

Wildcats onto the state championship with close win over Augusta



The Louisburg basketball team celebrates following its 58-55 Class 4A state semifinal victory over Augusta on Thursday at the Tony's Pizza Events Center in Salina. The Wildcats will play in their first ever state championship on Saturday.

SALINA – When they were done in the locker room following their 58-55 state semifinal win over Augusta, the Louisburg boys raced to the concourse of the Tony's Pizza Events Center.

It was there where they met a very large fan club that let out a roar that could be heard throughout the arena.

The victory put the Wildcats in the Class 4A state championship for the first time in school history and there was plenty to celebrate Thursday night in Salina.

“It hasn't sunk in yet,” Louisburg senior Weston Guetterman said of playing in the title game. “You walk out into the arena and it is just huge. It hits when you get out there. Right now we are just playing basketball and it will probably hit us afterward. Right now, we are just living in the moment.”

Guetterman and the Wildcats lived well against the Orioles as the senior point guard came up huge for the Wildcats when they needed him most.

He opened the game with nine points in the first quarter to help give Louisburg a seven-point lead at the end of the quarter. Then, when the Wildcats trailed in the fourth and Guetterman was saddled with four fouls, he rose to the occasion again.



Weston Guetterman was all smiles after the buzzer sounded in Thursday's state semifinal win over Augusta.

He hit a 3-pointer midway through the fourth quarter to give Louisburg a 51-48 lead and then hit a pair of free throws to put the Wildcats up four with about a minute left.

Guetterman finished with a game-high 21 points and also had a team-high six steals and four assists as he played well on both ends of the floor.

"He played amazing," junior Julian Margrave said. "Weston showed up when it was needed and hit some incredible shots

that I knew he could hit. He just showed up and we really needed him.”

Margrave also came up big for the Wildcats as he scored 23 points and had eight rebounds. The Louisburg junior led the Wildcats back when they were down 46-44 with under four minutes in the game.

He scored five straight points, including converting an old-fashioned 3-point play after an assist from Konnor Vohs after an Augusta turnover.

“We really had to dig in,” Margrave said. “It was a really good change by coaches Pfannenstiel, Harding and Skakal to tell us to focus up. It was now or never in that moment and we didn’t want our season to end right there. We wanted to play for the championship.”



Louisburg junior Julian Margrave defends Augusta's Ely Wilcox on Thursday in Salina.

Augusta didn't go away late as the Orioles tried to chip away at the Wildcat lead with several late baskets. Louisburg, however, answered each time at the free-throw line.

Weston Guetterman hit two, Ben Guetterman hit one to keep it at three, and then Vohs hit the biggest ones of the game.

With nine seconds left, the Louisburg senior sank two free throws to all but seal the win for the Wildcats and give them their best finish in school history – no matter what happens Saturday.

"They were huge," Louisburg coach Ty Pfannenstiel said. "Konnor is a calm, cool kid. I had great confidence in him. He doesn't get too high, he doesn't get too low and he is a perfect guy to step up there and knock those down. His defense and energy was good as well and was big all night for us."



Louisburg senior Konnor Vohs drives the lane during Thursday's state semifinal game. Vohs hit two free throws late to seal the win for Louisburg.

The Wildcats (18-6) changed the game on the defensive end as they forced 11 Augusta turnovers and turned those into 16 points. Louisburg committed just four turnovers and took care of the ball on offense.

Louisburg also focused on slowing down Augusta's Ely Wilcox, who hurt the Wildcats in January in the first matchup on the inside. They held Wilcox to just five points as he also sat out part of the first half in foul trouble.

"It was very similar to the last game we played them at Baldwin," Pfannenstiel said. "They came back and stretched out a lead on us, and luckily it wasn't as bad as that night. For our kids to battle like they did, it took some stops defensively, and we really had to stop Wilcox and we did a great job on him. It was a great team effort."

Louisburg will have to take their defense to another level Saturday as it faces the No. 1 team in Class 4A, Bishop Miege. The two teams will square off at 2 p.m. tomorrow for the state championship.

The Stags have won three state titles in the last five years and were among the final four teams left at the state tournament last season before it was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We will take a look at Miege," Pfannenstiel said. "I haven't thought or prepared for them because all my focus was on Augusta. We will do what we can to get a good game plan for Saturday. Our kids are looking forward to it."

LOU 18 13 10 17 – 58

AUG 11 16 14 14 – 55

LOUISBURG (18-6): Julian Margrave 9-15 3-4 23; Weston Guetterman 8-14 2-2 21; Michael Seufferling 2-5 2-3 6; Konnor Vohs 1-4 2-2 4; Ben Guetterman 1-5 1-4 4. Totals: 21-43 10-15 58. 3-point field goals: 6, (W. Guetterman 3, Margrave 2, B. Guetterman)