

Wildcats can't overcome Paola in rivalry battle



Louisburg senior Jayce Geiman puts up shot at home Friday during the Wildcats' game with Paola. The Wildcats fell 47-42 on Senior Night as Geiman, Grant Harding, Jake Hill, Sam Guetterman, T.J. Dover, Dalton Stone and Alex Seuferling were all honored prior to the game.

For the second time this season, the Louisburg boys basketball team had rival Paola where it wanted – tied or with the lead in the fourth quarter.

And for the second time, the Wildcats couldn't quite get over the hump. This time Paola handed Louisburg a 47-42 loss on Senior Night at Louisburg High School.

Along with the loss, the Wildcats and their fans also had to say goodbye to seven seniors as they played their final home contest. Grant Harding, Jayce Geiman, Dalton Stone, Sam Guetterman, T.J. Dover, Jake Hill and Alex Seuferling all had a chance to take the floor one last time.

"They are a group where I can bring my kids to practice if I need to and know they are in good hands," Louisburg coach Jason Nelson said. "They are a good group of boys. The four years they have been tasked with helping change the mentality

of the program. I can get knit picky on them sometimes, and they have heard it all, but these are kids that would do anything for now or in the future.”

Down by two points, the Wildcats (8-12) had a chance to either tie or win the game with under a minute left and they called a timeout to set up a play.

Louisburg drew it up to go for the last shot but Guetterman lost the ball near the top of the key as the Wildcat bench thought he was fouled. Instead, it was a no call and turned into two free throws for Paola.

“That was a terrible no call on Sammy there,” Nelson said. “I thought he was fouled and it hurts because I had 100 percent certainty that either Stone, Jayce or Grant were going to slide to the ball and hit it. We asked the kids to give everything they have on senior night and see what happens. For the most part we did that.”



Louisburg senior Sam Guetterman puts up a shot in the lane Friday against Paola.

Louisburg built a 16-11 lead in the second quarter on a basket from junior Dalton Ribordy and a 3-pointer from Harding, but Paola battled back and eventually tied it at 18-all before halftime on a Noah Bell 3-pointer.

The lead changed hands six times and there were two ties in

the third quarter alone before Paola widened its lead to five late. Geiman knocked down a 3-pointer at the buzzer to cut the Paola lead to two.

Louisburg grabbed the lead in the fourth quarter on back-to-back baskets from Dover and another from Guetterman to go up 40-39. Bell hit a 3-pointer to give the Panthers the advantage again, before Dover tied it with another bucket.

Paola's Tanner Moala, who led all scorers with 14 points, put the Panthers up with under a minute left, which ended up being the game-winner.

"Defensively this was one of the better games we have played on the year with regard to pressuring the ball," Nelson said. "Even rebounding, we didn't give up much after the first quarter. Pressure was fantastic.

"Offensively, you see bits and pieces of it here and there. When we were running our half court sets and looking to attack, we didn't have many easy opportunities because they were sagging quite a bit inside. We were able to slide on the perimeter and get good looks, we just couldn't knock them down."

Harding was the lone Wildcat in double figures with 12 points, with nine of those coming in the first half. Guetterman and Dover each added eight points in the loss.

It won't be long before the Wildcats get another shot at the Panthers. Louisburg earned the No. 3 seed in the substate tournament and will face No. 2 Paola at 7:30 p.m., on Thursday at Spring Hill High School.

"We know them well obviously and I like Paola," Nelson said. "They have good kids and we have good kids. We play hard against each other and it is always a fun game. We have been working on some stuff in practice to use in substate, so we will see what happens."

LOU	7	11	16	8 -
42				
PAO	9	9	18	11
- 47				

LOUISBURG (8-12): Grant Harding 12, Sam Guetterman 8, T.J. Dover 8, Jayce Geiman 6, Dalton Ribordy 4, Dalton Stone 2, Jake Hill 2. Totals: 17 3-7 42. 3-point field goals: 5, (Geiman 2, Harding 2, Guetterman)