

Wildcats pull away from De Soto for third straight win



Louisburg junior Dalton Ribordy draws some contact and scores a basket during Tuesday's home contest against De Soto at Louisburg High School. The Wildcats captured their third-straight win with a 56-40 victory over De Soto.

On two different occasions, the Louisburg High School boys basketball team had a chance to let De Soto stay in the game or even take the lead.

Louisburg wasn't about to let that happen.

The Wildcats used a big second and fourth quarters on both ends of the floor to pull away from De Soto for a 56-40 win Tuesday in Louisburg. In the process, the Wildcats recorded their third consecutive victory after they won the final two games of the Baldwin Invitational last week.

"The first half we just gave up too many offensive rebounds and putbacks and that kept it close," Louisburg coach Jason Nelson said. "Our on-ball defense a few times wasn't the best. It was a testament to those guys that they were able to fix those things. They are doing a good job of looking for each other on the court. Now we have to put together four quarters."

De Soto trailed Louisburg 14-13 at the end of the first

quarter, but the Wildcats turned the pressure up defensively in the second quarter and went on a 13-4 run to go up 27-17 at halftime.

Again, De Soto made another run in the third quarter as it scored on offensive rebounds and drives to the basket and cut the Louisburg lead in half.



Senior Sam Guetterman drives past a De Soto defender Tuesday in the Wildcats' 16-point win.

In the fourth quarter, the Wildcats (6-6) made it a point to get the ball inside to senior T.J. Dover and junior Dalton Ribordy and it worked. Louisburg ended the game on a 16-5 run that was spurred on by several baskets by the two Wildcat forwards.

"That is exactly what we need to do to be successful," Nelson said. "We need to get the ball into Ribordy and T.J. and play inside-out. That frees up Jayce (Geiman), Grant (Harding), Sam (Guetterman) and everyone else on the perimeter to get open shots or drive it. We did a good job of that this time and it is something that we need to continue to do."

Dover was one of three Wildcats players to score in double figures. He tied with Harding for a team-high 15 points and Geiman added 11, along with a pair of 3-pointers. Ribordy added six points, including a couple big baskets during the Wildcats' fourth quarter run.

"We have been working hard on post entry and T.J. and Dalton are so athletic inside," Nelson said. "If we can get the ball inside, then we can do some good things. We keep improving in that area and they are being more assertive down low and the guards are doing a better job looking for them."

After a rough start to the season, the Wildcats' three-game winning streak has brought their record back to .500 and they earned their second Frontier League win. Louisburg will now try to keep those winning ways going as it hosts Spring Hill at 7:30 p.m. Friday.

The game will follow homecoming ceremonies that had to be rescheduled from earlier this month.

"Our biggest attribute right now is our mentality," Nelson said. "This is the second game in a row where we have played a good, scrappy team. Instead of letting them back into it and getting a lead, we pulled away instead and that is good to see. Hopefully we can keep playing well."

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LOUISBURG (6-6): Grant Harding 15, T.J. Dover 15, Jayce Geiman 11, Dalton Ribordy 6, Sam Guetterman 4, Jake Hill 2, Desmond Doles 2, Dalton Stone 1. Totals: 21-41 12-18 56. 3-point field goals: 2, (Geiman 2)