

Defense, rebounding key Wildcats in season opening victory



Louisburg senior Cade Gassman drives to the basket for two points Friday at Tonganoxie High School. The Wildcats defeated Tonganoxie, 46-32, in their season opener.

TONGANOXIE – It wasn't the best of shooting nights for the Louisburg boys basketball team, but it didn't need to be. It did everything else well.

The Wildcats went on the road Friday and out rebounded Tonganoxie and also forced more than 20 turnovers in their 46-32 victory at Tonganoxie High School.

For a Louisburg team that was returning just one starter from a season ago, Wildcat coach Ty Pfannenstiel made sure his team used those hustle plays to come out on top.

"That was a great way to open the season," Pfannenstiel said. "Our guys came out confident and played with great energy all night. Any time you can win on the road is huge, and to do it the way we did was a good first step for us this season. There were a lot of guys seeing the varsity floor for the first time, so it was great to see them play with confidence and for them to execute like they did."

Louisburg opened the game with a 1-3-1 press defense, which set the tone for the rest of the night. The Wildcats forced 24

turnovers and never let the Chieftains get comfortable.

The Wildcats turned those turnovers into 21 points, which turned out to be a big difference in the game. Louisburg also held Tonganoxie to just 11 first half points.



Louisburg senior Isaiah Whitley gets into the passing lane to knock the ball away Friday against Tonganoxie.

“Our defense was great,” Pfannenstiel said. “We always tell the kids that we are going to have some games where we are good offensively and nights that we struggle to shoot the ball, but our defense always has to be a constant. If we are good on defense, we will always give ourselves a shot to win.”

“We forced 24 turnovers, so those are empty possessions for their offense. Combine the turnover and offensive rebound disparity in that game and that makes a huge difference. Now we just have to build off of this.”

Louisburg jumped out to a 19-3 lead after the first quarter thanks to its defense, but also because of its relentlessness on the glass.

The Wildcats pulled down 21 offensive rebounds and got several looks the basket despite shooting just 31 percent for the night.



Louisburg senior Colyer Wingfield gets to the basket for two points Friday at Tonganoxie.

Senior Mason Dobbins pulled down seven offensive boards and had nine total rebounds to lead Louisburg. Another senior, Isaiah Whitley, had four offensive boards.

“To have 21 offensive rebounds is unheard of,” Pfannenstiel said. “I guess it means we missed plenty of shots, but it also means we gave ourselves extra opportunities. Tongie sat in a zone most of the night and we told our guys to crash the glass.

“Zone teams can struggle to rebound, so making an effort to go rebound and get loose balls was the difference. Mason and Isaiah were great on the offensive glass. They gave them problems for sure.”

Senior Colyer Wingfield was consistent presence for the

Wildcats all night as he led the team with 20 points to go along with seven rebounds, three assists and two steals.

“Colyer had a good night,” Pfannenstiel said. “We need him to get us into our offense and create for us, and he did just that. He’s really worked on his shot this offseason and he looks good out there.”



Senior Trey Myers connects on a 3-pointer Friday. Myers finished in double figures with 11 points.

Trey Myers, another Louisburg senior, provided several big shots from the outside as he knocked down three 3-pointers and finished in double figures with 11 points. He also finished with four steals.

Junior Nathan Parker also connected on a pair of 3-pointers, while senior Cade Gassman led the team with five steals. Brock Vohs and Conlee Hovey also scored their first varsity points.

Louisburg will try and make it back-to-back wins Tuesday when it hosts Burlington for its home opener. Tipoff is set for 7:30 p.m.

LOU 19 10 8 9 – 46

TONG 3 8 9 12 – 32

LOUISBURG (1-0): Colyer Wingfield 8-19 3-4 20; Trey Myers 3-10 2-2 11; Nathan Parker 2-7 0-0 6; Cade Gassman 2-3 0-0 4; Brock Vohs 1-3 2-3 4; Conlee Hovey 0-1 1-2 1. Totals: 16-52 8-13 46. 3-point field goals: 6, (Myers 3, Parker 2, Wingfield)