

Piper uses quick start to hand Lady Cats their first loss



Louisburg junior Alyse Moore goes up for a basket Friday during the Lady Cats' final game of 2019 against Piper at Louisburg High School.

It would have been easy for the Louisburg girls basketball team to realize Friday was just not its night.

The Lady Cats found themselves down 10 points in the first three minutes of the game against Piper, the No. 2 team in Class 4A and defending state runner-up. Trying to get back in the game against one of the best teams in the state was going to be a tough task.

Louisburg was up for the challenge as the Lady Cats rallied to keep the game close, before Piper used a big fourth quarter to hand Louisburg its first loss of the season, 47-29, at Louisburg High School.

Piper opened the game on a 10-0 run to put the Lady Cats on their heels, but they were able to respond and

trailed just 16-10 at the end of the first quarter. From there, Louisburg was able to stay within striking distance, but would get no closer.

“Two things are going to happen in that situation – you are either going to stand up for yourself or you are just going to quit and lay down,” Louisburg coach Shawn Lowry said. “The character of our team is they are going to fight. We really battled the entire game, but it is just some things that we are doing to ourselves. If we can clean those things up, I like what this team can be.”

The Lady Cats struggled on the offensive end of the floor as they shot 27 percent from the field, but they hurt themselves on the free-throw line as they went 10-for-24.

It was tough to get good looks at the basket most of the night against a tough Piper defense that applied full-court pressure for part of the contest.



Senior Haley Cain dribbles into the lane Friday during the Lady Cats' contest with Piper.

"We are not that far away," Lowry said. "The things we have been talking to the girls about time after time is finishing plays at the rim, free-throw shooting and we really hurt ourselves with those two things. Piper is obviously an extremely talented team, with extremely talented players.

"The message to our girls was when we got down big early, was to settle down and to compete and they did that. We have a lot of progress left to do, both individually and as a team, but I sure like our kids and I like what the rest of the season can look like for us."

Junior Megan Foote paced the Lady Cats with a team-high 12 points, while junior Madilyn Melton finished with seven points and five rebounds. Junior Alyse Moore pulled down a team-high 11 rebounds and senior Haley Cain also had five boards.

Piper took an 11-point halftime lead and the Pirates were able to build on it into the fourth quarter as they used a 9-2 run to pull away from the Lady Cats.

Louisburg, which is 3-1 going into the holiday break, saw a lot of positives to begin its season. The Lady Cats also realize they will be competing in several difficult games in the Frontier League when they resume play in early January.

"We wanted to be 4-0, but we like where we are at," Lowry said. "We would have liked to have that other game before break with the Frontenac game being postponed, but we are going to take some days off here, regroup and get back after it. This group has high expectations for themselves and you have to love that.

"This league is fantastic and what a great league to compete in. When we come back from break we will face a very good Eudora team, Baldwin is tough, Paola is strong again this year, Spring Hill is good and I think the league is going to be a race this year. I don't think that anyone is going to run away with it. Piper is out to a good lead, but I think it will be competitive till the end."

The Lady Cats will continue their season on Jan. 7 when they travel to Turner. Louisburg will

then go to Eudora
on Jan. 10 to start up league play.

LOU	10	7	9	3 -
29				

PIP	16	12	10	9 -
47				

LOUISBURG (3-1): Megan Foote 5-7
0-0 12; Madilyn Melton 1-6 5-12 7; Haley Cain 1-7 1-2 4; Alyse
Moore 0-3 3-7 3;
Delaney Wright 1-1 0-0 2; Brianne Kuhlman 0-0 1-2 1. Totals:
8-30 10-24 29.
3-point field goals: 3, (Foote 2, Cain 1)