

# Lady Cats fight back in loss to Wellsville



Louisburg senior Emalee Overbay drives the lane during the Lady Cats' fifth-place game of the Top Gun Tournament on Saturday at Wellsville High School. The Lady Cats came up short in a 63-56 loss.

WELLSVILLE – For three quarters, the Louisburg girls basketball team was able to outscore Wellsville on Saturday during the fifth-place game of the Top Gun Tournament.

It was other quarter that had the Lady Cats digging out of a hole the entire contest.

Wellsville used a big first quarter to distance itself from the Lady Cats early and handed Louisburg a 63-56 loss at Wellsville High School.

The Eagles outscored Louisburg 20-2 in the first quarter and eventually built a 22-point lead early in the second quarter before the Lady Cats started to chip away at the lead.

“We let some different things distract us and we just weren’t mentality prepared starting the game,” Louisburg coach Shawn Lowry said. “We talk a lot about this process for us and this is definitely something we will learn from and be better next time.”

The Lady Cats (6-6) scored the first basket of the game on Madisen Simpson layup, but Wellsville would go on a 24-0 run to take the commanding lead. Louisburg, however, spent the last 22 minutes of the game cutting into the Eagle lead.

Louisburg nearly pulled off the improbable comeback as it cut the lead to four points midway through the fourth quarter on a basket from Paige Buffington.

“It would have been easy for many after that first quarter to check it in for the day but this group has a great deal of pride in the way they play together,” Lowry said. “Our seniors do a very good job of leading and battling when they’re faced with adversity.”

The Lady Cats faced a lot of adversity as it had to try to overcome a 22-point deficit on their opponent’s floor. Louisburg started by stopping the Wellsville run early in the second quarter and started to hit shots themselves.

Simpson and Buffington hit shots from the outside and each connected on three 3-pointers and the Lady Cats had seven for the day. Simpson led Louisburg in scoring with 20 points to go along with three assists and Buffington added 15 in the loss.

Louisburg also battled under the basket for loose balls and rebounds. Sophomore Carson Buffington finished with a game-high 17 rebounds to go along with eight points, while freshman Haley Cain came off the bench to add seven boards.



**Madisen Simpson averaged 19 points a game for the tournament and earned a spot on the all-tournament team.**

After the Lady Cats cut the lead to four points, it became a free throw shooting contest as the Eagles held the ball in the final four minutes of the game, forcing Louisburg to foul. Wellsville scored their final 11 points from the free-throw line and was 31 for 46 for the game compared to just 12 for 20

for Louisburg.

"It's very important for us to continue and get better both individually and as a team each time we step on to the court, whether that be in practice or in a game," Lowry said. "All the players are committed to this and are playing with great effort, toughness and heart."

Louisburg put together a strong tournament, especially offensively despite the 1-2 record.

The Lady Cats broke two tournament records, including the record for most 3-pointers in a game Thursday in the consolation semifinals against Anderson County. Louisburg made 14 3-pointers, which broke Ottawa's old record of 12 in 2005.

Louisburg also set the record for most made 3-pointers by a team as they made 31 over the three game span. The Lady Cats broke the previous record of 25 set by Ottawa in 2005.

Individually, Simpson tied the tournament record for most made 3-pointers. She equaled Baldwin's Kelsey Verheage's mark of 12 in 2006 and 2007.

Along with her spot in tournament history, Simpson was also named to the all-tournament team as she averaged 19 points a game.

"Madisen continued her strong play last week in the tournament and we were all excited for her to be recognized for it," Lowry said.

Louisburg will try and get back on the winning track, but it will be a challenge tonight as the Lady Cats travel to No. 8 Paola. Tipoff is set for 6 p.m.

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LOUISBURG (6-6): Madisen Simpson 20, Paige Buffington 15, Carson Buffington 8, Tayler Lancaster 5, Kennia Hankinson 5, Emalee Overbay 2, Chloe Renner 1. Totals: 17 12-20 56. 3-point field goals: 7, (Simpson 3, P. Buffington 3, Lancaster)