

Offense stays strong, but Lady Cats fall short



Louisburg catcher Molly Rison tags out an Ottawa runner trying to score after she received a perfect throw from centerfielder Miranda White on Tuesday in Ottawa. The Lady Cats lost both games of the doubleheader 11-7 and 12-10.

OTTAWA – The Louisburg High School softball team had one of its better offensive performances of the season as it put together 17 runs over the two games Tuesday against Ottawa.

The only problem was the Lady Cats couldn't keep up with the hot-hitting Cyclones.

Louisburg took a four-run lead before falling to the Cyclones 11-7 in the opener and a late rally came up short in a 12-10 loss in the nightcap.

"I have commented numerous times this season about the amount of hard work this group has put in on the junior varsity and varsity, without a lot of wins to show for it," Louisburg coach John Ozier said. "However, they continue to improve in many different aspects of the game."

The Lady Cats (3-11) have definitely improved offensively as they have scored 60 runs in their last six games and have won three of those.

Louisburg's bats got the Lady Cats going early in the opener

as they took a 4-0 lead after two innings, but Ottawa took advantage of a Louisburg error in the bottom of the second that led to three runs.

However, one bad inning was the difference. Louisburg held a one-run lead into the fifth inning when Ottawa rallied for six runs in the bottom of the fifth and put the game away.

The Lady Cats did outhit Ottawa 13-10 and more than half of those came from middle of their lineup. Junior Emalee Overbay finished the game 4-for-4 with a double, a triple and four RBIs.



Louisburg third baseman Katie Baker throws out a runner during Tuesday's doubleheader in Ottawa.

Fellow junior Allyssa Griggs was 3-for-4 with a double and a pair of RBIs. Freshman Molly Rison added an RBI single and another freshman, Kennia Hankinson, had a pair of hits, including a double.

"We continued the trend with our hot bats and jumped on Ottawa early," Ozier said. "We had a couple of miscommunications on defense in key situations that hurt us. As we have continued to do this season, we take those mistakes and attempt to look at them as significant learning opportunities to work on in

practice, so they won't be repeated."

In the nightcap, it was Ottawa that got off to the quick start.

The Cyclones had a five-run second inning that led to a 7-0 into the third inning. Louisburg trailed 12-4 going into the final inning, but the Lady Cats didn't give up.

The Lady Cats answered with six runs to cut the Ottawa lead to two, but they could get no closer. Louisburg also used its defense to spark its bats.

Senior centerfielder Miranda White threw out a runner at home attempting to score and Rison, the team's catcher, threw out a runner at second attempting to steal.

"Our freshmen pitchers had to face a really good hitting Ottawa offense," Ozier said. "After falling behind 10-1, the girls could have decided to check out mentally. We had a couple of great defensive plays that got everyone fired up. We then proceeded to close the gap to 12-10 in the final inning, with the tying run at the plate to end the game."

Hailey Crowder was hit by the pitch with the bases loaded to start the rally in the seventh and Katie Baker drove home a run on a sacrifice. White came through with an RBI single, Karson Griggs hit a sacrifice fly, Overbay had an RBI double and Allyssa Griggs singled home Overbay before Rison flew out to right field to end the game.

Overbay led the Lady Cats with three hits in the nightcap, while Allyssa Griggs, Rison and White each finished with two.

Louisburg returns to action today when it travels to De Soto for makeup doubleheader. First pitch is set for 4:30 p.m.