

Lady Cats lean on defense for first win over Baldwin since 2014



Megan Foote (left) and Brooklyn Diederich celebrate Foote's made basket and the foul Tuesday during the Lady Cats' home game with Baldwin.

When you pair your worst offensive performance with the best team you have played to date, it usually doesn't work out well.

The Louisburg girls basketball team were facing both of those Tuesday when it hosted Baldwin. The Lady Cats struggled to score against one the Frontier League's best teams.

So, the Lady Cats leaned on their defense and it paid off in a big way. After scoring just 11 points in the first half, Louisburg came to life with 31 in the second half and held on for a 42-39 victory over the Bulldogs.

It was the first time since 2014 that the Lady Cats had defeated Baldwin and they stayed perfect on the season in the process.

"I could tell they really wanted this game, maybe more than the others, just because they were super hungry and they had their eyes set on the prize," Louisburg coach Adrienne Lane said. "I was so proud of them of how we came back after only scoring 11 points in the first half and not quitting.

Baldwin's defense was very good and didn't allow us to do much, but that third quarter was huge and our defense was a big reason why."

Down 21-11 at halftime, the Lady Cats ramped up their defense and held the Bulldogs to just six points in the third quarter and that allowed them to creep back in the game.

In all, Louisburg forced 26 Baldwin turnovers, which turned into 16 points and the Lady Cats put it all together in the fourth quarter. The Lady Cats scored 19 points in the final quarter to pull in front.

"This was a huge win for us," Lane said. "The girls were so excited after the game was over and they just played super hard. They deserved it and the defense won us the game. Offense was a little tricky at times, and we will get better at that, but our defense and rebounding were key for us. I think a win like this sets the tone for the rest of the season."



Senior Madilyn Melton looks to put a shot up over a Baldwin defender. Melton finished with a team-high 17 points.

Senior Madilyn Melton sparked the Lady Cats' rally as she scored 10 of her team-high 17 points in the fourth quarter and was 6-for-6 from the free-throw line. Melton also had 11 rebounds to record the double-double and had five blocked shots.

The Lady Cats were bothered at times by the length of Baldwin's post players, but Melton made an adjustment and attacked.

"Madilyn made a lot of big baskets for us and it was probably her best game of the season so far," Lane said. "She battled against their post the whole game and she fought. To start she was kind of fading away from her, and we just told her to go into her and shoot it. She got some big points in the fourth quarter that way and she never quit."

To start the fourth, Louisburg found itself down four, but Melton helped bring them Wildcats back with six straight points. Sophomore guard Brianne Kuhlman also hit a jumper in the lane to give the Lady Cats a 32-31 lead.

Senior Brooklyn Diederich hit her biggest of the shot of the night on a 3-pointer with three minutes left in the game to put Louisburg up four. Melton and Kuhlman combined for the final seven points.

Baldwin had one final chance to tie the game as they had the ball with 10 seconds left, but the Bulldogs were unable to get shot off.

"The goal of that was to not foul the 3-point shooter and rebound.," Lane said. "They didn't even get a shot off and the girls really played that perfectly."

Diederich was second on the team in scoring with eight points, but she also did it on the defensive end with four deflections, four steals and four blocks.

Senior Alyse Moore was second on the team with six rebounds, while senior Megan Foote led the offense with five assists and also had three steals. She also converted two 3-point plays.

Louisburg will try and stay perfect as they host Coffeyville-Field Kindley tonight in a replacement game for Piper, who was forced to quarantine. Game time is set for 7:30 p.m.

LOU 9 2 12 19 – 42

BAL 9 12 6 12 – 39

LOUISBURG (4-0): Madilyn Melton 5-16 6-6 17; Brooklyn Diederich 3-9 0-0 8; Brianne Kuhlman 3-6 1-2 7; Megan Foote 2-5 2-4 6; Alyse Moore 1-7 1-6 3; Jordan Mynsted 0-7 1-3 1. Totals: 14-56 11-21 42. 3-point field goals: 3, (Diederich 2, Melton)