

Lady Cats bring back experience as they gear up for new season



All-Frontier League player Madilyn Melton will look to lead the Lady Cats this season after she had a team-high 14 points a game a year ago. Louisburg opens its season Friday in Tonganoxie.

Coming off a 10-win season and a win shy of the sub-state championship game, the Louisburg girls basketball team is hoping to take a step forward in 2019-20 and there will be several returning faces to help make that happen.

The Lady Cats return six players, who either started, or played significant minutes from a season ago and it begins with junior Madilyn Melton. The Louisburg forward was an all-league honorable mention selection last season after she led Louisburg in scoring with 14 points a game to go along with six rebounds.

"Madilyn had a strong season last year and has put herself in a position to have a great season this year," Louisburg coach Shawn Lowry said. "As good a player

that Madilyn has the potential to be, she is all about her team and teammates, which was evidenced by being voted one of the team captains."

Melton will be joined in the starting lineup by senior Haley Cain, who has given the Lady Cats several big minutes in the post the last two years. Cain has played four years on the varsity level and her playing time has increased each season.

Junior Alyse Moore is another returning starter for Louisburg and will provide some big minutes on the wing and defensively. Another junior, Brooklyn Diederich, saw her minutes grow as the season went on a year ago as she gave the Lady Cats an outside scoring threat and a defensive presence.

To start the year, the Lady Cats will be looking to a pair of freshmen to earn that fifth spot as both Adyson Ross and Brianne Kuhlman are competing to crack the starting lineup.

Senior Sydni Keagle, along with juniors Megan Foote, Madi Quinn, and sophomores Delaney Wright and Jordan Mynsted will all see playing time off the bench.

"With these first couple weeks of practice, I'm encouraged that our defense can be one of our strengths this season along with the fact that we return several players with game experience from last year," Lowry said. "We also have some really good competition amongst players which provides us depth at most positions and the ability to have different lineups."



Senior Haley Cain is one of two returning seniors to the Louisville squad. Cain is in her fourth season as a member of the varsity team.

One familiar face that is missing is Carson Buffington. The Louisville graduate played four years on the varsity level, was considered one the best rebounders in the Frontier League and did a little bit of everything for the Lady Cats.

So, when the first day of practice arrived, it was obviously a little different than what was considered normal.

“Carson’s leadership and toughness was so important for our team these

last four years
and it was definitely an adjustment for me not having her
every day in practice,”
Lowry said. “With that said, we have several players that are
now sophomores,
juniors and seniors that are really developing into strong
leaders and have
carried on that work ethic and toughness.”

Louisburg
will get to showcase its new squad Friday when it travels to
Tonganoxie for its
season opener and Lowry knows every game in and out of the
Frontier League is
going to be a challenge.

“The
Frontier League will again have some of the very best teams in
the state.”
Lowry said. “In addition to a very strong league, we will have
the opportunity
to play some very good teams in our non-conference and
tournament schedule.
With this said, I trust in our players to compete with great
effort, toughness
and pride every time we take the floor.”

Since the first day of practice
started in mid-November, and even before that with preseason
conditioning, the
Lady Cats have been working to make themselves better and
Lowry believes that
is a great start to what he hopes is a successful season.

“Our expectations are first a foremost
to be great representatives of the Lady Cats Basketball
program, Louisburg High
School and the Louisburg community,” Lowry said. “We expect to

compete with
character, respect and sportsmanship and because of the
commitment and hard
work the girls have given we expect to compete with great
energy, toughness and
success.

“The
girls are working very hard in preparing for the upcoming
season. Our returning
players and team captains have been great at fostering an
environment that is
very competitive and positive with their work and attitudes.”