

Wildcats can't keep up with No. 4 Cyclones



Louisburg senior Ben Minster goes up for two of his 12 points during the Wildcats' contest with Ottawa on Tuesday at Louisburg High School. The Wildcats fell to the No. 4-ranked Cyclones, 55-39.

Down by just two points at halftime to the No. 4-ranked team in the state, the Louisburg High School boys basketball team couldn't have asked to be in a better position.

The Wildcats had an opportunity to pull off one of the bigger upsets of the early season against Ottawa and give themselves some momentum going into the holiday break.

Unfortunately for the Wildcats, the second half didn't go as well as the first.

Ottawa held the Louisburg offense to just five points in the third quarter and the Wildcats couldn't keep up with the Cyclones in a 55-39 loss.

"I thought the first half we were playing well, defensively and offensively," Louisburg coach Ty Pfannenstiel said. "I thought we had a lot of energy, which I think is so important for us. The second half, for some reason, we didn't have that energy. Ottawa came out fired up and got some buckets to go in. We got six possessions without a basket and we just looked

deflated. That is the difference. We have to find ways to fight through that, and that is two games in a row where we have been flat in the second half.”

In the first quarter, Louisburg and Ottawa traded the lead five times before the Cyclones went up 14-11 going into the second quarter.

Louisburg junior Dylan DeShazer gave the Wildcats a lead early in the second on a 3-pointer, before the Cyclones took it back until late in the first half. Junior guard Brayden Gage hit a runner in the lane to put Louisburg up one with just more than a minute left before halftime.

Ottawa ended the second quarter with a 3-pointer to give the Cyclones a 24-22 advantage going into the locker room. Still, the Wildcats had the momentum on their side.

The second half turned out to be a different story. The Wildcats (1-5) watched as Ottawa opened the second half on an 11-2 run and Louisburg struggled to find success on the offensive end.



Senior Parker Perentis drives past an Ottawa defender Tuesday in Louisburg.

"We were patient on offense, especially in the first half," Pfannenstiel said. "Then when we had a few possessions where we didn't score in the second half, then we started going back to doing stuff on our own and standing around and watching other guys. I was disappointed in our body language when things weren't going right for us."

"We just have to keep fighting no matter what the score is, we just have to keep fighting. We are not very good when we are not playing with energy, and we lost that in the second half."

Ottawa started the fourth quarter on another big 11-3 run to put the game out of reach for the Wildcats and hand them their third straight loss.

Senior Ben Minster led the Wildcats in scoring with 12 points,

while senior Dalton Ribordy and Gage each finished with seven points.

Louisburg will try for a fresh start following the holiday break when it hosts Baldwin on Jan. 4. The Wildcats defeated Baldwin earlier in the season.

"Ottawa is a good team," PfannenstieI said. "I think we proved we can play with those teams, but you can't say you played with a team for a half – you have to play that kind of basketball for four quarters. We have to keep that fight and try and build that momentum. We have lots of work to do, but I don't think we are that far away."

LOU	11	11	5	12 –
39				
OTT	14	10	12	19 –
55				

LOUISBURG (1-5): Ben Minster 12, Dalton Ribordy 7, Brayden Gage 7, Dylan DeShazer 5, Kohl Vogel 3, Justin Sievert 3, Desmond Doles 2. Totals: 14-39 8-14 39. 3-point field goals: 3, (Vogel, Sievert, DeShazer)