

Wildcat boys basketball hopes to build on state appearance



Louisburg head coach Ty Pfannenstiel is in first year with the Wildcat boys basketball team as he tries to build off the program's best finish in 12 years.

Last season, the Louisburg High School boys basketball team had its best finish in 12 years as the Wildcats earned a spot in the Class 4A-Division I state tournament.

It was a senior-laden team that caught fire at the right time and put together one final run.

However, almost every part of that team is gone and the Wildcats are ready to start anew for the 2017-18 season – from the players all the way to a new coaching staff.

Louisburg returns just one starter from a season ago and two other players that saw varsity time. The rest is a different lineup and a new head coach in Ty Pfannenstiel, who took over for Jason Nelson after he resigned at the end of last year.

Although there will be several fresh faces for the Wildcats, they hope this team can build on what last year's version accomplished.

“Absolutely we want to build off of that momentum,” Pfannenstiel said. “The schedule is going to be grueling right off the bat, so we will have a battle on our hands each night.

These guys are competitors and the expectations are extremely high for this group.”

It has been a good offseason for the new Wildcat head coach as he used that time to get to know his team and what to expect out of this group. He also wanted to make sure the players knew what to expect from him.

Pfannenstiel came to Louisburg from Oakley High School, where he was the school’s athletic director, head football coach and head girls basketball coach. He also spent time as an assistant boys basketball coach at Gardner-Edgerton.

“I feel like the transition has been very smooth,” Pfannenstiel said. “We got a good start with our summer workouts and are just continuing to build off of that. My expectations are for our kids to be good representatives of Louisburg High School in how we prepare and compete on the court, and how we conduct ourselves off of the floor.

“Obviously, my system and terminology is new to these guys so there is a big learning curve. I think as the year moves on we will get more comfortable in what we do.”



Senior Dalton Ribordy is the team's lone returning starter from last season's state tournament team.

The Wildcats will lean heavily on their five returning seniors, including returning starter Dalton Ribordy. The Louisburg forward was a factor inside for the Wildcats last season and was among the team leaders in rebounds.

Ribordy (6-foot-4) will join seniors Ben Minster (6-1), Desmond Doles (6-4), Justin Sievert (6-0) and junior Brayden Gage (5-9) in the starting lineup. Minster and Doles also saw a lot of varsity minutes a season ago.

"I really like this group," Pfannenstiel said. "First of all, they are all good kids which makes coaching so much fun. Even though we have five seniors, our varsity experience will still be pretty limited at the start. Dalton has the most experience on the court. He has really emerged as a leader for us in

practice. He's a workhorse day in and day out and we are expecting a big year out of him. I think all the seniors are going to be major contributors for us, each in their own way."

Senior Parker Perentis (5-10), juniors Dylan De Shazer (6-4), Noah Hill (6-4), Kohl Vogel (6-1) and sophomore Madden Rutherford (6-3) will all see varsity time as well off the bench.

Pfannenstiel is also excited about the depth he has this season, which will allow the Wildcats to do some different things on both ends of the floor.

"I think we have pretty good depth and athleticism," he said. "I think this will allow us to play up tempo and be great on defense each night. Our kids are excited to play. We have a lot to learn, but I think we have made good progress each day."

Louisburg will get its season started Friday when it hosts Pittsburg. The tipoff will follow the varsity girls game, at approximately 7:30 p.m.

The Purple Dragons were picked to win SEK League and Pfannenstiel knows his team will be tested early and throughout the season.

"I want us to be extremely competitive each night," he said. "I think with last year's success, the expectations have been raised for this group, which is exactly how we want it. We expect to be great each night we step on the court."