

Despite fast start, Wildcats fall to Baldwin



Louisburg senior Desmond Doles drives to the basket Thursday during the Wildcats' 54-52 home loss to Baldwin. Doles finished the game with eight points and three steals.

The Louisburg boys basketball team couldn't have asked for a better start in its first game back from the holidays.

The Wildcats were looking to snap a 3-game losing streak Thursday when they hosted Baldwin. They were well on their way to doing that as they scored 23 points in the first quarter and built a double-digit lead.

Everything was going as planned – that is until the second quarter.

Louisburg's offense cooled off in the final three periods and Baldwin took advantage to pull out a 54-52 win over the Wildcats.

"It is tough because it is a home game and it would have been good for our guys to get a win just to show that we have made progress," Louisburg coach Ty Pfannenstiel said. "I do feel that we are getting better and our guys could have used a win, but you don't just get wins, you have to earn them. Baldwin just made more plays than us. I think we can build from this.

"I feel a lot more positive about this than maybe I have in

some of our other games and I thought we fought hard for four quarters. We did some good things, especially coming off of break.”

Louisburg (1-6) used a 10-0 run to get going in the first quarter, thanks to baskets from five different players in Desmond Doles, Justin Sievert, Dylan DeShazer, Ben Minster and Brayden Gage. Ben Minster and Dalton Ribordy added a pair of baskets later and Louisburg had a 17-6 advantage.



Senior Ben Minster drives in for a layup Thursday against Baldwin.

The Wildcats were up by 10 to start the second quarter, but the Bulldogs whittled away at the Louisburg lead. Louisburg took a 31-26 advantage into halftime, but Baldwin jumped out to a 9-2 run to start the second half and eventually grabbed the lead midway through the third quarter.

Baldwin never relinquished it, but the Wildcats did make it interesting. Down by three with just over two minutes left in the contest, Minster stole a Baldwin pass and scored to cut the Bulldog lead to one.

Fouls became a problem for Louisburg in the fourth quarter, but in a different way. The Wildcats didn't commit a team foul until under two minutes left in the game, which meant they had to foul Baldwin several times to get up to seven team fouls to put Baldwin on the free-throw line.

Louisburg got the ball back on a few different occasions to either tie the game or take the lead, but its shots couldn't find the bottom of the net. Baldwin led by five with under three seconds left, when Sievert hit the Wildcats' lone 3-pointer of the game to cut it to two, but Louisburg couldn't get another opportunity.

"The second quarter was kind of tough because we gave them some life by not scoring for a while," Pfannenstiel said. "We scored 23 in the first quarter and I said something about that to the guys in the huddle and I probably shouldn't have because I think that jinxed us. Right after that, we struggled to score and gave them some momentum.

"(Baldwin) knocked down some shots and made a few more plays. We stress how important every possession is, offensively and defensively, because you never know. We lost by two points and if we just make a couple more plays that could have made a difference."

Ribordy led Louisburg with 12 points to go along with three blocks, while Minster also scored in double figures with 10. Doles finished with eight points and a team-high three steals. DeShazer added a team-high six rebounds.

Louisburg will try and bounce back Tuesday when it travels to Frontenac. The Wildcats will hit the road again Friday when it goes to De Soto.

LOU	23	8	10	11 –
52				

BAL	13	13	18	10 –
54				

LOUISBURG (1-6): Dalton Ribordy 12, Ben Minster 10, Desmond Doles 8, Justin Sievert 7, Madden Rutherford 5, Dylan DeShazer 4, Brayden Gage 2, Kohl Vogel 2. Totals: 23-58 3-5 52. 3-point field goals: 1, (Sievert)