

Buzzer-beater sinks Louisburg in loss to rival Paola



Louisburg senior Michael Seuferling is trying to wrestle the ball away from two Paola players Tuesday at Louisburg High School.

The Louisburg boys basketball put together the defensive performance it was looking for Tuesday against No. 5 ranked Paola.

The game was tied with a minute left and Paola had the opportunity to escape Louisburg with a victory. Everyone's eyes focused on Trey Moala, one of the top players in the Frontier League.

Moala had the ball in his hands with five seconds and drove the lane. However, instead of shooting it, he found an open teammate in Logan Newkirk and Newkirk drained the 3-pointer from the corner to give Paola a 42-39 win at the buzzer.

In a game where the Wildcats did most everything right to stay with the state-ranked Panthers, they came up just short.

"We knew Moala was going to try to get downhill," Louisburg coach Ty Pfannenstiel said. "Our goal all night was to keep him from getting into the lane and make them hit shots from the perimeter. We did a good job of cutting him off, but he was able to find the open man and hats off to that kid (Newkirk) for hitting the big shot.

“I thought it was a great game. Paola is tough. They have great size and athleticism to go along with the best player in our league, so for us to play as well as we did defensively, I was really proud.”

Senior Michael Seuferling led the defensive charge for the Wildcats as his assignment was to follow Moala the entire night. Seuferling, who is also the team’s leading scorer on the season, held Moala to just two field goals the entire game and made things difficult for the Paola forward.



Louisburg senior Maverick Rockers drives the lane Tuesday and gets fouled in the Wildcats’ home game with Paola.

“Sci Fi is one of the best on ball defenders in our league,” Pfannenstiel said. “He was great in that role last year. We knew we could always put him on the other team’s best player and he’d make things tough on him. Even with Michael being

asked to score more for us this year, he still draws the other team's best player.

"With Moala's size (6-6) and Mike at 5-10, that's a lot to ask of him, but he did a great job. To hold Trey to 2 field goals was an incredible job by him and our guys there in the paint."

Louisburg got out to a good start and played from in front to begin the second quarter. The Wildcats took an 11-7 lead, but the Panthers flipped the game in the second as they outscored Louisburg 15-4 to take a seven-point halftime lead.

After an even third quarter, the Wildcats didn't back down as they chipped away at the Panther lead.

Back-to-back three point plays from Maverick Rockers and Seuferling cut the Paola lead to one, then a Seuferling jumper in the lane put Louisburg in front.

Junior Mack Newell then converted three shots in the paint to give the Wildcats a 3-point lead late in the game.



Louisburg junior Mack Newell skies for a rebound Tuesday against Paola.

Ayden Morris hit a pair of free throws for Paola to cut the lead to one. Louisburg then missed on a 3-pointer with under two minutes remaining.

The Wildcats wouldn't see the ball again as Paola hit a free-throw to tie it, then Louisburg tipped a missed free throw out of bounds. The Panthers would hold the ball the rest of the way and eventually get the game-winning shot.

"When we had the lead and the ball with a minute left, I probably should have called a timeout to regroup our guys, but I have a lot of trust in our guys," Pfannenstiel said. "The smart thing to do would have been to talk things over. I take full blame for that. We had an empty possession, which lead to Paola getting the ball back."

Newell led the Wildcats on the inside as he scored a career-high 17 points and grabbed six rebounds, while Seuferling finished with nine. Junior Colyer Wingfield had a team-high seven rebounds and also had three assists.

Although the loss was a difficult one, especially against a rival, Pfannenstiel saw a lot of great play from this team.

“Overall, I know the last minute didn’t turn out how we wanted it, but our kids did a great job of executing our game plan,” Pfannenstiel said. “We ran some good sets on offense and did exactly what we were wanting to do on defense. We just didn’t quite make enough plays there at the end.

“We will build off of this. Paola is a team that will likely be a 1 seed in sub-state. We’ve really played tough against the top teams in our league in Paola and Eudora. If we can be a little more consistent offensively, I think we have a chance to be a dangerous team. I was really proud of our boys’ effort.”

LOU 11 4 10 14 – 39

PAO 7 15 10 10 – 42

LOUISBURG (3-10): Mack Newell 8-14 1-2 17; Michael Seuferling 3-8 3-3 9; Maverick Rockers 3-9 1-1 7; Colyer Wingfield 1-3 2-2 4; Isaac Guetterman 1-1 0-0 2. Totals: 16-31 7-8 39. 3-point field goals: none