Frontenac boys run away from Louisburg



Louisburg senior Jayce Geiman gets the ball across half-court thanks to a screen from teammate Dalton Ribordy on Tuesday during the Wildcats' home game against Frontenac. The Wildcats fell 71-59.

The Louisburg High School boys basketball team hoped to get its second consecutive win when the Wildcats returned home for the first time in three weeks.

Frontenac had other plans.

The Raiders scored a lot of points in transition and limited the Louisburg offense with their zone defense as they handed the Wildcats a 71-59 loss in what was up-and-down game that featured a lot of free throws.

"We knew we had to do coming in and we didn't assert ourselves very well," Louisburg coach Jason Nelson said. "We didn't stick to the script the entire time and that hurt us. When we did do that in the second half, we started getting to the line and getting some weak side buckets, stuff that we should have started doing all along."

The two teams combined for 55 free throws and Frontenac made more free throws (23) than Louisburg (20) attempted. While that was a big difference in the game, Louisburg also

struggled from the field against the Raiders’ zone defense as it shot just 32 percent for the contest.

Louisburg and Frontenac went back-and-forth in the first half as the lead changed hands seven times and had seven more ties.

Frontenac pulled away in the third quarter as it outscored Louisburg 20-10 to build a 12-point lead going into the fourth quarter. The Raiders’ lead expanded to 15 before the Wildcats cut it to nine on Jayce Geiman’s 3-pointer with less than four minutes left in the game.

The Raiders stopped Louisburg’s mini-run to put the lead back up to 17 with two minutes left and sealed the win. Frontenac got those points in transition off Wildcat misses and from the free-throw line.



Junior Desmond Doles goes up for two points Tuesday against Frontenac.

“All that was a manifestation of our lack of communication,” Nelson said. “I don’t know remember the last time that our rotation was that slow, but when we don’t communicate or assert ourselves then stuff like this happens.

“When our shots were falling, it can carry over to the defensive end and guys hang their heads a little bit. But

maybe that is on me for not motivating them enough.”

Geiman led the Wildcat scoring with 17 points, including five 3-pointers against the Frontenac zone. Senior Grant Harding also finished in double figures with 16 points, while junior Desmond Doles came off the bench to add eight points and a team-high seven rebounds.

Senior T.J. Dover added six rebounds in the loss, while junior Dalton Ribordy and senior Sam Guetterman had five a piece.

Louisburg will try and get a Frontier League win Friday when it hosts De Soto for homecoming. Tipoff is set for approximately 7:30 p.m.

“If we come out and set the tempo then good things are going to happen,” Nelson said. “If we are too reactive then we leave ourselves open to bad things happening. These kids know how to do it, we just have to be consistent and play through adversity.”

LOU	**11**	**16**	**10**	**22 – 59**
FRON	**14**	**15**	**20**	**22 – 71**

LOUISBURG (3-5): Jayce Geiman 17, Grant Harding 16, Desmond Doles 8, Sam Guetterman 6, T.J Dover 6, Dalton Stone 3, Dalton Ribordy 2. Totals: 20-62 12-20 59. 3-point field goals: 6, (Geiman 5, Stone)

Wildcats pick up first league win at Baldwin



Louisburg senior Sam Guetterman saves the ball from going out of bounds Friday against Baldwin. The Wildcats defeated Baldwin on the road with a 68-58 victory.

BALDWIN CITY – Playing back-to-back games against the top two teams in the Frontier League gave the Louisburg boys basketball team some perspective going into the holiday break.

The Wildcats had a chance to right those wrongs in practice from those two losses against state-ranked Eudora and Ottawa, and learn from their mistakes to prepare them for the grind of the next two months.

The first challenge was against Baldwin on the road Friday and the Wildcats passed it with flying colors. Despite a late charge from the Bulldogs, Louisburg held on for a 68-58 win to snap that two-game losing streak and win its first Frontier League contest.

“They boys were fantastic,” Louisburg coach Jason Nelson said of his team. “Defensively, we were fantastic. Offensively, we asserted ourselves really, really well. To Baldwin’s credit, they got hot at the end and couldn’t miss, but to our kids’ credit, they responded. Free throws really won the game for us, which is an anomaly for us, but shows progress.”

Louisburg was able to overcome a hot-shooting fourth quarter from the Bulldogs after building a 17-point lead to end the third. Baldwin scored 24 points thanks to five 3-pointers in the fourth, but the Wildcats won the game at the free-throw line and on the boards.

The Wildcats (3-4) converted on just 16 of 31 from the free-throw line, but hit several down the stretch the keep the lead at double digits.

Louisburg also did work on the glass. The Wildcats got three offensive rebounds off missed free throws in the final three minutes thanks to junior Dalton Ribordy and senior Dalton Stone that gave Louisburg more chances at the line.

“It was a nine-point game and you could feel the momentum start to switch, but those offensive rebounds by Ribordy and Stone were huge,” Nelson said. “All that momentum then went back to us. We built a big lead up and we knew Baldwin was streaky and was a scrappy team, but we were able to hold on and the guys never panicked.”

Offensively, the Wildcats were efficient most of the night as they had four players score in double figures, despite having to deal with some early foul trouble. Senior Grant Harding led all scorers with 22 points as he was able get to the free-throw line several times in the fourth quarter.



Dalton Stone goes in for a layup Friday against Baldwin at Baldwin High School.

Senior forward T.J. Dover, who was saddled with two quick fouls to start the game, came alive in the third quarter as he scored 12 of his 16 points in the frame. Senior guard Jayce Geiman helped get the Wildcats off to a good start as he scored 10 of his 15 points in the first half and fellow senior Sam Guetterman also had a good night with 10 points.

“Our ball movement was fantastic,” Nelson said. “I don’t think that we forced much of anything. We had two-and-half weeks over break to kind of beat up on each other, and we focused on moving the ball around and getting the open shot and not just settling. Hopefully this game will give them some confidence moving forward.”

The Wildcats opened the game on a 7-0 run on baskets from Dover, Guetterman and a 3-pointer from Geiman. Baldwin eventually cut the lead to 10-7, but Harding knocked down a basket, was fouled and converted the 3-point play at the free-throw line.

Harding then stole a Baldwin pass two possessions later for a dunk and a 15-7 Louisburg advantage. The Wildcats then hunkered down defensively as they held Baldwin to just four points in the second quarter and eventually took a 29-16 halftime lead.

Louisburg built a 20-point lead late in the third quarter that was challenged by the Bulldogs. Baldwin, which hit 12 3-pointers in the contest, connected on five in the fourth quarter alone.

Baldwin eventually cut the lead to nine points with under three minutes left in the game, but the Wildcats kept the Bulldogs at bay from the free-throw line.

“They wouldn’t die,” Nelson said of Baldwin. “We were denying the ball and they just seemed to make everything. I think that was the best thing about this win is we were able to overcome the storm and stay with the game plan. The boys reaped the rewards of what we have been working on.”

Louisburg returns to action with a pair of home games this week. The Wildcats will host Frontenac on Tuesday and then will play De Soto on Friday for homecoming.

LOU	**15**	**14**	**22**	**17 – 68**
BAL	**12**	**4**	**18**	**24 – 58**

LOUISBURG (3-4): Grant Harding 22, T.J. Dover 16, Jayce Geiman 15, Sam Guetterman 10, Dalton Stone 2, Dalton Ribordy 2, Jake Hill 1. Totals: 27 16-31 68. 3-point field goals: 3, (Geiman 3)

Rough second quarter hurts Louisburg in loss



Louisburg senior Sam Guetterman battles for a rebound during Monday's league contest in Ottawa. The Wildcats fell to the Cyclones, 61-36, in their final game before the holiday break.

OTTAWA – For one quarter, the Louisburg High School boys basketball team stayed right with the No. 3 team in the state.

From there, Ottawa showed why it was ranked in the top half of Class 4A-Division I.

Ottawa used a big second quarter and handed Louisburg its second straight loss, 61-36, in its final game before the holiday break. The Cyclones outscored the Wildcats 17-4 before halftime and Louisburg was forced to play catch up for most of the game.

Louisburg and Ottawa found themselves in a back-and-forth first period that saw Ottawa take 15-13 advantage.

“The first quarter we were proactive and we set our tempo and good things happened,” Louisburg coach Jason Nelson said. “Then after that, a couple little things happened and everything changed. It is on me to get them in better position and have a better reaction to adversity. We burned a timeout and we talked about it, but it didn’t work.

“We saw against two of the best teams in our league that when we are proactive, and not reactive, then we are good. These boys want to be good and now we have two weeks to work on asserting ourselves for 32 minutes.”

The Wildcats (2-4) had a tough time stopping the Cyclone combination of Isaac McCullough and Perry Carroll, who combined for 42 of Ottawa’s 61 points. McCullough led all scorers with 23 points, including five 3-pointers. Carroll shot 9 for 11 from the field for 19 points.

“We let them get hot,” Nelson said. “But there were times where McCullough hit so many contested threes and I thought our defense was pretty good on most of them. When they get points like that, you just have to tip your hat to them.”

Louisburg senior Jayce Geiman led the Wildcats in scoring with 13 points, while fellow seniors T.J. Dover and Sam Guetterman scored eight and seven points, respectively. Junior Dalton Ribordy led Louisburg with four rebounds.

The Wildcats hope to stop their losing skid when they return from the holiday break on Jan. 6 when they travel to Baldwin.

Tipoff is set for 7:30 p.m.

LOU	**13**	**4**	**12**	**7 – 36**
OTT	**15**	**17**	**21**	**8 – 61**

LOUISBURG (2-4): Jayce Geiman 13, T.J. Dover 8, Sam Guetterman 7, Grant Harding 4, Jake Hill 2, Dalton Ribordy 2. Totals: 15-36 2-4 36. 3-point field goals: 4, (Geiman 3, Guetterman)

Eudora uses big second half to get past Louisburg



Louisburg junior Dalton Ribordy puts up a shot over a couple Eudora defenders Tuesday at Louisburg High School. Ribordy finished with eight points in Louisburg's 64-49 loss.

For the first 16 minutes, the Louisburg boys basketball team stayed right with state-ranked Eudora and even took a halftime lead.

The next 16 were a different story.

Eudora doubled up Louisburg in the third quarter and the No. 7

Cardinals spoiled the Wildcats’ home opener Tuesday and handed Louisburg a 64-49 loss at Louisburg High School.

The two teams battled back and forth at each other in the first half, but Louisburg took a four-point halftime lead and were able execute offensively. In the second half, Eudora made some adjustments and outscored the Wildcats 38-19 to pull away for the win.

“The first half we came out and were assertive,” Louisburg coach Jason Nelson said. “We executed the game plan that we have been working on. We cut hard, we got position, we worked inside-out and got the posts involved with what we were trying to do.

“The second half we deviated away from it a little bit, took a timeout and got a little better, but we never got into a flow like we did in the first half. They started sagging on us a little more, but we still need to play an inside-out game.”



Senior Jayce Geiman pulls up for jumper Tuesday against Eudora.

Louisburg had a tough defensive assignment most of the night as the Wildcats had to keep an eye on Eudora's Mitchell Ballock. The Cardinal senior, and Creighton University commit, led all scorers with 20 points.

Ballock scored eight of those points in the first quarter and then added a 3-pointer early in the second quarter to give

Eudora a one point advantage. Louisburg senior Grant Harding had the assignment of guarding him early, but the calls didn't go his way as he picked up his third foul with four minutes left in the first half.

"I thought Grant did a pretty good job on him early, but with the foul trouble we had to change some things up defensively," Nelson said. "He is a good player, but I thought we were able to slow him down a little."

The Wildcats (2-3) got off to a fast start as they took an early 9-3 lead on a 3-pointer from Harding, a pair of baskets from junior Dalton Ribordy and a reverse layup from senior Sam Guetterman.

Eudora went on a 14-6 run to take a 17-15 lead late in the quarter, but senior T.J. Dover tied it at 17-all and junior Ben Minster put the Wildcats on top with 45 seconds left in the period.

In the second quarter, the Wildcats went on a mini 7-0 run on back-to-back baskets from senior Jake Hill and a 3-pointer from senior Jayce Geiman to take a 30-22 lead with two minutes left in the half. Eudora hit a pair of baskets, but the Wildcats still led by four at halftime.

The Cardinals were more aggressive to start the second half and outscored Louisburg 20-8 in the third quarter. Eudora did a lot of its damage from the free-throw line as it converted 9 of 9 opportunities in the frame.

"We were putting them on the line and I think we were a half-a-step slow on defense occasionally," Nelson said. "At the same time, we just didn't execute. We knew what we had to do, but we didn't get it done. I think it is all a part of going through a long season and learning from your mistakes."

Eudora took a 46-38 lead into the fourth, but the Wildcats weren't able to get any closer. The Cardinals opened the

fourth on a 12-3 run to seal the win.

Harding was one two Wildcats in double figures as he led Louisburg with 12 points and Geiman added 10 in the loss. Ribordy and Guetterman each finished with eight, while Guetterman led Louisburg with seven rebounds on the night.

Louisburg will try and bounce back tonight, but it will be against another state-ranked team. The Wildcats will travel to No. 3 Ottawa to continue Frontier League play in their final game before the holiday break.

“These are the two of the best teams in the state and why not see where we are at,” Nelson said of Ottawa and Eudora. “Ottawa has good players, so we will see what we can do. It will be a tough test for us.”

LOU	**19**	**11**	**8**	**11 – 49**
EUD	**17**	**9**	**20**	**18 – 64**

LOUISBURG (2-3): Grant Harding 12, Jayce Geiman 10, Sam Guetterman 8, Dalton Ribordy 8, Ben Minster 5, Jake Hill 4, T.J. Dover 2. Totals: 19-44 8-14 49. 3-point field goals: 3, (Geiman 2, Harding)

Guetterman, Harding pace

Wildcats in blowout win



Louisburg senior Grant Harding finishes off an alley-oop after a pass from teammate Jayce Geiman on Friday in the final game of the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic at Burlington Middle School.

BURLINGTON – Sam Guetterman was just in the right place at the right time – after time, after time.

In fact, Anderson County couldn't keep track of the Louisburg senior. Whether it was as simple as a pull-up jumper, an offensive rebound or the beneficiary of a pass from a teammate, Guetterman made the most of every chance.

Guetterman scored a game-high 26 points as he helped Louisburg to its second straight win with a 75-49 victory over Anderson County. Several of those points came thanks to senior teammate Grant Harding who found an open Guetterman while driving to the basket.

"That was really great to see and Sammy played a great game," Louisburg coach Jason Nelson said. "He and Grant worked really well together and defensively he was always solid. Offensively, that is what he is capable of. He found his opportunities and he exploited it every single time. It was fantastic to see."

Guetterman shot close to 70 percent from the field as he converted on 12 of 17 shots to go along with five rebounds, two assists, a steal and a block.

Harding had an efficient night as well as he finished with 19 points on 7 of 13 shooting, including a pair of dunks to help to get his team going. One of those dunks came in the first quarter on an alley-oop from fellow senior Jayce Geiman.

Other than the final four minutes of the second quarter, the Wildcats dominated the Bulldogs offensively and shot 52 percent from the field for the game.

Louisburg (2-2) opened the game on a 20-9 run in the first quarter, including eight points from Guetterman. After a dunk and a steal from Harding, the Wildcats led 28-14 with five minutes left in the first half.

Anderson County responded with a 12-3 run to get back into the game as the Wildcats led 31-26 at halftime.

The Wildcats got the lead right back to double digits in less than three minutes as they opened the second half 12-5 on baskets from juniors Ben Minster and Dalton Ribordy, Guetterman and a 3-pointer from Harding.



Louisburg senior Sam Guetterman goes up for two of his 26 points Friday against Anderson County.

Louisburg outscored Anderson County 26-9 in the third quarter to all but seal the game for the Wildcats and they were able to do it without one of their starters. Senior forward T.J. Dover was out with an illness, so the rest of the Wildcats picked up the slack.

Minster took Dover’s place in the starting lineup and scored

in double figures with 13 points, while Ribordy and Desmond Doles each pulled down a team-high five rebounds.

“We played fantastic,” Nelson said. “We really asserted ourselves on both ends of the floor. We crashed hard and communicated on defense. We knew we were going to be thin on the bench missing T.J., and Ben wasn’t feeling well either, but we picked each other up. It was fantastic. Offensively, we took high-percentage shots and we didn’t settle. We asserted ourselves defensively and we set the tone with perimeter defense.”

In fact, the Wildcats missed different players with illness throughout the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic, but were still able to finish with a 2-1 record, with their lone loss coming against Burlington earlier in the week.

“They picked each other up and did a fantastic job,” Nelson said. “I would like to have that Burlington game back, but it was everything you could ask for. We used all 10 of our players tonight and everyone did something well. Monday we get back to work and fix the couple errors that we have.”

Louisburg will get into Frontier League play starting this week and it will be tested early. The Wildcats host Eudora, the No. 7 team in Class 4A Division I, on Tuesday. Then next week, the Wildcats will travel to No. 3 Ottawa before they take a break for the holidays.

“I will be glad to have a home game more than anything else,” Nelson said. “If you believe all the preseason standings, (Ottawa and Eudora) were the No. 1 and 2 teams in our league, so we will see what we are made of pretty soon.”

LOU	**20**	**11**	**26**	**18 — 75**

BUR 9 17 9 14 – 49

LOUISBURG (2-2): Sam Guetterman 26, Grant Harding 19, Ben Minster 13, Dalton Ribordy 6, Desmond Doles 4, Jayce Geiman 3, Dalton Stone 3, Jake Hill 1. Totals: 31-55 8-15 75. 3-point field goals: 5, (Harding 2, Geiman, Guetterman, Stone)

Wildcats get first victory of season over Baldwin



Louisburg junior Ben Minster goes up for a shot against Baldwin on Tuesday in the second game of the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic at Burlington Middle School. The Wildcats picked up their first victory of the season, 63-50.

BURLINGTON – In its third game of the year, and its second in as many nights, the Louisburg boys basketball team was able to get its first victory of the season and the Wildcats weren't about to let it get away – no matter what their opponent threw at them.

Louisburg faced off with Baldwin in the second game of the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic at Burlington Middle School, and despite a barrage of eight second half 3-pointers from the

Bulldogs, Louisburg came away with a 63-50 victory.

“Given how poorly we played the night before, to come out here with the mentality to rectify the errors we made in our last game, for the most part we did that,” Louisburg coach Jason Nelson said. “I couldn’t be more proud of them about that and says a lot about the team mentally and physically to play on back to back nights.”

The Wildcats (1-2) used a couple big runs to pull away from the Bulldogs, who found themselves playing catch up most of the evening. Louisburg went on a 15-2 run to end the first half and took a 15-point halftime advantage.

Baldwin, which had 11 3-pointers in the game, converted eight of them in the second half to eventually cut the Louisburg lead to seven points with 3 minutes and 45 seconds left in the game.

From there, the Wildcats created some more distance as they finished on a 10-4 run, including six straight points from senior Grant Harding – two of which came on a steal and a breakaway dunk. Baskets from senior T.J. Dover and junior Ben Minster helped ice the game during the stretch.

“We have to have the mindset throughout the whole game and not just stretches, even though it is nice when they do it,” Nelson said of the offensive spurts. “We had another run at the end of the fourth quarter. During those stretches, the guys were acting instinctively, instead of reactionary. When these guys are instinctive, they can do some really good things.”



Louisburg senior Jake Hill dribbles toward the basket during Tuesday's contest in Baldwin.

In the second quarter, Louisburg led just 17-15 but five straight free throws from Minster and Harding, along with baskets from Minster, Sam Guetterman, Jake Hill and Harding helped key the big first half run.

Louisburg had to play with some adversity most of the night as

it didn’t have starting forward Dalton Ribordy, who was out with an illness. Dover, the team’s other starting forward, was saddled with foul trouble for much of the night.

The Wildcats were forced to play smaller with juniors Desmond Doles and Minster, but those two players, along with Hill, picked up the slack. Minster scored in double figures with 14 points while Doles and Hill combined for 10 points.

“This was our best team game of the season,” Nelson said. “We had guys come off the bench and do some really nice things. We had to play smaller than we usually do, but our rotations were good. Ben and Dez stepped up big time for us. Without Dalton we are pretty thin, but it was nice to see those other guys play well.”

Harding led Louisburg in scoring with 19 points, and along with Minster, the Wildcats had three score in double figures as Dover finished with 10. Harding also led the Wildcats with five rebounds and three steals.

Louisburg will try for its second straight win Friday when it travels back to Burlington to play Anderson County for the final game of the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic.

LOU	**14**	**8**	**17**	**14 – 63**
BAL	**11**	**6**	**22**	**11 – 50**

LOUISBURG (1-2): Grant Harding 19, Ben Minster 14, T.J. Dover 10, Jayce Geiman 6, Desmond Doles 6, Sam Guetterman 4, Jake Hill 4. Totals: 21-42 17-27 63. 3-point field goals: 2, (Geiman 2)

LOUISBURG LOSES TOURNEY OPENER TO BURLINGTON

The Louisburg boys basketball team had an opportunity to defend its Wildcat-Bulldog Classic title Monday when they traveled to Burlington in the first of the three-game round-robin tournament.

Those title hopes took a hit as Burlington scored 22 fourth quarter points to defeat Louisburg 60-52 after Louisburg held a one-point lead going into the final frame.

“They zoned us quite a bit and we didn’t have good communication,” Louisburg coach Jason Nelson said. “We didn’t rebound real well and had some turnovers. We had a few calls that didn’t go our way, but we didn’t react the way we needed to.”

Burlington had a big night at the free-throw line as it converted 23 of 31 from the stripe, compared to just 11 for 16 for Louisburg. The Wildcats shot 37 percent for the game.

Senior T.J. Dover led Louisburg in scoring with 10 points, while Minster also finished double figures with 10.

LOU – 52	**9**	**13**	**17**	**13**
BUR – 60	**9**	**18**	**11**	**22**

LOUISBURG: T.J. Dover 12, Ben Minster 10, Grant Harding 9, Jayce Geiman 8, Sam Guetterman 6, Desmond Doles 5, Jake Hill 2. Totals: 19-51 11-16 52. 3-point field goals: 3, (Geiman 2, Harding)

Wildcats suffer setback against Pittsburg



Louisburg senior T.J. Dover goes up for a basket Friday during the Wildcats' season opener at Pittsburg High School. Dover finished with a team-high 14 points in Louisburg 53-46 loss.

PITTSBURG – There are many things coaches can simulate in practice to prepare their team for when the season starts.

Athleticism isn't one of them.

That was on full display Friday when the Louisburg boys basketball team traveled to Pittsburg for its season opener. The Purple Dragons caused havoc on the perimeter and it took a while for the Wildcats to settle in.

By then, the Wildcats didn't have enough time to overcome a first half deficit and went on to fall to Pittsburg 53-46. Despite the loss, the Wildcats still left Pittsburg with a good frame of mind.

"I thought our teamwork was fantastic," Louisburg coach Jason Nelson said. "When we had the opportunity to run our two-man game, we did a really good job with that. Pittsburg is just faster than what we can show in practice, but we just have to

have that mentality. The boys played their tails off. They were the SEK champs last year and we played them at their place. We knew it would be tough, but we had our chances."

Defensively, the Wildcats held the Purple Dragons on first shot opportunities, but Pittsburg was quicker to the ball on missed shots as it had 12 second-chance points in the first half which helped them jump out to a double digit lead in the second quarter.

Louisburg took an early 6-3 lead after a dunk from senior Grant Harding, but the Purple Dragons responded and Pittsburg took a 14-11 lead after the first period.



Senior Grant Harding dunks the ball during the first quarter Friday in Pittsburg.

Wildcat senior Sam Guetterman cut it to one point with a reverse layup to start the second quarter, but from there Pittsburg went on a 9-2 run that was stopped on baskets from seniors T.J. Dover and Jayce Geiman. Pittsburg went into halftime with a 27-19 advantage.

Pittsburg also caused havoc on the Louisburg perimeter as it forced 11 first half turnovers, including eight in the second period.

“They put perimeter pressure on us really, really well,” Nelson said. “Looking back, and it is something we emphasize, we give up 12-14 second chance points and that is your ball game right there. Even despite their pressure, we exploited their weaknesses in the post on occasion. There are still so many good things to look back on, and if we can get a couple of those shots to fall that almost went in, then it might have been a little different.”

The Wildcats calmed down in the second half and had just two turnovers the rest of the game. Louisburg stayed in the game from the free-throw line as it converted 7 of 8 opportunities in the third quarter, including six consecutive from juniors Ben Minster and Dalton Ribordy. Louisburg was 13-for-16 for the contest.

Dover, who scored a game-high 14 points, had eight of those in the final quarter to keep the Wildcats in it. Harding was next on the team with nine points.

Although they are still looking for that first win, the Wildcats have positives to build on.

“In my four years here, this is the best defensive rotation we have had,” Nelson said. “Pittsburg is a fast team and we played man defense most of the night. Our rotations were great and there are good things to take from this. We would have liked to get a win, but it is equally important to take our lumps, learn from them and be ready for the tournament.”

That tournament begins today when Louisburg travels to Burlington for the first round of the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic. The Wildcats will face Burlington tonight and then will turn around and play Baldwin on Tuesday. It will all wrap up with one final game Friday.

LOU	**11**	**8**	**14**	**13 – 46**
PIT	**14**	**13**	**14**	**12 – 53**

LOUISBURG (0-1): T.J. Dover 14, Grant Harding 9, Jayce Geiman 7, Sam Guetterman 6, Dalton Ribordy 5, Ben Minster 5. Totals 17-40 13-16 46. 3-point field goals: 1, (Geiman)

Senior class to guide Wildcat basketball



Louisburg’s Jayce Geiman is one of seven Wildcat seniors for the 2016-17 season, and those players will be looked upon to guide the team as they try and bounce back from a rough finish a year ago.

Once the final buzzer sounded on the 2015-16 season, members

of Louisburg boys basketball team were ready to put it behind them.

It was a season that got off to such promise after the Wildcats won six of their first nine games, but it ended with 12 straight losses through a rugged Frontier League schedule. The players plan on using that experience to fuel them for the upcoming season that tips off Friday.

“Absolutely we learned from it,” Louisburg coach Jason Nelson said. “I think they learned how to deal with adversity, given how much existed. It would have been easy for them to hang their heads when the injuries came, or we ran in to a juggernaut of an opponent, but they learned from it and will use it as motivation this year.”

The Wildcats will feature a roster of predominantly upperclassmen, which includes seven seniors and two juniors that saw significant varsity minutes a season ago.

“This is the first time since I’ve been here that we’ve had a team dominated by upperclassmen and it has been fantastic thus far,” Nelson said. “It is through our upperclassmen that our entire program will evolve. They’ve demonstrated the right way to play, focused on becoming fundamentally sound and competed with one another in an effort to not only improve themselves, but also their brothers in the program.”

One of those players was considered among the best in the Frontier League a season ago in Grant Harding. The Wildcats senior returns after he earned second team all-league honors, and was also named to the honorable mention all-state team after he averaged 16 points and eight rebounds a game last year.

Harding will play a key role in the Wildcats’ offense this season as fellow seniors Sam Guetterman, Jayce Geiman, T.J. Dover and junior Dalton Ribordy will start along with him to begin the season.

“(Grant) wants to be one of the best to have played at Louisburg High School and knows how much dedication it takes,” Nelson said. “He’s definitely stepped up his training over the summer working on his few areas for improvement. He’s vital to our team success, not just as a scoring threat, but also defensively and distributing the ball and making those around him better.

“This group loves to play together, the coaches love to coach them and while Grant will be counted on, it will be no different than in past years. Our best games have always been when he, T.J., Sammy, Jayce, Jake (Hill) and others have been working as one.”



Louisburg senior Grant Harding returns this year after he averaged 16 points and eight rebounds a season ago as a second-team all-league player.

Although the Wildcats might not be as tall as some of their opponents, as Dover (6-foot-3, 250 pounds) and Ribordy (6-2, 200) will give them some scoring and rebounding options down low along with junior Garrett Lowry (6-4, 295).

Seniors Jake Hill, Dalton Stone, Alex Seuferling, along with

juniors Ben Minster and Desmond Doles, will give the Wildcats a lot of production off the bench.

“This is the best our rotation has been in my time here, given that we have multiple ‘true’ posts,” Nelson said. “In past years, we’ve had to play guys out of position occasionally, but this year, with TJ back, Dalton ready to break out and Garrett Lowry evolving, we can finally have a front court and back court rotation which will further facilitate everything. With Grant, Sammy and Jayce, expected to play a lot, Jake, Ben, Dalton Stone, Desmond, and Alex will also fit in to our rotation as needed and all offer different strengths that we’ll look to exploit as we progress.”

It will be a tough schedule for the Wildcats as they compete in a tough Frontier League that includes four combined games against No. 4 Ottawa and No. 8 Eudora, who are both ranked in Class 4A-Division I. Also in there are tough games against rival Paola, who qualified for the state tournament last season.

“Our league will once again be one of the best in the state,” Nelson said. “There’s not an easy game on the schedule, but that’s to the benefit of this group, especially the upperclassmen. They’ve seen it for 3-plus years and know the kind of dedication and talent it takes to do well in this league and look forward to the challenges it presents.”

Louisburg will tipoff its season Friday when it travels to Pittsburg for a 7:30 p.m. start. The Wildcats will then travel to Burlington next week for three games in the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic.

Experience dominates Wildcat basketball camp



Senior T.J. Dover goes up for a turnaround jumper during Louisburg's intrasquad scrimmage July 15 on the final day of the Wildcats' team camp. Louisburg will return six seniors that saw varsity time a season ago.

It has been a different kind of summer for the Louisburg boys basketball team.

Wildcat head coach Jason Nelson had taken his team to a summer league at Rockhurst in Kansas City, Mo., the last three seasons in order to work on their game and become more comfortable working together.

Nelson still wanted to stress that continuity, but decided to change things up a bit. He kept his team back in Louisburg and took part in scrimmages with Osawatomie High School along with open gym workouts.

"The summer league provided many opportunities for them to play to the expectations of the staff, however, this year we are fortunate enough to be able to focus on perfecting our program, and not our style of play, which is a testament to our boys progress," Nelson said. "We played two controlled scrimmages against Osawatomie and I couldn't be more pleased with the outcomes. We didn't keep score, but really were able to focus on our half court sets and transition in a controlled

atmosphere in which (Osawatomie) coach (Chris) Pitts and myself could stop and ‘coach’ when needed.

“Perhaps the best aspect of the scrimmages aside from our tangible improvements was that were able to play with many different rotations.”



Grant Harding drives the lane for a shot during the team’s final day of camp on July 15.

Those results of that offseason work came together for the Wildcat team camp. The camp, which started on July 11, brought the team together for five consecutive days in order to work on basics, but also to help bring along the younger players.

Nelson also brought back a couple Louisburg High Schools alums as former players David Embers and Garrett Griffin each attended the camp sessions to help out.

“First and foremost, camp provides a ‘bridge’ between middle school and high school for our incoming freshmen,” Nelson said. “It gives them the opportunity to see what our program is about, the dedication our older boys put into the program and that our ultimate goal is to be a credible team in one of, if not the best league in the state. We focused more on fundamentals with the younger guys and the older guys worked

on refining some of the things we need to do better this year.

“It was fantastic to have David and Garrett there to assist. The boys respect both of them and their presence lends itself to a program mentality, not just a team.”

The Wildcats have a senior-heavy roster for the upcoming season and that experience hopes to lend to a successful 2016-17 season. Senior Grant Harding, an all-Frontier League and all-state player, returns as the team’s top scorer.

Guards Jayce Geiman, Sam Guetterman, Jake Hill, Korbin Hankinson and forward T.J. Dover are the other seniors who hope to get Louisburg closer to the top of the league standings.

Louisburg got off to a good start last season as it won six of its first nine games, but struggled down the stretch as the Wildcats lost their remaining games to finish with a 6-15 record. Nelson hopes that rough stretch propelled his team to get better in the offseason.

“If adversity makes a group stronger, than this group of seniors ought to be the strongest in the state,” Nelson joked. “In all seriousness, I feel like this squad is far better in terms of both their individual and team skill set. They all went through the excruciating adversity last year and came to summer ready to improve and I couldn’t be happier or more proud of them.

“For the first time in my tenure, we have multiple kids playing AAU ball, working on their games individually when the time permits by shooting, dribbling, etc., and I feel some of this can be attributed to the roller coaster of emotions that last year provided.”

Harding named to all-league, state teams



Louisburg junior Grant Harding had a good season for the Wildcat basketball team and he was recently selected to the all-Frontier League second team and was also named as an honorable mention all-state player by the Topeka Capital-Journal and Wichita Eagle.

Throughout the season, Grant Harding was a big focus for the opposition when it came to stopping the Louisburg boys basketball team.

Opposing teams knew Harding was going to get the ball and that he was a big part of the Wildcat offense. All that attention didn’t seem to slow the Louisburg junior much and the rest of the Frontier League coaches took notice.

The all-Frontier League basketball team was recently released and Harding earned second team honors after a breakout season. Harding averaged 16 points a game to lead Louisburg and also averaged eight rebounds and three assists a contest.

“In our league, which I feel is the best in all of 4A, as a group, to get recognized at all is a huge honor,” Louisburg

coach Jason Nelson said. “Being recognized as one of the top 10 players in the league is even more of an honor and I couldn’t be more proud of him. His hard work and dedication to the sport he loves is paying off and that’s one of the greatest aspects of coaching.”

Harding was also recently recognized outside of the league. He earned all-state honors as he was named to the Class 4A-Division I honorable mention team by the Topeka Capital-Journal and Wichita Eagle.

Paola and Eudora, which each earned state tournament bids, led the way with three all-league selections as did Spring Hill.

2016 All-Frontier League Boys Basketball Team

First team: Justin Criddle, sr., Paola; Austin Downing, sr., Eudora; Isaac McCullough, jr., Ottawa; Mason McDow, sr., Paola; Ivan Hughes, sr., Spring Hill.

Second team: Perry Carroll, jr., Ottawa; Brian Tolefree, sr., Eudora; Grant Harding, jr., Louisburg; Jomain Rouser, sr., Eudora; Alex Wilson, sr., Paola.

Honorable mention: Jackson Barth, sr., Baldwin; Trey Heinrich, jr., Spring Hill; Jacob Jennings, sr., De Soto; Jacob Hodge, jr., Spring Hill; Jayce Dighans, soph., Baldwin.