

# Wildcats fall short on road at Spring Hill



Louisburg junior Brayden Gage glides to the basket for a layup during Thursday's game at Spring Hill. Gage finished with eight points in the Wildcats' 63-53 loss to the Broncos.

SPRING HILL – It is a game that will show up in the loss column, but for the Louisburg boys basketball team, Thursday's contest with Spring Hill provided the Wildcats with several positives.

The Wildcats showed a competitive nature head coach Ty Pfannenstiel hadn't seen for four quarters and that allowed them to stay close in a 63-53 loss. Although the defeat was disappointing, Pfannenstiel believes his team can build on it.

"I thought we played with a lot of intensity," he said. "I think the kids really like competing against Spring Hill and they always seem to get up for them and I really noticed that in football. I could tell in our preparation that our guys really know those kids well, from playing on summer teams with them and stuff like that.

"I was pleased with the way we competed. It seemed we were ready to go for four quarters and we didn't go through that one bad quarter, even though we started a little slow offensively. Defensively, we were ready to go. (Spring Hill) is a big team and they are very good. They are the No. 1 team

in our sub-state for a reason.”

Spring Hill (9-4) jumped out to a 17-10 lead at the end of the first quarter, but the Wildcats stayed within striking distance in the second quarter. Louisburg (2-11) went on an 8-2 run to end the first half and cut the Broncos’ double digit lead to just seven at halftime.

The Wildcats used their defense to get back in the game as they had a pair of steal and scores from senior Ben Minster and junior Brayden Gage toward the end of the first half.



**Louisburg senior Parker Perentis drives past a Spring Hill defender Thursday.**

“Our defense always leads to our offense,” Pfannenstiel said. “We got some steals and it picks up our offensive play. We scored the ball a little better than we have been. We saw going in that Spring Hill had been playing a lot of zone and

they didn't play zone the entire night, so it was a different look than we were expecting. I was very pleased with the way we played."

Although the Wildcats scored just seven points in the third quarter, they responded with a 22-point fourth quarter, but couldn't overtake the Broncos.

Louisburg had to play without senior starter Dalton Ribordy for the second straight game as he sat out with an ankle injury. In his absence, the Wildcats got a big performance from senior Ben Minster.

Minster finished with a team-high 19 points to go along with eight rebounds. Gage and senior Desmond Doles each added eight points, while Gage had a team-high four assists.

The Wildcats will leave the road behind them for a week and return home for a pair of games beginning Tuesday when they host rival Paola. It will be Louisburg's first home contest since Jan. 4.

"Our kids are ready for the stretch run," Pfannenstiel said. "We are getting ready to play Paola and this is the first time we have seen them. After that, we are going to go back and play the rest of the league again. If we bring the same type of intensity we did (Thursday), and if we can get healthy and get Ribordy back, we can do some good things."

<b>LOU</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>53</b>					
<b>SH</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>20</b>	
<b>- 63</b>					

LOUISBURG (2-11): Ben Minster 19, Brayden Gage 8, Desmond Doles 8, Justin Sievert 6, Dylan DeShazer 6, Parker Perentis 4, Kohl Vogel 2. Totals: 19-46 11-18 53. 3-point field goals:

4, (Gage, Doles, Minster, Sievert)