

Hot-shooting Ottawa sinks Louisburg



Louisburg junior Sam Guetterman rises up for a shot in the lane during Tuesday's home contest against Ottawa. The Wildcats couldn't keep up with Ottawa in the 65-50 loss as the Cyclones connected on 11 3-pointers.

Life in the Frontier League can be difficult at times, just ask the Louisburg boys basketball team.

The Wildcats faced one of the tougher teams in the league Tuesday when they hosted Ottawa, and despite staying with the Cyclones for a half, Louisburg couldn't hold on in a 65-50 loss.

It was the second straight loss for Louisburg, which also fell to a talented Eudora squad right before the holiday break.

"It has to be one of the best leagues in any division in Kansas," Louisburg coach Jason Nelson said. "Hopefully it will push us to work harder, and help them realize that there are good teams in this league, but we can be too. I think there is a fine line between a good team and a decent team. We are right there, we just have to cross that line. It is putting together 32 minutes."

Louisburg (3-3) showed signs of crossing that line at

different parts of the game, especially in the third quarter. The Wildcats trailed by 11 points at halftime, but rallied to cut the Ottawa lead to six points midway through the third, before the Cyclones caught fire.

Ottawa, which connected on 11 3-pointers for the game, hit six in the third to balloon its lead to 22 points going into the final quarter.

“Defensively I thought we played really well,” Nelson said. “We have been emphasizing limiting offensive rebounds in practice and I think we did a good job fixing that. We were good defensively, but some of those shots they hit, there wasn’t much we could do.”

Ottawa forward Isaac McCullough hit six of the 3-pointers for Ottawa and finished with a game-high 26 points. Cyclone guard Perry Carroll was also difficult to stop on the perimeter as he added 21 points, including four 3-pointers.

The Wildcats got off to a slow start and fell behind 13-3 in the first quarter, but they fought back to cut into the Ottawa lead. Louisburg went on a 7-1 run to end the quarter after baskets from Grant Harding and Jayce Geiman.



Sophomore Dalton Ribordy gets ready to drive the lane Tuesday against Ottawa.

Geiman then forced a turnover, which led to a basket from Jacob Welsh and the Wildcats trailed just 14-10.

Cyclones answered right back in the second quarter as they went on a 14-4 run to push their lead back to double digits.

“Our post defense was fantastic for the most part and gave up very few points,” Nelson said. “We knew they were going to be quick, and after the first quarter, for whatever reason our help defense just wasn’t there and they go on an (14-4) run. Once our help defense got better, the game evened up.”

Harding and Welsh were both bright spots throughout the game. Harding finished with a team-high 17 points and Welsh also scored in double figures with 11. Sophomore Dalton Ribordy led the Wildcats with five rebounds.

Louisburg came out strong to start the second half as it went on an 8-3 run after two baskets from Mitchell McLellan and four free throws from Harding. However, Ottawa would catch fire from behind-the-arch as they connected on those six 3-pointers – many of which were well defended.

The Wildcats didn’t give in as they cut the 22-point lead to 13 late in the fourth quarter thanks to a pair of buckets from T.J. Dover and a 3-pointer from Sam Guetterman.

“That is the intensity we are trying to get to and that is something I need to get better at,” Nelson said. “That intensity in the fourth quarter is the same intensity we have to have the entire game. Everyone knows that is what they need to do, it is just me getting them to the point where they are that way from minute one to minute 32. No one works harder than our kids, it is just putting all these pieces of the puzzle together and figuring it out.”

Louisburg will try to snap its losing skid Friday when it travels to Baldwin. The Wildcats will be on the road the rest of this month and won’t return home until their game against

Paola on Feb. 2.

LOUISBURG		10	13
12	15 - 50		
OTTAWA		14	18
23	10 - 65		

LOUISBURG (3-3): Grant Harding 6-17 5-8 17; Jacob Welsh 4-5 3-4 11; T.J. Dover 2-6 1-2 5; ; Mitchell McLellan 2-7 0-0 4; Ben Minster 1-1 2-2 4; Dalton Ribordy 2-3 0-0 4; Sam Guetterman 1-5 0-0 3; Jayce Geiman 1-3 0-0 2. Totals: 19-47 15-20 50. 3-point field goals: 1, (Guetterman)