

Lady Cats leave it all on floor against Baldwin



Louisburg guard Isabelle Holtzen goes up for a shot during Friday's road contest against Baldwin. The Lady Cats fell 66-35 to the Bulldogs.

BALDWIN CITY – As Shawn Lowry walked out of the locker room following Friday's game with Baldwin, he had a grin from ear to ear.

He couldn't stop smiling.

By looking at him, no one could tell that his Louisburg girls basketball team had just lost 66-35 to the Bulldogs. No, it wasn't about the score to Lowry or to the rest of his players.

It was about what the Lady Cats left on the court – nothing.

“Score isn't even really an issue for me,” Lowry said. “For what they gave, I will take that any time, any day and with any team that I coach. I couldn't have asked for them to give any more than what they just did. I loved it.”

Whether it was early in the game, or in the final seconds of their 31-point loss at Baldwin High School, the Lady Cats made Baldwin work for every point. With the game already out of reach in the fourth quarter, the Louisburg players found

themselves on the floor for loose balls, going after rebounds – trying anything they could to get something positive to go their way.

The Lady Cats (1-6) also battled foul problems most of the game and had to go deep in their bench on several occasions. Those players did the same thing the starters did – they made things uncomfortable for Baldwin at times.



Senior Megan Roy gets on the floor for a loose ball during Friday's contest with Baldwin at Baldwin High School.

Baldwin also did the same for Louisburg as the Lady Cats had to go up against a full-court press most of the night.

“That is one of the better pressure teams we will probably face this year,” Lowry said. “They are very quick and athletic. I saw Baldwin play earlier this year and they give everyone a hard time. We got a little wore down at the end, and foul trouble hurt us a little bit, but for what those kids gave, especially the younger ones and even the younger, younger ones. It was awesome.”

It wasn't the best of starts for the Lady Cats as Baldwin displayed their athleticism early and they jumped out to a 9-0

lead two minutes into the contest. Louisburg didn't back down, however, as it went on a mini 7-0 run of its own to cut the lead to two on a 3-pointer from Kennia Hankinson and baskets from Madisen Simpson and Isabelle Holtzen.

Baldwin brought the lead back out to 11 going into the second quarter and the Lady Cats had to deal with foul problems as starter Emalee Overbay had three fouls in the first quarter and three other players had two each.

Megan Lemke, Holtzen and Hankinson would also pick up their third foul in the second quarter and the Lady Cats were forced to go to their younger players as freshmen Julianne Finley and Bailey Kern each saw time, along with sophomore guard Lexie Reece.

Still, by the time halftime came around, the Lady Cats found themselves down just nine points.

"I will tell you this, everyone that sat up there and watched that game is talking about how tough those kids are," Lowry said. "I just told the girls how proud I am of what they just gave. They never backed down and never quit playing. We were pressured the entire game, up until the last minute, which is fine by us. We showed a lot of toughness out there."

A lot that toughness came in the rebounding department and from freshman Carson Buffington. The Louisburg forward pulled down a team-high 11 rebounds to go along with seven points and two steals.

Simpson led Louisburg in scoring with nine points, while Holtzen added seven points in the loss.

"This group is not done working and they showed that," Lowry said. "That is what I love about this group. Carson Buffington is rebounding the ball like crazy and we are getting to balls that no one else wants to get after. It is really fun to coach that."

Baldwin started to pull away from the Lady Cats in the third quarter as it went on an 11-2 run to take a 14-point lead going into the third quarter. Louisburg also lost starter Paige Buffington with an ankle and knee injury in the second half.

The Lady Cats continued to fight, but a deeper Baldwin team pulled away in the fourth quarter. Still, Louisburg gave it everything it had until the final buzzer.

“They had nothing left,” Lowry said. “It was great to see and I will take that any day of the week. They showed me a lot out there.”

Louisburg tries to get back on track tonight when it travels to Frontenac. Tipoff is set for 6 p.m.

LOUISBURG		11	11
8	5 - 35		
BALDWIN		22	9
18	17 - 66		

LOUISBURG (1-6): Madisen Simpson 4-10 0-2 9; Carson Buffington 3-10 1-4 7; Isabelle Holtzen 2-7 3-6 7; Kennia Hankinson 1-11 0-0 3; Lexie Reece 1-1 1-2 3; Paige Buffington 1-4 0-1 2; Megan Roy 1-3 0-2 2; Emalee Overbay 1-4 0-2 2. Totals: 14-55 5-23 35. 3-point field goals: 2, (Hankinson, Simpson)