

Moore's free throw lifts Louisburg to the Class 4A state semifinals



The Louisburg girls basketball team celebrates following the Lady Cats' dramatic 49-48 win over Labette County Tuesday in the Class 4A state quarterfinals.

ALTAMONT – Alyse Moore went to the free-throw line with the weight of the world on her shoulders.

Louisburg was tied with Labette County at 48-all with eight seconds remaining in the Class 4A state quarterfinal game Tuesday. Moore had a chance to send the Lady Cats to the state semifinals for the first time in school history.

“I felt confident going to the line, but I knew that I had to do it for my team,” Moore said. “I had to do it for the community of Louisburg.”

Moore would make 1 of 2 free throws to put the Lady Cats in front and Labette County couldn't get its last shot to fall as Louisburg advanced with a 49-48 victory on the road in Altamont.

The win automatically gave the Lady Cats their best finish in school history and they aren't done yet as they will play in the state semifinals today in Salina against McPherson.

“I am just so happy right now that it is hard to put into

words,” Moore said. “I am so, so proud of my team and how hard we have worked. The things that people don’t see, I think are showing off right now and I am so proud of all my teammates.”

The atmosphere at Labette County High School mirrored one of a state championship contest.

In a loud gymnasium that made it difficult to think, much less talk, added another layer of difficulty in the Lady Cats’ victory – one they had to rally from five points down in the fourth quarter.



(From left) Jordan Mynsted, assistant coach Leanna Willer, Megan Foote and head coach Adrienne Lane celebrate as the buzzer sounded on the Lady Cats’ historic win.

“That gym was the loudest gym I have ever coached in,” Louisburg coach Adrienne Lane said. “The environment was so awesome and I felt like I was in my element.

“I cannot even begin to say how proud I am of this team. They

are fighters and they do not quit, no matter the situation. I never once thought we were going to lose, because I knew the team would battle back. I felt like we finally wore Labette County out with three minutes left in the game.”

It was then that the rally started.

Melton scored with under four minutes remaining to cut the Labette County lead at 42-39, then on the Lady Cats’ next possession, Megan Foote tied it with a 3-pointer – her fourth of the night.

Melton answered the bell again as she scored on a reverse layup to put Louisburg up 44-42 with under two minutes remaining.

“During a game like that, you just got to do what you got to do,” Melton said. “They put so much pressure on us under the goal that we had to just go for it, and had to get creative. In the moment, I did not even think about it (reverse layup). It was the open path to score.

“This game was very tough, very challenging mentally and physically. We knew that the battle was not over until the final buzzer, so we just kept fighting. The team’s determination and heart shown in that game. We put it out there for all to see.”



Madilyn Melton goes in for a reverse layup late in Tuesday's game against Labette County.

A Labette free throw cut the Louisburg lead to one, but with a minute left, junior Delaney Wright drove baseline and put up a runner that went in put Louisburg back up three.

"To be honest, I didn't think it was going to go in," Wright said. "Then when I saw it go in, I kinda couldn't believe it. It was a great feeling. It is hard to put into words right now what this win means to me."

Labette County knotted it up at 48 as Karsyn Stewart hit a 3-pointer in transition with 20 seconds left.

Louisburg put up a shot to try and win it with 10 seconds left, but it rimmed off and Moore was there to try and grab the rebound and was fouled – which set up her heroics.

Moore, who is shooting just 35 percent from the line on the season, went up to the charity stripe with the confidence of a 90 percent shooter. She wasn't about to let her team down.

"I wasn't surprised that she made the free throw," Lane said. "I know Alyse has struggled all year from the free-throw line, but I had faith in her. Alyse is the type of player that makes things happen and she was ready for that moment."



Louisburg senior Alyse Moore gets fouled while putting up a shot near the basket.

As many plays as the Lady Cats made down the stretch offensively, it was their defense the entire game that kept them in it.

Despite shooting just 30 percent from the field and 52 percent from the free-throw line, the Lady Cats were strong defensively as they were constantly on the floor and diving

for loose balls.

In all, Louisburg forced 20 Labette County turnovers, which led to 16 Lady Cat points and was one of the biggest differences in the game.

“Labette was really tough,” Foote said. “They’re physical and all-around good team. The atmosphere they created was also extremely difficult to play in. I thought we did an amazing job not letting them get to us and get us riled up. We never freaked out and we especially never gave up.

“That game just shows how important perseverance and patience is. We never once thought we were going to lose that game. Hustle and grit truly describes our team.”

It was Foote who led the Lady Cats in scoring with 15 points and was one of three to score in double figures.

Junior Jordan Mynsted finished with 11 points and Melton had 10, to go along with eight rebounds.

Moore, who finished with two points, also tied a team-high with eight rebounds and had a team-best seven deflections.

Brooklyn Diederich, Delaney Wright and Foote provided strong defense from the guard spots and made things difficult on the Labette shooters.



Louisburg senior Megan Foote dives on the floor for a loose ball.

"I am overjoyed knowing I'm a part of this historic team," Foote said. "We will forever go down in history. I am not satisfied though. I think we can make even more history than we already have. I'm planning on us being the first ever basketball team to win state. My goals are set high and I know we can achieve them. We're not done yet."

The challenges only get tougher as the Lady Cats face a McPherson team that is a regular to the state tournament and ended the season as the No. 2 team in Class 4A.

The semifinal, which tips at 7 p.m. tonight at the Tony's Pizza Events Center in Salina, could give the Lady Cats their toughest test of the season.

Still, they are looking forward to the challenge of playing on

the highest stage.

"To play in Salina is absolutely an amazing feeling," Melton said. "For me, it is a goal we set, fought for, believed in and achieved it. To experience this with my team and especially with Megan, Alyse, and Brooklyn, who have fought for this these last 4 years beside me, is an emotion I cannot put into words. All I can say is we did it girls. We made it. We deserve to play on that court and no matter what happens, I wouldn't want to be there with anyone else."

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LC 14 12 8 14 – 48

LOUISBURG (19-4): Megan Foote 4-14 3-4 15; Jordan Mynsted 5-7 1-2 11; Madilyn Melton 3-9 4-5 10; Delaney Wright 2-5 1-3 5; Brooklyn Diederich 1-6 0-0 3; Adyson Ross 1-2 0-0 2; Alyse Moore 0-7 2-7 2; Brianne Kuhlman 0-2 1-2 1. Totals: 16-52 12-23 49. 3-point field goals: 5, (Foote 4, Diederich)