

Wildcats pick up first win of season in home opener



Louisburg junior Ben Guetterman dribbles around an Anderson County defender Friday during the Wildcats' home opener.

After a pair of difficult losses to start the season, the Louisburg boys basketball team wanted to try and make amends.

There was no better place to do that than in the Wildcats' home gym.

Louisburg scored 17 of the game's first 21 points and the Wildcat defense took care of the rest as they secured a 53-44 win Friday over Anderson County. It was the Wildcats' first win of the season and they were happy to get it in their home opener.

"It was a great start for us," Louisburg coach Ty Pfannenstiel said. "We let them back in it a little bit and they were able to steal some of that energy, but our defense led to our offense. There are going to be nights where you have good offensive nights, and there are some where you are going to struggle, but your defense always has to be a constant. As a team, I think we have bought into that. We have always had that offensive mindset, but now I think we proved we can play that tough on-ball defense. We have a long ways to go, but we definitely made some improvement."

The Wildcats (1-2) used that full-court pressure into some easy baskets early in the contest. Junior guard Weston Guetterman opened the game with a steal and score, senior Michael Waldron hit a pair of 3-pointers and Guetterman hit 3-pointer near the end of the first quarter to give Louisburg a 15-4 lead after one quarter.

Junior Connor Koesser hit a basket to make it 17-4 early in the second quarter before Anderson County cut into the lead. The Bulldogs went on a 12-0 run to cut the Louisburg lead to one point.

The game started to get physical as both teams played aggressive. Late in the first half, both teams went for loose ball on the floor and things got a little heated.

That play seemed to spark the Wildcats as they went on an 8-0 run to end the second quarter. Sophomore Julian Margrave was fouled on a 3-point attempt and made all three free throws and junior Ben Guetterman followed that up with a 3-pointer of his own.



Senior Michael Waldron lays the ball up for an easy basket late in Friday's game against Anderson County.

Then, just seconds before the end of the quarter, Waldron dove on the floor for a steal and passed the ball up to Weston Guetterman, who found Ben Guetterman under the basket. Ben made the shot and was fouled to put Louisburg up 25-17 at halftime.

Defense was the difference for the Wildcats as they forced 15 turnovers and scored 23 points off those miscues. They also had nine steals in the game.

"We put a big emphasis in practice the last couple of day of

playing aggressive defense and taking the team out of what they want to do," Pfannenstiel said. "We came out with full-court pressure and I think that brought us a lot of energy. It was a good environment and Anderson County was an aggressive team too. I am just proud of how hard we fought. It was a physical game, and the officials were letting some things go on both ends, but I really thought we grew as a team after this win."

Louisburg ballooned its lead to 13 points midway through the third quarter, but Anderson County made another run as it trimmed the Wildcats' lead to 40-35 early in the fourth. The Bulldogs, however, could get no closer as the Wildcats held off the Bulldogs thanks to seven points in the quarter from Margrave.

Margrave led the Wildcats in scoring with 18 points on the night. Weston Guetterman also had a big night from the point guard spot as he finished with 11 points, a team-high seven rebounds, six assists and three steals.

Michael Waldron also had 11 points in the win, including three 3-pointers. Ben Guetterman had nine points and six rebounds.

The Wildcats will try and make it two in a row at home Friday when they host Piper. Tipoff is set for approximately 7:30 p.m., and Louisburg is ready to take another step forward.

"Each game we have been in, we have been right there," Pfannenstiel said. "Instead of calling them losses, we have tried to call them learning opportunities. It is a loss,

but we have learned from those. After the Tongie game, we worked on being more patient offensively, and I think that led to better offense against Burlington. But our defense wasn't that good at Burlington and we didn't take care of the ball.

This game, we really stressed defense, and if we could put both together, I think we have a shot every night."

LOU	15	10	15	13	-
53					
AC	4	13	13	14	
- 44					

LOUISBURG (1-2): Julian Margrave 6-11 6-6 18; Weston Guetterman 4-10 2-3 11; Michael Waldron 4-8 0-0 11; Ben Guetterman 3-8 1-3 9; Garrett Rolofson 1-4 0-0 2; Connor Koesser 1-1 0-0 2.
Totals: 19-48 9-12 53. 3-point field goals: 6, (Waldron 3, B. Guetterman 2, W. Guetterman 1)