

Defense carries Lady Cats in win over Bonner Springs



Louisburg senior guard Kennia Hankinson pushes the ball up the floor Thursday during the Lady Cats' game with Bonner Springs in Louisburg.

It was a frustrating first half for both Louisburg and Bonner Springs on Thursday at Louisburg High School.

The two teams combined for just 16 points offensively, and neither squad could get in any kind of rhythm.

As for the second half, Louisburg was able to work out its kinks on offense and still made it difficult on Bonner Springs. The Lady Cats scored 35 points in the second half and rolled to a 47-21 win as they got a nice victory heading into their final week of the season.

"They were playing hard and our defense set the tone for us," Louisburg coach Shawn Lowry said. "Our defense can be really good and we are able to make adjustments out of it. I am not sure this group knows how good they can be if they can clean up some things like finishing at the rim, free throws and some discipline things

like with our passing. They will grind it out and work their tails off defensively, but we have to get more offense out of our defense.”

Louisburg held Bonner Springs to just four first half points, and while the Braves were able to score a bit more in the second half, the Lady Cats’ defense still set the tone and it started with junior Haley Cain.

Cain had the assignment of shadowing Bonner Springs forward Kim Whetstone, who is the Braves’ main scoring threat on the inside. Cain and the Lady Cats held Whetstone to just three points and made it difficult for the Braves to score.

“I have to give credit to Haley for that,” Lowry said. “I had her shadow (Whetstone) most of the night and she did a good job of being physical with her and moving her out of place. Haley has been that good defensively all year for us. Sometimes it won’t show up on the stat sheet, but what she does is really good for our team.”

The Lady Cats (8-10) took a 12-4 lead into halftime and struggled offensively with leading scorer Madilyn Melton in foul trouble for most of the first half with three fouls.

Louisburg picked it up in the second half and it started with senior Carson Buffington, who was all over the floor for the Lady Cats. Buffington was one rebound and three

steals away from
recording a triple-double as she affected the game on both
sides of the floor.

Buffington finished the game with
a team-high in points (16) and rebounds (nine). Defensively,
she was a force as
well with 10 deflections that led to seven steals.

"This is what she has been since
she came here as a freshman," Lowry said of Buffington. "No
one will out work
her and no one will be tougher than she is. She will be that
way until she
walks off that floor in her last game."

Melton came back from foul trouble
in the second half to finish with 15 points and junior Sydni
Keagle came off
the bench to finish with seven. Keagle gave the Lady Cats'
some nice minutes
with Melton on the bench in the first half.

"Our defense will hold us
together, even if we have one or two players go out with foul
trouble," Lowry
said. "I thought Sydni did a nice job for us coming off the
bench and again she
plugs right in and defensively she knows where she needs to be
and offensively
she gave us a boost too."

Louisburg will try and make it two
wins in a row tonight when it hosts Metro Academy for a 5 p.m.
tipoff.

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LOUISBURG (8-10): Carson

Buffington, 5-10 5-5 16; Madilyn Melton 5-8 5-7 15; Sydni Keagle 2-4 2-5 7;

Alyse Moore 2-11 0-0 4; Jordan Mynsted 0-0 2-3 2; Kennia Hankinson 1-10 0-0 2;

Ashley Moore 0-0 1-4 1. Totals: 15-56 15-25 47. 3-point field goals: 2,

(Buffington, Keagle).