

Wildcats hang on to beat Paola on Senior Night



Louisburg senior Andy Hupp dives on the floor for a loose ball with Paola's Trey Moala on Friday during the team's Senior Night game in Louisburg.

With the game hanging in the balance on Senior Night, who else but a senior to help pull his team through.

Louisburg hosted rival Paola on Friday in hopes of, not only ending its regular season with a victory, but winning for its five seniors.

One of those seniors, Weston Guetterman, came through when his team needed him most.

With under two minutes left in the contest, and the Wildcats only up two points, Guetterman knocked down 5 of 6 free throws help seal a 58-54 victory.

It was the perfect ending to a night that honored seniors Konnor Vohs, Weston Guetterman, Andy Hupp, Ben Guetterman and Dawson Barnes prior to the contest.

"We knew it was going to be a tough," Louisburg coach Ty Pfannenstiel said. "We played really well the last time we played them and Paola didn't have a great night. We knew we were going to get a good contest and they are a good team. They have a lot of talent, length and can really jump. Their athleticism is tough, but for our kids to battle was good for

us and we had to make some plays down the stretch. A lot of those were at the free-throw line and Weston stepped up and knocked down some shots.”

It was back and forth for much of the contest as the two teams were tied at the end of the first quarter.

Paola actually held a one-point lead late in the first half, but Weston Guetterman got the lead back on a 3-pointer, and Ben Guetterman scored a quick two points to put the Wildcats up 26-22 at halftime.



Louisburg senior Ben Guetterman pulls up for a jumper Friday against Paola.

Louisburg (14-6) struggled to get going offensively in the third quarter and the Panthers used the opportunity to go on a 8-2 run and take a 39-37 advantage into the fourth quarter.

Then it was junior Julian Margrave's turn to get the Wildcats going. Margrave, who scored a game-high 24 points and had four 3-pointers, hit two back-to-back early in the fourth quarter.

Junior Michael Seuferling followed up with a basket of his own to put the Wildcats up 45-41. Louisburg knocked down 9 of 10 from the free-throw line in the fourth quarter to keep the Panthers at arm's length the rest of the way.

"Julian is a good shooter and scorer," Pfannenstiel said. "He played well for us and we need something offensively to get us going. This is a night that we weren't great on offense or defense, necessarily. We weren't bad by any means, but we have to be better. Those shots definitely jump started us for sure.

"Paola played pretty well defensively. They have length inside and they can contest shots, so it was a well-executed game plan by them and we were fortunate to get the win. But we made the plays when we needed to."



Louisburg senior Dawson Barnes goes up for two points in Friday's win over Paola.

Weston Guetterman also scored in double figures with 15 points to go along with seven assists, four rebounds and three steals. Seuferling just missed double figures with nine points.

Barnes did a lot of the dirty work for the Wildcats as he pulled down a team-high six rebounds and also had three assists and two blocks. Senior Ben Guetterman also played well defensively with a team-high four steals.

It was a bittersweet night for many of the Wildcats. They know

the playoffs are still on the horizon, but they do know their time is coming to a close.

“This is a great group of kids,” Pfannenstiel said. “They are the first group that I have had for all four years. At the end of practice the other day in the auxiliary gym, we were reminiscing a little bit and it doesn’t seem like four years ago that as freshmen Ben went for 32 against Paola and Weston would hit a half-court buzzer beater to win the game.

“Time flies, and it is kind of cliché, but this group works so hard. When you work hard good things happen and they have had a really good season and we hope to be playing basketball for quite a bit longer.”



(From Left): Louisburg seniors Sydney Thornton (manager), Dawson Barnes, Ben Guetterman, Konnor Vohs, Weston Guetterman, Andy Hupp and manager Aiyana Penca were honored prior to their game Friday for Senior Night.

Louisburg earned the No. 1 seed in substate and will once

again play for Paola with their season on the line. The Wildcats, who are also the No. 2 ranked team in Class 4A, will host the Panthers (8-11) at 7 p.m. tonight in the Class 4A sub-state semifinals.

“That is always tough playing a team for a third time, much less playing them twice in less than five days,” Pfannenstiel said. “We will see what happens and our kids will be ready to play. We just have to get ourselves prepared and get ready to play. It is do our die from here on out, but we are looking forward to it.”

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LOUISBURG (14-6): Julian Margrave 8-12 4-4 24; Weston Guetterman 3-12 7-8 15; Michael Seuferling 4-7 1-2 9; Ben Guetterman 2-11 0-0 4; Konnor Vohs 1-2 0-0 2; Dawson Barnes 1-1 0-0 2; Andy Hupp 1-1 0-0 2. Totals: 20-46 12-14 58. 3-point field goals: 6, (Margrave 4, W. Guetterman 2)