Wildcat boys begin with pair of wins, including league victory at Tonganoxie



Louisburg sophomore Herschel Strumberger has recorded back-to-back double-doubles to begin the season and has helped the Wildcats to a 2-0 record.

TONGANOXIE – Louisburg boys basketball put together its best half of the young season Friday night, storming back from a halftime deficit to edge Tonganoxie, 63–60, in a Frontier League road battle.

The Wildcats (2-0) trailed 27–24 at the break but erupted for 39 second-half points, leaning on a trio of double-double performances and some timely shooting to fend off a strong

effort from the Chieftains.

Herschel Strumberger continued his dominant start to the season with a massive 21-point, 16-rebound night, controlling the paint on both ends. Lance Callahan gave Louisburg a huge outside spark, knocking down three 3-pointers as part of a 16-point performance, while Owen Marsh added 12 points and 10 rebounds.

Louisburg won the third quarter 22–17 to grab momentum, then held on late thanks to free throws and a clutch perimeter bucket.

“It is big,” Louisburg coach Ben Doll said. “League road wins are hard to come by because this league is so good. We haven’t played a great game yet, and we are working toward that. Lost the lead, kept coming back, and to hold on was huge. We made our free throws and hit a few big shots.”

Strumberger’s activity on the glass again proved critical.

“Herschel has a long way to go and that is great,” Doll said. “He is going to keep getting better. He worked a lot in the offseason and it is showing now. He is relentless at going for the ball, cleaning up the boards and giving us a real post presence to work around. He gives us extra possessions and we need that.”

They needed every one of them to survive a standout effort from Tonganoxie star Lachlan McRae. The all-Frontier League guard poured in 24 points and dished six assists, continually pressuring the Louisburg defense.

“Lachlan is hard to stop,” Doll said. “He can shoot and drive, he is a good passer and puts pressure on the defense. Glad to see our guys make the plays we needed down the stretch.”



Louisburg junior Lance Callahan scored 16 points in the Wildcats' road win over Tonganoxie on Friday.

Callahan delivered one of the biggest, drilling a late 3-pointer to break open a tie game with 1:20 left to help the Wildcats stay in front.

"Lance hit a late 3 there for us that was big," Doll said. "He also plays a lot in the offseason and it is paying off and showing. Good to see him have success and hit a lot of big shots."

LOU		10	14
22	17 – 63		
TON		12	15
17	16 – 60		

LOUISBURG (2-0): Herschel Strumberger 7-12 6-8 21; Lance

Callahan 6-8 1-2 16; Owen Marsh 5-16 2-4 12; Derek Frederick 1-5 4-4 6; John Guetterman 1-6 2-6 5; Parker Stanfield 1-5 1-2 3. Totals: 21-55 16-26 63. 3-point field goals: 5, (Callahan 3, Strumberger, Guetterman)

STRUMBERGER'S GAME-WINNER LIFTS LOUISBURG IN OPENER

Louisburg opened its season Dec. 2 with a nail-biter, surviving multiple Wellsville rallies before Herschel Strumberger delivered the game-winner in a 59–57 victory at home.

The Wildcats raced ahead by double digits early, only to watch the Eagles claw back before halftime. Louisburg again stretched the lead after the break, then saw Wellsville surge once more in the fourth.

With the game tied in the final seconds, Strumberger sealed it, scoring inside with 10 seconds left to put Louisburg ahead for good.

The senior forward was dominant throughout, finishing with 18 points and 18 rebounds as the Wildcats controlled the glass.

"There were a lot of teaching moments," Doll said of the opener. "It was nerve-racking at times and we had a ton of turnovers. Wellsville wanted to turn it into a track meet, and the key with that is to *not* get into it – and we did. It hurt us at times. Glad we survived, and that is a team I would not want to see on a regular basis."

Marsh added 13 points for the Wildcats, while Derek Frederick and Callahan each chipped in nine.

LOU		17	11	
16	15 – 59			
WEL		13	12	
16	16 – 57			

LOUISBURG: Herschel Strumberger 9-16 0-3 18; Owen Marsh 5-12 3-4 13; Derek Frederick 3-11 2-2 9; Lance Callahan 3-10 2-3 9; John Guetterman 1-5 3-4 5; Parker Stanfield 1-5 1-2 3; Fletcher Viterna 1-1 0-0 2. Totals: 23-61 11-18 59. 3-point field goals: 2, (Frederick, Callahan)