

Louisburg shoots way past Spring Hill



Louisburg senior Paige Buffington tries to dribble past a Spring Hill defender Thursday during the Lady Cats' home contest against the Broncos. Louisburg defeated Spring Hill 60-49.

It never mattered how close Spring Hill got – or even when the Broncos took the lead for a few moments – Louisburg wasn't about to give in, especially on its home floor.

Louisburg got a career-high in points from senior Madisen Simpson and the Lady Cats connected on 10 3-pointers as they put away Spring Hill, 60-49, in front of a large contingent of fans Tuesday at Louisburg High School.

The Lady Cats used a big second half to overcome a halftime deficit and improve their record to 5-4 and are currently 3-1 in Frontier League play.

"This is a big win for us and another one for us to build off of," Louisburg coach Shawn Lowry said. "After not playing for a week prior to this, it was good to come back and play well. This was a team that is in our league, in our substate and someone we are going to see in a tournament coming up.

"It was really good to get this win on our home floor. We had a great crowd, a fantastic student section and it felt like

substate so that was neat for the girls to play in.”

Simpson provided the Lady Cats with several big baskets down the stretch as she connected of five of the team’s 10-3-pointers and scored 31 points, which was a new career high. Her previous personal best was set last month with a 28-point performance with a win at Ottawa.



Madisen Simpson drives to the basket for two points Thursday against Spring Hill. Simpson scored a career-

high 31 points.

"This is her senior year and she put a lot of work in on her own and it is showing for her now," Lowry said. "Madisen is playing with great confidence and she is playing her tail off all the way around. She is doing it defensively, offensively, she was our point guard in this game and she is taking care of the basketball for us. We are asking a lot of her, but that is why she is a captain."

The two teams stayed within a few points of each other in the first half, but Louisburg took a three point lead to end the first as Simpson finished the quarter with five straight points and sophomore Kennia Hankinson hit a 3-pointer to overcome a small Spring Hill lead.

Spring Hill found its rhythm offensively in the second quarter as it scored 18 points in the frame. Louisburg's Tayler Lancaster made a 3-pointer and Emalee Overbay hit a basket to open up a five point lead for the Lady Cats, but Spring Hill went on a 8-0 run to take a 22-19 advantage.

Simpson responded with back-to-back 3-pointers to give Louisburg the lead again, but the Broncos went on mini 7-2 run to take a 29-27 halftime lead.

Spring Hill played several different lineups and Louisburg had to adjust. Sometimes the Broncos would play with two post players in Savannah Leaton and Camie Williams who stand 6-0 and 6-1, respectively, and other times they would play with quicker lineups.



Isabelle Holtzen gets on the floor to tie up a Spring Hill player for a loose ball Thursday.

The Broncos would also try and change defenses to confuse the Lady Cats, but Louisburg was able to shoot itself out of any problem it encountered.

“Spring Hill mixes their defenses up quite a bit and give us different looks with their zone and man,” Lowry said. “I wasn’t sure what lineup they were going to start with, but we were prepared for those differences. We are not a big team, but you see how we play against big teams, and that is with toughness. Our girls will play with anyone no matter how tall they are.”

Louisburg took the lead right back to start the third quarter and never gave it back to the Broncos. Simpson and Lancaster

opened with back-to-back 3-pointers and eventually took a 42-36 lead into the fourth.

Spring Hill caught fire to start the fourth as Spring Hill's Lauren Delker hit back-to-back 3-pointers to tie it at 44-all with under five minutes left in the contest.

However, Louisburg's Paige Buffington and Lancaster answered with two consecutive 3-pointers of their own to stop the Spring Hill run and the Lady Cats were able to pull away from there.

"Those are just two more seniors that basically said there that they refuse to lose on their home floor," Lowry said. "It is a pride thing for us too. We want to defend this place and we work really hard to make sure we win as many games as we can at home."

Lancaster ended the game with nine points and was second on the team in scoring. Buffington finished with seven points, six assists and a pair of steals.

On the glass, sophomore Carson Buffington finished with a team-high 13 rebounds and guard Isabelle Holtzen was next with five.

The Lady Cats won't have to wait long to see Spring Hill again as they will face off with the Broncos Tuesday in the opening round of the Top Gun Tournament at Wellsville High School. Tipoff is set for 6:45 p.m., and if the Lady Cats advance, could meet Piper – the No. 1 team in Class 4A – in the next round.

"It is a fun tournament," Lowry said. "I would love to have our tournament back, but this one is great to play in. They do a lot of different things for the girls and we will play some great teams. The No. 1 team in the state is sitting there and there is an opportunity that we will get to play them. I know the girls are looking forward to the tournament."

LOU	14	13	15	18 –
60				
SH	11	18	7	13
– 49				

LOUISBURG (5-4): Madisen Simpson 31, Tayler Lancaster 9, Paige Buffington 7, Carson Buffington 4, Emalee Overbay 4, Kennia Hankinson 3, Chloe Renner 2. Totals: 19-49 12-18 60. 3-point field goals: 10, (Simpson 5, Lancaster 3, P. Buffington, Hankinson)