

Louisburg boys, girls fall on the road to Baldwin



Louisburg junior Brayden Gage draws a foul while driving toward the basket Tuesday at Baldwin High School. Gage finished with eight points in the road loss to the Bulldogs.

BALDWIN CITY – The Louisburg boys basketball team had an opportunity to break its losing skid Tuesday when it faced off with Baldwin – a team the Wildcats had split with earlier this season.

It became evident early on that it was not going to be the Wildcats' night.

Baldwin caught fire on the offensive end as it shot 54 percent from the field in its 77-44 win over Louisburg at Baldwin High School.

“Our defense was not very good,” Louisburg coach Ty Pfannenstiel said. “We pride ourselves on playing tough defense and this was our poorest effort of the season by far. With our offensive struggles this year, it has been so important for us to be good on the defensive end of the floor each night. We didn’t compete as a team and that’s disappointing.”

Senior Ben Minster led Louisburg (2-15) in scoring with 12 points and fellow senior Justin Sievert also finished in

double figures with 10. Junior Brayden Gage added eight points in the loss, while senior Dalton Ribordy and sophomore Madden Rutherford both pulled down a team-high six rebounds.

Jayce Dighans led Baldwin in scoring with 28 points and had seven rebounds.

Louisburg returns to action tonight when it hosts Spring Hill. Tipoff is set for approximately 7:30 p.m.

Lady Cats fall to Baldwin

The Louisburg girls basketball team hit the road Tuesday for a matchup with Baldwin, the No. 1 team in Class 4A-Division II.

Baldwin showed exactly why they considered as one of the favorites to win a state title. Louisburg couldn't keep up with the hot-shooting Bulldogs in a 63-28 loss.



Freshman Madilyn Melton led the Lady Cats with 13 points in a loss to Baldwin.

Freshman Madilyn Melton and senior Bailey Belcher provided Louisburg (7-10) with a bulk of its offense. Melton was the lone Lady Cat in double figures with 13 points to go along with seven rebounds, while Belcher added eight points.

Junior Carson Buffington did the work on the glass as she led Louisburg with 15 rebounds on the night.

Lady Cats overcome slow start

to beat Ottawa



Louisburg senior Bailey Belcher goes up for a shot and gets fouled Friday during the Lady Cats' game at Ottawa High School. The Lady Cats rallied from 20 points down to beat the Cyclones, 48-44.

OTTAWA – For the first 12-plus minutes of Friday's game with Ottawa, the Louisburg girls basketball team found themselves in dire straits.

The Lady Cats had managed just two points during that stretch and were down 20 with three minutes left in the first half.

Offensively, no matter what the Lady Cats tried, nothing seemed to work.

"Based on some of the shots I saw in the first quarter, it was just us and trying to get settled down," Louisburg coach Shawn Lowry said. "Maybe we practiced really hard for those first four days that we were off, because we were all amped up for those first few shots of the first quarter."

Once the lid finally came off the basket for Louisburg, that all changed.

Louisburg put together a furious rally that eventually ended in a 48-44 victory over the Cyclones and gave the Lady Cats a big road win in the process.

"It was great, especially to do it at this point in the season

and battle back like we did on the road," Lowry said. "Ottawa has been playing really well here the last couple weeks and we knew it would be tough coming in.

"To play as poorly as we did to start that game, and for the girls not to lose focus, was great to see. What I was most proud of is they battled together. It wasn't one person battling by themselves, they battled together. They played for each other and that was fun to watch."

As good as the ending was, the beginning was a tough one to watch for Louisburg as Ottawa jumped out to an 11-2 lead at the end of the first quarter. The scoring drought continued into the second quarter and the Cyclones eventually took a 22-2 advantage with under four minutes left in the first half.

Along with their offensive woes, the Lady Cats were also battling their 12 first half turnovers that turned into some easy Ottawa baskets.

Senior Isabelle Holtzen ended Ottawa's long run with a 3-pointer with 3 minutes and 10 seconds left in the second quarter and the Lady Cats started chipping away from there.

Louisburg (7-9) eventually whittled the Ottawa lead to 24-13 at halftime as it ended the first half on an 11-2 run thanks to six straight points from junior Carson Buffington and another basket from freshman Brooklyn Diederich.

Still, the Lady Cats had a lot of work to do in the second half.



Freshman Brooklyn Diederich puts up a shot in the lane Friday against Ottawa.

"The message to the girls at halftime was the game isn't over and we have to chip away at this," Lowry said. "I told the girls that it starts with what we do defensively. We have to win the 50-50 balls and we have to win the rebounds and then the offense will come from that. It just seemed like we settled down in the second half."

Ottawa still led by 10 late in the third quarter when freshman Madilyn Melton connected on a 3-pointer and another freshman, Alyse Moore, scored near the basket to make it 34-29 going into the final eight minutes.

Buffington, who finished with a team-high 16 points and seven rebounds, hit one of her four 3-pointers to get Louisburg within one with 4:40 left, but seconds later the Lady Cats would be without their leading scorer as she fouled out of the

contest.

Several Lady Cats picked up her slack down the stretch. Holtzen hit the go-ahead jumper with 2:17 remaining, while senior Bailey Belcher connected on 3 of 4 at the free-throw line to widen Louisburg's lead to 46-43 with 1:06 left as she finished with eight points on the night.

"Bailey came through late for us there at the end," Lowry said. "In fact, she was the one who stayed late after practice (Thursday) to work on free throws and I really think it paid off."

Diederich and Melton each hit 1 of 2 free throws in the final seconds to help hold off the Cyclones and complete their furious comeback.

Melton and Diederich provided Louisburg with big minutes down the stretch as they scored nine and five points, respectively, while Moore filled in for Buffington down low late with six rebounds. Melton also tied Buffington with a team-high seven rebounds.

"I thought both Brooklyn and Alyse are both growing and maturing throughout the season and what a great time for both of them to step up and do what they did to contribute to this," Lowry said. "They are still freshmen, but getting opportunities like this is good for them, and at this point in the season they are no longer freshmen. They are basketball players."

Louisburg will try to build on its win Tuesday as it faces another difficult test when it travels to No. 1 Baldwin in its first of four final regular season games.

"As we prepare for our run, this is absolutely one we can use later on," Lowry said. "We have young and inexperienced players who got experience in a big game on the road. To come from that far behind, and not just compete, but to win, we

will definitely use and build off this."

LOU	2	11	16	19 -
48				
OTT	11	13	10	10 -
44				

LOUISBURG (7-9): Carson Buffington 16, Madilyn Melton 9, Bailey Belcher 8, Brooklyn Diederich 5, Isabelle Holtzen 5, Haley Cain 3, Alyse Moore 2. Totals: 14-50 13-22 48. 3-point field goals: 7, (Buffington 4, Belcher, Holtzen, Melton)

Eudora uses late run to pull away from Lady Cats



Louisburg junior Carson Buffington dives for a loose ball Friday during the Lady Cats' home game against Eudora. Buffington finished with 10 points and 16 rebounds in the Lady Cats' 41-34 loss.

The shots weren't falling. Turnovers were piling up, as were the foul problems.

It wasn't exactly the performance the Louisburg girls basketball team wanted to have following its big win over rival Paola earlier in the week. Then, in just a few minutes time, the Lady Cats had life again.

Louisburg rallied to tie Eudora late in the third quarter and it seemed to have all the momentum. Then in a matter of seconds – it was a gone again.

The Cardinals scored the next seven points and took that momentum into the final period for a 41-34 win over the Lady Cats in their homecoming game Friday.

"We just weren't ready to play," Louisburg coach Shawn Lowry said. "You always worry about a letdown after a good showing, then with homecoming added on to that, we just weren't checked in at all to play and that is on me."

It was a rough first half for the Lady Cats offensively. They managed just three points in the first quarter, and struggled at times in the second, but still managed to claw back to a 17-13 deficit at halftime.

Louisburg turned up its defensive pressure to start the third quarter and got back in the game. A 3-pointer from freshman Brooklyn Diederich cut it to 18-17 and a free throw from freshman Madilyn Melton tied it up with 3 minutes left in the third.

Eudora grabbed the lead right back with a basket, but another Louisburg freshman, Alyse Moore, drove to the basket and scored to knot it at 20-all.

From there, it was all Eudora.

The Cardinals forced Louisburg into eight turnovers in the third and turned several of those into transition points as they went on an 18-3 run that went into the fourth quarter and built a 15-point lead.

"Eudora just made some plays and some shots," Lowry said. "To their credit, they worked harder than we did at getting 50-50 balls, which we take a lot of pride in and we didn't this time. Eudora was ready to come in here and play."



Sophomore Haley Cain dribbles around a Eudora defender Friday.

The Lady Cats (6-9) tried to get back into the game, as Moore scored three baskets in the final quarter and junior Carson Buffington hit a 3-pointer to cut the lead to six late in the game, but Louisburg couldn't get any closer.

Eudora employed a zone defense for most of the night and the Lady Cats weren't able to crack it as the Cardinals forced 24 turnovers.

"We weren't very strong with the basketball," Lowry said. "We weren't very strong with our passes, we weren't strong

catching the ball and if you don't do those two things first, then it doesn't matter what happens after that. That kind of fed into everything and that kind of goes into the mental side of the game.

"I was concerned about it going into the game, and as a coach, you just kind of get that feeling that maybe not everyone was ready for the game. There is a lot of stuff going on, but that is no excuse. You have to be ready to play a basketball game and we weren't."

Buffington recorded another double-double to lead the Lady Cats' offense with 10 points and team-high 16 rebounds. Moore was next on the team with nine points and Diederich added six in the loss. Melton was second on the team with eight rebounds.

Louisburg will try to bounce back Friday when it travels to Ottawa for another Frontier League matchup.

"This is one that we have to learn from," Lowry said. "We have to pick ourselves back up and individually they have some things they have to think about and make sure that they are all in and then we go from there."

LOU	3	10	10	11 -
34				
EUD	9	8	12	12
- 41				

LOUISBURG (6-9): Carson Buffington 10, Alyse Moore 9, Brooklyn Diederich 6, Bailey Belcher 2, Carlee Gassman 2, Haley Cain 2, Isabelle Holtzen 2, Madilyn Melton 1. Totals: 10-40 10-24 34. 3-point field goals: 4, (Buffington 2, Diederich 2)

Lady Cats score first win over Paola in four years



Louisburg freshman Madilyn Melton goes up for two of her team-high 21 points against Paola on Tuesday at Louisburg High School. The Lady Cats downed the Panthers, 69-57, for their first win over the Panthers since 2014.

It has been four years since the Louisburg girls basketball team has left the floor after a victory over Paola.

Since then, there has been a lot of heartbreak and disappointment.

Louisburg got a chance to change all that Tuesday when it hosted its rival and the Lady Cats were able to turn the tables on the Panthers. There was no heartbreak this time around.

Defense and free throws turned out to be the difference as the Lady Cats were able to pull out a 69-57 win over Paola – their first victory over the Panthers since 2014.

“They are excited to win a basketball game, but at the same time they are collectively starting to figure things out,” Louisburg coach Shawn Lowry said. “Our effort and toughness

was really good and Paola was a tough, physical team too. For us to play that way, and match that intensity and toughness, was important and we want to defend our home court with everything we have."

It all started on the defensive end of the floor for the Lady Cats as they forced 21 Paola turnovers and recorded 15 steals on the night.

Louisburg used a half-court trapping defense that took Paola out of any kind of rhythm offensively and led to several baskets in transition.

"It started defensively for us and that just fed into everything else," Lowry said. "As a coach, I still see those things that we have to clean up, but it was a good team effort. They were able to respond and battle through adversity when it happened."

The Lady Cats (6-8) experienced a little adversity in the fourth quarter. Louisburg held a 17-point lead early in the final period, before junior starter Carson Buffington fouled out.

Paola went on a run and cut the lead to seven with 2 minutes and 28 seconds left in the game, but the Lady Cats were able to put the game away at the free-throw line. Louisburg converted 33 or 45 free-throw attempts for the game, including 10 straight makes to end the game by senior Isabelle Holtzen, sophomore Carlee Gassman and freshman Madilyn Melton.

"It is nice to see some of our inexperience go away at the end of the game like that," Lowry said. "Our kids stood tall, and Isabelle provided some great senior leadership and really took control of things when we were in foul trouble. Other people stepped up and made some good plays as well."

"We work a lot on free throws to win the game and that is what it came down for us. That won us the game."



Louisburg senior Bailey Belcher gets fouled while driving to the basket Tuesday against Paola.

Louisburg also got a big performance from Melton, who didn't play like a freshman. With the game tied at 23-all late in the first half, the Lady Cat freshman scored 11 straight point as Louisburg went on an 11-4 run and took a 34-27 lead at halftime.

For the game, Melton finished with a team-high 21 points and 11 rebounds and she converted 12 of her 16 free-throw opportunities.

"I think all the girls did really, really well," Melton said. "Playing against Paola in middle school was tough, so coming in as a freshman playing varsity, I knew it was going to be even harder. I am just so proud of the girls and I knew we could pull through."

"I just want to go out there, and even though that I am a freshman, I want to be there for my team and help them when they need me."

The Lady Cats got big performances up and down their lineup. Holtzen was second on in the team in scoring with 18 points, including 9 of 10 from the free-throw line.

Along with Melton, Buffington also finished with a double-double with 10 points and 11 rebounds to to alon with a team-high four steals. Senior Bailey Belcher also added 10 points and three steals in the win, while sophomore Haley Cain added seven rebounds.

"We were all pretty hyped up for this one, knowing we were going to play our rival," Holtzen said. "We just played hard as a team and we played together, even though we had some foul problems throughout the game. I think everyone stepped up at the right time and we were able to get a big win."

Louisburg will hope to build on this win tonight when it hosts Eudora for a homecoming matchup. The Lady Cats hope to exact some revenge after falling to the Cardinals in overtime early in the season.

"We are preparing for this run here," Lowry said. "Now we are going back through the league teams, and when it is all said and done, we are going to be in Paola for a sub-state tournament. We are going to see them again on their senior night, so I am sure it will be emotional for them and it will be a tough place to play. We will be ready though."

LOU	12	22	14	21 -
69				

PAO	9	18	6	24
- 57				

LOUISBURG (6-8): Madilyn Melton 21, Isabelle Holtzen 18, Bailey Belcher 10, Carson Buffington 10, Carlee Gassman 5, Haley Cain 5. Totals: 16-47 33-45 69. 3-point field goals: 4, (Holtzen, Melton, Belcher, Buffington)

Meet the LHS 2018 Winter Homecoming Candidates



Members of the 2018 Louisburg High School winter homecoming court are (front row, from left): Grant Ryals, Scott Murphy, Kai Tinich, Mitchell Drew; (back row) Haven Trageser-Turner, Isabelle Holtzen, Alexa Goodspeed and Tomi Frederes.

Homecoming week at Louisburg High School kicked off Monday and events are in full swing. With something going on every day this week, it will be a busy time for students. All of it is, of course, centered around the crowning of the 2018 winter king and queen. Eight students were selected as nominees and here are their names and profiles.

The crowning will take place on Friday at halftime of the boys basketball game with Eudora. Tipoff for that game is set for approximately 7:30 p.m. Good luck to all the participants and make sure to come out on Friday to support the Wildcat girls and boys teams against the Cardinals.



Kai Tinich and Alexa Goodspeed

Kai Tinich

Kai is the son of Terry and Susan Tinich. He has been involved with student council for four years. Kai has participated in golf for three years, Leo's Club for three years, FCCLA for two years, FCA for two years, Spanish Club for two years and basketball for one year. After graduation, Kai plans to attend the University of Arkansas to study international business with a minor in Greek or Italian.

Alexa Goodspeed

Alexa is the daughter of Susan Goodspeed. She has participated in cross country for four years, FFA for four years, softball

for two years, Spanish Club for two years. She was a basketball manager for one year and participated in Leo's Club and choir for one year. After graduation, Alexa plans to attend Pittsburg State University and major in physiology.



Tomi Frederes and Mitchell Drew

Tomi Frederes

Tomi is the daughter Christy and Jerry Frederes. She has participated in FFA for four years, cross country and Leo's

Club for three years, softball and Spanish Club for two years and track and volleyball for one year. After graduation, Tomi plans to attend Pittsburg State University and major in business.

Mitchell Drew

Mitchell is the son of Pat and Shanna Drew. He has participated in baseball for four years and football for four years. After graduation, Mitchell plans to attend Pittsburg State University and pursue a bachelor degree in nursing.



Scott Murphy and Isabelle Holtzen

Scott Murphy

Scott is the son of Gene and Amanda Murphy. He has participated in soccer, band, stage crew, Model United Nations, student council, Scholars Bowl and Technology Student Association for four years. He has also taken part in track and Spanish Club for three years, Jazz Band for two years and National Honors Society, Math Club and Science Olympiad Club for one year. After graduation, Scott plans to attend Cornell University to study mechanical engineering.

Isabelle Holtzen

Isabelle is the daughter of Craig and Michelle Holtzen. She has participated in debate, basketball, cross country, track and Fellowship of Christian Athletes for four years. She has also taken part in choir for three years, National Honors Society and Model United Nations for two years and musical, Leo's Club and Student Advisory Council for one year. After graduation, Isabelle plans to attend the University of Northern Iowa to major in business and will pole vault for the track team.



Grant Ryals and Haven Trageser-Turner

Grant Ryals

Grant is the son of Janelle Ryals and Jason and Michelle Ryals. He has participated in soccer for four years, student council for three years, National Honors Society and girls soccer manager for two years, and Leo's Club and golf for one year. After graduation, Grant plans to attend William Jewell College to play soccer and major in biomedical engineering.

Haven Trageser-Turner

Haven is the daughter of Jeff and Katie Trageser and Courtney Turner. She has participated in FFA, student council and musical for four years, basketball and choir for three years, FCCLA for two years and softball, Leo's Club and Spanish Club for one year. After graduation, Haven plans to attend the University of Kansas and major in nursing.





Lady Cats salvage Top Gun tourney with blowout win



Louisburg sophomore Haley Cain gets on the floor for a loose ball during the Lady Cats seventh-place game against Anderson County Saturday in the Top Gun Tournament at Wellsville High School.

WELLSVILLE – It would have been easy for the Louisburg girls basketball team to just push its seventh-place game aside Saturday in what was an already tough Top Gun Tournament.

Earlier in the week, the Lady Cats had double-digit losses to state-ranked Piper and Frontier League foe Spring Hill, and they have a game with rival Paola looming on the horizon.

The Lady Cats placed all of that behind them and put together a strong performance Saturday to close out the Wellsville tournament. Louisburg took control of the game from the start against Anderson County and never looked back in a 51-22 victory to finish in seventh place.

“It was an awesome midseason tournament to play in,” Louisburg coach Shawn Lowry said. “We talked before it started about the caliber of teams that we were going to go up against. It was great to watch some of them and it was great to play some of

them.

"The girls could have come out flat in our last game, and have not enough emotion, but they didn't. They played with a lot of toughness, effort, togetherness, unselfishness – just like they did the first two games. I was really proud of that."

Louisburg came to life offensively in the second and third quarters as it scored a combined 35 points in the two frames to help pull away thanks to its defense.

The Lady Cats turned Anderson County over many different times during the contest, which led to easy transition points on the other end.

"If we can use some of our athleticism, we would like to," Lowry said. "It worked for us this time. We have some things that we still need to work on."

Senior guard Isabelle Holtzen led the Lady Cats in scoring with 12 points and fellow senior Bailey Belcher added 11 in the win. Buffington finished with nine points, including three 3-pointers, and ended the tournament with 27 rebounds in the three games.

Louisburg (5-8) already had control of the game with a 29-10 lead at halftime, but the Lady Cats all but sealed the win with a monstrous start to the second half. They opened the third quarter with a 14-0 run and ended their tournament on a solid note.

"We talked about those first couple minutes of the third quarter, and how important they are," Lowry said. "Regardless of what is going on in the game score-wise, it seems like those first two or three minutes of the third quarter and so big in determining what is going to happen in that second half. They always respond well with that."



Freshman Brooklyn Diederich passes off to a teammate Saturday. Diederich finished second in the tournament's free throw competition.

Following the tournament, two Lady Cat players also earned honors.

Freshman Brooklyn Diederich placed second in the tournament's free throw competition as she made 22 of 30 over three days, finishing just one behind Wellsville's Ally Newhouse.

Senior Mikayla Quinn was also named to the tournament's all-academic team.

For the first time in more than three weeks, the Lady Cats will return home tonight when it hosts Paola in a 6 p.m. tipoff. They will follow that up with another home game against Eudora on Friday for homecoming.

LOU	10	19	16	6 -
51				

ANDCO	4	6	4	8 - 22
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LOUISBURG (5-8): Isabelle Holtzen 12, Bailey Belcher 11, Carson Buffington 9, Sydni Keagle 5, Alyse Moore 4, Madilyn Melton 4, Brooklyn Diederich 3, Haley Cain 2, Carlee Gassman 1. Totals: 20 6-11 51. 3-point field goals: 5, (Buffington 3, Diederich, Keagle).

LOUISBURG FALLS TO SPRING HILL, NO. 3 PIPER

In what could be called one of the tougher tournaments in the state, that features four state-ranked teams, Louisburg had its hands full from the opening game of the Top Gun Tournament.

The Lady Cats opened play against No. 3 Piper on Jan. 23 and couldn't keep up with the Pirates in a 72-41 loss.

Louisburg then had to square off with Spring Hill in the consolation semifinals Thursday, and despite keeping it close in the first half, came up short in a 65-40 defeat.

Against Spring Hill, the Lady Cats played the Broncos tough as they trailed just 27-17 at halftime before the Broncos opened the game up in the second half.

"It has been a process from the start and I think the first quarter or first half of the Spring Hill game really showed our development and the continued work that we are getting in with our kids," Lowry said. "They are learning, growing and getting better. Our younger players are stepping up and I

think that first half shows we aren't that far away come March, but we have a lot of work to do between now and then, but we are getting there.

"The first time we played them (a 30-point loss), it wasn't much as what they did to us as what we did to ourselves. I think that is part of a young, inexperienced team. The more experience we get, the better we are going to be and I think that showed in that first half."

Carson Buffington led the Lady Cats with 11 points, while freshman Madilyn Melton finished with seven and sophomore Haley Cain added six.

Piper also proved to be worthy of its ranking as it used a 26-point third quarter to help seal its win over Louisburg. Senior Isabelle Holtzen scored a team-high 13 points in the loss and Cain finished with nine.

LOU	13	4	12	11 -
40				
SH				
	65			

LOUISBURG: Carson Buffington 11, Madilyn Melton 7, Haley Cain 6, Alyse Moore 5, Brooklyn Diederich 3, Isabelle Holtzen 3, Sydni Keagle 3, Bailey Belcher 2. Totals: 14 9-16 40. 3-point field goals: 3, (Buffington 2, Diederich)

LOU	9	12	12	8 -
41				
PIP	19	16	26	11
- 72				

LOUISBURG: Isabelle Holtzen 13, Haley Cain 9, Carson Buffington 8, Bailey Belcher 5, Madilyn Melton 5, Alyse Moore. Totals: 10 17-22 41. 3-point field goals: 4, (Belcher, Buffington, Cain, Holtzen)

Spring Hill trips up Lady Cats



Louisburg senior Bailey Belcher goes up for a layup Wednesday during the Lady Cats' game at Spring Hill. Belcher scored a team-high 13 points in the 70-37 loss.

SPRING HILL – It was a game the Louisburg High School girls basketball team wanted to quickly forget.

The Lady Cats had a tough time stopping a Spring Hill team that lived in the paint as the Broncos handed Louisburg a 70-37 loss Wednesday at Spring Hill High School.

It was game that featured mistakes on both ends of the floor for Louisburg, but if there is a positive, those mistakes are all correctable.

“We had breakdowns and those are things we are going to have to get back into practice and work on,” Louisburg coach Shawn

Lowry said. "Part of it is some inexperience, at this point though, we have to start to reduce that. We are no longer a senior, junior, a sophomore or a freshman. We are a group of basketball players and we each have individual jobs to do.

"This is a good group of kids and they are going to work their tails off. They want to do the right things and they care about each other. This bothers them and I am going to be anxious to see how they respond."

Spring Hill jumped out to a big lead early and never let up and it led Louisburg 36-19 at halftime. After an even third quarter, the Broncos went on a 21-4 run in the fourth to seal the win.

The Broncos were able to run a lot of motion offense, which led to a lot of easy points near the basket, and Louisburg couldn't get enough stops early on in the game.

"They are a good team, but we didn't rise to the occasion of playing a good team," Lowry said. "We have some things to figure out about ourselves and each other. We play in one of the strongest tournaments in the state next week we are going to find out a lot about ourselves and how we will respond to how we played against Spring Hill."

Louisburg senior Bailey Belcher led the Lady Cats in scoring with 13 points, including three 3-pointers, and also added seven rebounds.

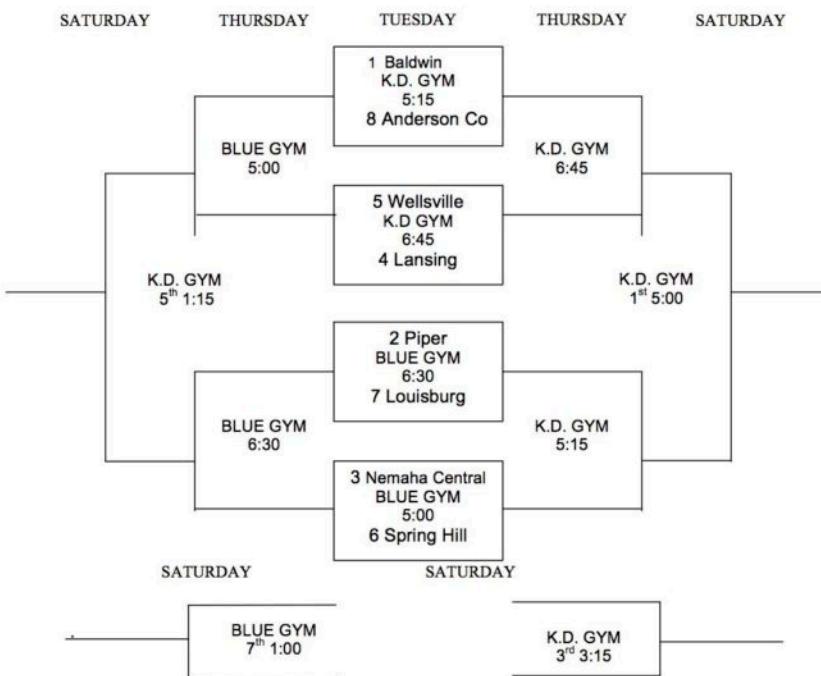
Forward Carson Buffington was one point away from another double-double for Louisburg as he finished with nine points to go along with a team-high 10 rebounds. Sophomore Haley Cain and Madilyn Melton added five rebounds in the loss, and senior guard Isabelle Holtzen had a team-high four assists.

This week will present several challenges for the Lady Cats as they compete in the Top Gun Tournament at Wellsville High School beginning Tuesday. Louisburg is the No. 7 seed and will

open with No. 2 Piper, which is currently undefeated on the season. The Lady Cats will also play on Thursday and Saturday.

TOP GUN TOURNAMENT

WELLSVILLE, KS
JAN. 23, 25, 27 2018



The top team is considered the home team and will wear their white uniforms.

Along with Piper, which is ranked No. 3 in Class 4A-Division I, is Baldwin (No. 1 in Class 4A-DII), Lansing (No. 1 in 5A) and Nemaha Central (No. 3 in 3A).

"It is a fantastic midseason tournament just looking at the teams that will be there," Lowry said. "There is one of the best teams in 3A there in Nemaha Central. Baldwin and Piper are undefeated in 4A, then you mix in a Lansing team that is ranked No. 1 in 5A. Wellsville and Spring Hill are really nice

teams too. It is an incredible field of teams and it will be a fun one to be a part of."

LOU	9	12	12	4 -
37				
SH	18	18	13	21
- 70				

LOUISBURG (4-6): Bailey Belcher 13, Carson Buffington 9, Carlee Gassman 5, Isabelle Holtzen 4, Haley Cain 3, Sydni Keagle 2, Madilyn Melton 1. Totals: 11-58 10-26 37. 3-point field goals: 5, (Belcher 3, Buffington 2)

Lady Cats fall short at De Soto



Louisburg sophomore Carlee Gassman drives to the basket for a layup Friday against De Soto. Louisburg came up short in a 54-40 loss at De Soto High School.

DE SOTO – Going on the road in the Frontier League is difficult enough on normal nights, but the Louisburg girls basketball team found itself down a starter for Friday's

contest at De Soto.

The Lady Cats were without senior captain Isabelle Holtzen, who was competing at the Class 4A state debate tournament, and they had to find a way to make up for her production.

De Soto proved to be too much for Louisburg on both sides of the floor as Louisburg fell, 54-40, and the Lady Cats are now 1-3 in Frontier League play and 4-5 overall.

“Our rotation was a little shorter and some girls were on the floor a little longer than maybe I want them to be,” Louisburg coach Shawn Lowry said. “It is what it is and the next girl has to be ready to go and be ready to play. That is why we work as hard as we do in practice, so when we have a situation like that, they are prepared.

“We were kinda flat. We talk a lot about adversity, and the girls didn’t lay down or quit and they kept battling. This is a journey that we are on and we have to have people that are stepping up at different times and doing more and learning more. This is still part of that learning process for us, even a game like this.”

De Soto took control of the game early on. The two teams were tied at 5-all early, but De Soto went on a 10-4 run to end the first quarter. The Lady Cats couldn’t get in a rhythm offensively in the second quarter and De Soto built a 31-16 halftime lead.



Sophomore Sydni Keagle goes up for two points on Friday in De Soto.

Louisburg couldn't trim the De Soto lead to single digits in the second half as it shot 31 percent for the game.

"We did a lot of stuff to ourselves," Lowry said. "De Soto is a good team, they were well-coached and they were physical. It wasn't anything that we weren't prepared for, but we just didn't execute as well as we should have.

"That is a mentality thing and we just have to be better. We just have to be able to finish some of those shots and watching the ball go through the basket is just about mentality."

Lady Cat junior Carson Buffington recorded a double-double to lead Louisburg with 11 points and 10 rebounds. Sophomore forward Haley Cain also scored in double figures with 10

points.

Freshman Madilyn Melton added nine points in the loss and fellow freshman Alyse Moore was second on the team with eight rebounds.

Louisburg will try and get back on the winning track Wednesday when it travels to Spring Hill for a 6 p.m. contest.

LOU	9	7	11	13
- 40				
DES	15	16	10	13 -
54				

LOUISBURG (4-5): Carson Buffington 11, Haley Cain 10, Madilyn Melton 9, Carlee Gassman 4, Brooklyn Diederich 3, Sydni Keagle 2, Bailey Belcher 1. Totals: 15-49 6-21 40. 3-point field goals: 4, (Melton 2, Buffington, Diederich)

Defense ignites Louisburg to win over Frontenac



Senior Isabelle Holtzen goes up for two of her 13 points during Tuesday's road contest at Frontenac High School. Holtzen and the Lady Cats forced 22 Frontenac turnovers en

route to a 64-56 win.

FRONTENAC – The Louisburg girls basketball team picked the right time to have its best offensive game of the season when it hit the road Tuesday in Frontenac.

As good as the Lady Cats' offense was, their defense might have been even better.

Louisburg forced 22 turnovers on its way to a 64-56 victory over Frontenac and evened their record to 4-4 on the season. The Lady Cats used a lot of those turnovers and turned them into offense as they simply outran the Raiders to a win.

"We practice that way," Louisburg coach Shawn Lowry said. "After getting back off break and just getting back into the gym all together, the girls have practiced great. I expected that effort and toughness on the road against a really good team at their place and it is never easy to play down here."

The Lady Cats employed a frantic-style defense that allowed them to trap the Frontenac guards and it ended up forcing 19 steals. Those steals became points for Louisburg on the other end as it held the lead for 29 of the game's 32 minutes.

Louisburg pushed the ball offensively for many of those 32 minutes and got easy transition baskets thanks to its frenetic pace.

"We did some different things defensively that we have been working on and that we have been putting in over break," Lowry said. "There is a lot of breakdown stuff that we have to clean up and fix, but overall I love the effort, the toughness and we have some athletic girls that can cover some ground. We have some freshmen that are still figuring some stuff out, but overall I was really happy with it."

"I thought we did a really good job of pushing the ball up the

floor and we were the aggressor on defense for the most part. When we weren't, that is when they got back in the game a little bit and we have to stay the aggressor and use our speed and athleticism to our advantage."

It was a team effort as Louisburg had four players in double figures for the first time this season.

Junior Carson Buffington had a big night as she recorded a double-double with 12 points and 12 rebounds to go along with five steals. Senior guard Bailey Belcher led the Lady Cats in scoring with 14 points and also finished with six rebounds, four assists and three steals.

Isabelle Holtzen, another senior guard, was a catalyst on the defensive end for Louisburg as she joined Buffington with a team-high five steals. She also scored 13 points and added four rebounds and four assists.



Freshman Alyse Moore goes up for a layup Tuesday against Frontenac.

Sophomore Carlee Gassman gave the Lady Cats some big minutes as well with 12 points, seven rebounds and three steals. Sophomore Haley Cain added six points in the win, while freshman Alyse Moore finished with nine rebounds.

“(Frontenac) played a lot of zone against us, so our guards had to be solid,” Lowry said. “They were all good, and we do have some that are still learning, but they are learning from some great upperclassmen.”

The game didn’t get off to the start the Lady Cats had hoped as Frontenac scored the first five points of the game to take a quick lead, but the Louisburg defense quickly changed that around.

Louisburg went on a 15-3 run in which it didn’t allow a field goal. Buffington hit two 3-pointers during the run and Melton got it started with a 3-pointer of her own. Gassman and Holtzen each added baskets to help give Louisburg a 19-13 lead going into the second quarter.

The Lady Cats built a 14-point lead midway through the second and eventually led 35-26 at halftime.

Frontenac made a mini-run to start the third quarter and trimmed the Lady Cat lead to five, but Louisburg went on a 9-2 run to end the frame and took back its 14-point advantage.

The Raiders were able to crawl back and get within four with two minutes left in the game, but the Lady Cats took advantage of their free-throw opportunities down the stretch to hold on.

“We weren’t very good that first three minutes of the third quarter, but with all that being said, they never got too low and they didn’t get too high either,” Lowry said. “They were level throughout and did the things that I was asked them to

do."

Louisburg will try for its second straight win Friday when it travels to De Soto. Varsity is set to tipoff at approximately 6 p.m.

LOU	19	16	15	14 -
64				
FRON	13	13	10	20 - 56

LOUISBURG (4-4): Bailey Belcher 14, Isabelle Holtzen 13, Carson Buffington 12, Carlee Gassman 12, Haley Cain 6, Alyse Moore 4, Madilyn Melton 3. Totals: 25-70 9-21 64. 3-point field goals: 5, (Buffington 2, Belcher, Gassman, Melton).

Louisburg girls fall to No. 1 team in state



Louisburg senior Bailey Belcher drives around a Baldwin player to the basket during Thursday home game against Baldwin. The Lady Cats fell to Baldwin, 72-42. Baldwin is currently ranked No. 1 in Class 4A-Division II.

In its first game back from the holiday break, Louisburg girls basketball coach Shawn Lowry figured his team would have a little rust.

It certainly didn't help that the Lady Cats had to go up against the No. 1 team in Class 4A-Division II.

Louisburg hosted Baldwin on Thursday and the Bulldogs put up a performance worthy of their ranking as they handed Louisburg 72-42 loss.

"They are obviously a very good basketball team, and well-deserving of their ranking," Lowry said of Baldwin. "At the same time, we have to do more. We can do more and we are capable of that. We talked to the girls about what a great opportunity and challenge this was going to be for us. We also talked about playing through adversity against the No. 1 team in Division II. We are on a journey, and this is part of a process, and we are going to get better from this."

The two teams were in a close game midway through the first quarter before Baldwin went on an 11-1 run to take a 25-12 lead going into the second quarter. The Bulldogs employed a full-court press against Louisburg and didn't allow the Lady Cats to get in a rhythm.

Baldwin eventually took a 49-22 lead at halftime, but Louisburg didn't back down and made a little run in the second half. The Lady Cats opened the third quarter on an 8-0 run to cut the lead down to 19, but couldn't get any closer.

"The start of the third quarter is one of the most important parts of the game," Lowry said. "I think the girls took to heart about what I said at halftime. I love seeing that from the girls, but at the same time, as the game went on we just got wore down and it is what it is."

Although the Lady Cats fell short, Lowry liked the effort he saw from his players. Senior Isabelle Holtzen and Madilyn

Melton each finished with a team-high 11 points and senior Bailey Belcher added seven points and five rebounds.

Junior forward Carson Buffington also recorded six points and a team-high seven rebounds in the loss.

"It was the first game after break, so that added a little more difficulty to it," Lowry said. "Some of the individual effort was really good and I was extremely proud of some individuals. Collectively, though, we have to do more. I thought Isabelle, Carson, Bailey and Haley (Cain) gave every ounce they had. They never quit. Even with a minute left in the game, you saw players like Isabelle dive on the floor for loose balls and I was really glad to see that."



Louisburg freshman Madilyn Melton battles Baldwin's Reilly Stewart for position Thursday in Louisburg.

Melton tied for a team-high 11 points.

Junior Kayla Kurtz led Baldwin in scoring with 20 points and senior Abby Ogle added 16 points in the win. Ogle also scored her 1,000th career point against Louisburg.

“She has been a really nice player since she was a freshman and it is finally nice now that she is a senior,” Lowry said. “They have a lot of good upperclassmen and (Baldwin coach) Bob (Martin) and his crew and have done a really nice job and have for many years.”

Louisburg will try and get back on track Tuesday when it travels to Frontenac. The Lady Cats will also hit the road later in the week when they go to De Soto on Friday.

LOU	12	10	17	3 -
42				
BAL	25	24	18	5 -
72				

LOUISBURG (3-4): Isabelle Holtzen 11, Madilyn Melton 11, Bailey Belcher 7, Carson Buffington 6, Megan Foote 4, Haley Cain 2, Alyse Moore 1. **Totals:** 13-43 11-17 42. **3-point field goals:** 5, (Melton 2, Belcher, Buffington, Holtzen).