

# Louisburg comeback falls short against Eudora



Louisburg senior Dalton Ribordy puts a up a shot in-between two Eudora defenders Tuesday at Eudora High School. Ribordy led the Wildcats with 13 points to go along with seven rebounds and six steals.

EUDORA – Things looked bleak for the Louisburg High School boys basketball team early in its Frontier League opener against Eudora.

Eudora jumped out to a 15-point lead in the first quarter before the Wildcats even had a chance to make a field goal. It had all makings of a game that was getting ready to get out of hand.

Instead, the Wildcats put together a big run of their own and eventually took a short lead late in the first half. However, Louisburg found itself in another big hole in the second half, and this time it couldn't climb out of it in a 59-49 loss Tuesday in Eudora.

Despite the setback, Louisburg head coach Ty Pfannenstiel found a few positives to build on, including that big first half rally.

“I was really proud of them to be able to battle back from that,” Pfannenstiel said. “That was as slow of a start that we

can have and we struggled to score. I told them that we were going to have to come back possession by possession and that we couldn't get it all back at once. It starts on the defense end, and I thought that was really good to see."

Louisburg (1-4) found itself down 17-2 to start the game before junior Kohl Vogel hit a 3-pointer for the Wildcats' first field goal of the game and senior Dalton Ribordy followed it up with another bucket to cut the lead to 10 going into the second quarter.

The Wildcats outscored the Cardinals 17-7 before halftime and actually took a 24-22 advantage with a minute left in the first half on a layup from senior Ben Minster. Eudora tied the game again with 35 seconds left and the two teams were knotted at 24-all going into the locker room.

Although Louisburg had momentum on its side going into the second half, Eudora got out to another quick start as it went on a 13-4 run and the Wildcats trailed by nine going into the final period.



**Senior Justin Sievert rises up for a shot Tuesday at Eudora.**

Eudora increased its lead to 13 in the fourth quarter and Louisburg could overcome another big deficit this time around. The Wildcats also had a tough time stopping Eudora forward Rock Jerome, who finished with a game-high 22 points.

“Those guards are pretty good,” Pfannenstiel said. “They can take it off the dribble and they were smooth. It seemed like Eudora came out with a little more energy to start the second half. They were able to get a couple quick buckets and gave them some momentum. Both halves we started off slow, especially in the first half. If we don’t get down 15, then I think the game is a different story.

“We knew going in that Eudora is good defensively. A lot of their games have been low-scoring and we struggled to get into any flow offensively. We just have to find ways to go through

those huge scoring droughts.”

Louisburg got a big game from Ribordy as he led the Wildcats in scoring with 13 points to go along with seven rebounds. He also led Louisburg defensively with a team-high six steals.

“I thought Dalton had a really good game and I thought he brought a lot of energy and leadership that we needed,” Pfannenstiel said. “We need start working the ball through him a lot more. That is when we started making our runs is when he was being aggressive and we were making it a point to get him the ball.”

Senior Desmond Doles also finished in double figures for the Wildcats with 10 points and three steals. Junior Brayden Gage added seven points in the loss.

The schedule doesn’t get any easier for the Wildcats as they will host Ottawa on Tuesday for a 7:30 p.m. tipoff in their final game before the holiday break. Ottawa is currently ranked No. 6 in Class 4A-Division I.

“We have a week to prepare and they are traditionally good every year,” Pfannenstiel said of Ottawa. “We just have to keep plugging away and working hard in practice. I think defensively we will stay in games, but we have to do more on the offensive end to be able to hang with these teams and not get in these big holes.”

<b>LOU</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15 –</b>
<b>49</b>				
<b>EUD</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16 –</b>
<b>59</b>				

LOUISBURG (1-4): Dalton Ribordy 13, Desmond Doles 10, Brayden Gage 7, Ben Minster 5, Dylan DeShazer 5, Justin Sievert 4, Kohl Vogel 3, Noah Hill 2. Totals: 19-39 8-12 49. 3-point

field goals: 3, (Gage, Vogel, DeShazer)

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## Lady Cats fall to Eudora in overtime



Louisburg guard Carlee Gassman dribbles into the lane Tuesday during the Lady Cats' contest against Eudora in their Frontier League opener at Eudora High School.

EUDORA – Following its league opener, the Louisburg girls basketball team walked off the floor at Eudora High School knowing it let a victory slip through its fingers.

The Lady Cats had a lead late, went into overtime, but came up short in a 46-37 loss to Eudora, in a game that was plagued by foul trouble and turnovers. It was a combination they weren't able to overcome.

As disappointing as the loss was for the Lady Cats, they plan to use this setback as a positive moving forward in what is a long season ahead.

"They care and they want to do the right things," Louisburg coach Shawn Lowry said. "Their effort continues to be good, but there is a lot of things that we have to clean up. There

are a lot of things we have to get better at, and collectively our mental toughness has to get better.

“It was very soft in many aspects, whether it was our passing, our cuts, catching the ball or our play around the rim. There was a lot of soft play for us and we will fix that.”

Louisburg was able to get up and down the floor in the first quarter and those transition points helped the Lady Cats jump out to a 13-8 lead. Their offense slowed down a little bit in the second quarter, but still took a 19-14 halftime advantage.

Foul trouble and turnovers caught up with the Lady Cats in the third quarter as starting point guard Carlee Gassman and forward Carson Buffington each picked up their fourth foul and had to sit for several minutes. Louisburg also committed seven turnovers in the period, which took the Lady Cats out of what they wanted to do offensively.

Eudora was able to use its zone defense to keep Louisburg out of the middle and limit its scoring chances as the Cardinals outscored Louisburg 15-7 in the third.

“We like to attack the rim, but if you push the ball in the open court then they can’t set their zone up,” Lowry said. “We didn’t do a very good job of pushing the ball or running the floor. Once they got set in their zone, it was a challenge for us to get into some things and our passing just wasn’t very good.”

The Lady Cats (2-3) were able to tie the game early in the fourth on baskets from Haley Cain and Gassman, and then took a 34-32 advantage on a bucket from Buffington with four minutes left.



**Senior guard Isabelle Holtzen grabs a rebound Tuesday at Eudora.**

Eudora scored the next two to go back on top before Gassman tied the game on an assist from Cain with a minute left. Both teams had a chance to take the lead at the end of regulation, but their attempts fell short.

In the overtime, the Cardinals scored six straight points, while starters Gassman and Isabelle Holtzen fouled out, leaving the Lady Cats short-handed.

Cain led the Lady Cats as she finished with 12 points, six rebounds and three steals. Holtzen also scored in double figures with 10 points to go along with three steals.

Buffington led the Lady Cats with 11 rebounds and freshman Madilyn Melton recorded seven. Senior Bailey Belcher led Louisburg's defense with four steals.

Louisburg will try and get back on the winning track Tuesday in its final game before the holiday break. The Lady Cats will host Ottawa at 6 p.m.

“We are going to be ready to play,” Lowry said. “We have a week off and it is not easy having a week of practice from a loss to our next game, especially since this is our last game before break. We are going to work really hard to get some of this stuff fixed.”

<b>LOU</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>1 – 37</b>		
<b>EUD</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>10 – 46</b>		

LOUISBURG (2-3): Haley Cain 12, Isabelle Holtzen 10, Bailey Belcher 6, Carlee Gassman 6, Carson Buffington 2, Madilyn Melton 1. Totals: 16-44 5-12 37. 3-point field goals: none

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## **Wildcats lose back-and-forth game with Anderson County**



Louisburg senior Dalton Ribordy pulls down a rebound during the final game of the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic on Friday at



## **Baldwin High School. The Wildcats came up short in a 56-54 loss to Anderson County.**

BALDWIN CITY – When Anderson County’s John Rundle banked in a 3-pointer with under a minute left to tie the game against Louisburg, Wildcat head Ty Pfannenstiel couldn’t help but think it wasn’t his team’s night.

“Every time I watch basketball, or I am coaching it, every time there is a banked in three I always call it the ‘Kiss of Death,’” Pfannenstiel said. “It always seems like something is going right for that team when it happens. It is not like we were done there, but sometimes stuff like that happens. A three is a three, no matter how it goes in, but that was a big shot for them.”

After a Louisburg turnover and a pair of Anderson County free throws later, the Wildcats walked off the floor following a 56-54 loss to Anderson County in the final game of the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic on Friday at Baldwin High School.

It was a painful defeat for the Wildcats after they staked themselves a 15-point lead midway through the second quarter, but they couldn’t hold on. Louisburg finished the tournament with a 1-2 record, with its lone win earlier in the week against Baldwin.

Louisburg (1-3) trailed 14-11 midway through the first quarter, but the Wildcats’ defense took over as it helped them to a big lead. The Wildcats went on a 26-6 run as they forced several Anderson County mistakes thanks to their pressure defense. In all, Louisburg forced 22 turnovers.

The Wildcats built a 35-20 lead midway through the second quarter, but Louisburg turned the ball over on seven of its final nine possessions of the first half as Anderson County went on a 10-0 run to cut the Louisburg lead to 35-30 at half.

“We have continue to keep the foot on the gas,” Pfannenstiel said. “Our press had a lot to do with that. In the second half, they figured it out a little bit so we got out of that. We are going to have to find ways to score when we aren’t in transition. We need to get them into some different offensive looks and that falls on me. I have to help them out.”

Turnovers and bad shots continued to haunt the Wildcats in the second half as they committed 18 turnovers for the game, but still maintained the lead late in the fourth quarter.



**Junior Brayden Gage goes up for two of his team-high 14 points in Friday’s loss to Anderson County.**

Junior Brayden Gage provided Louisburg with an offensive spark with under two minutes left as he broke open a tie game with a free throw and then scored a basket after teammate Dalton

Ribordy grabbed a big offensive rebound.

Senior Ben Minster extended the Wildcats' lead to 54-51 with a minute left in the contest, but Randle's 3-pointer tied the game with 39 seconds left. Anderson County then stole the ball on Louisburg's next possession and was fouled. Kass Allnutt hit a pair of free throw with 13 seconds remaining in the game to give Anderson County the lead.

Louisburg had one final opportunity to either tie or win the game, but Desmond Doles' 3-pointer fell short at the buzzer.

"We have to find ways to score the basketball," Pfannenstiel said. "We will have to sit back and evaluate and see if we need to change up what we are doing or what it is. I just think we need to relax a little bit and I think we put a little too much pressure on ourselves. We just need to play more team basketball. It was a tough way to lose."

Gage led Louisburg in scoring with 14 points and Doles also finished in double figures with 10 points to go along with five points and five assists. Minster also had an impact on both sides of the floor with nine points, seven rebounds and a team-high six steals.

Junior Kohl Vogel came off the bench to give the Wildcats good minutes as well and scored seven points.

Louisburg will try and get back on track Tuesday when it travels to Eudora for its Frontier League opener. Tipoff is set for 7:30 p.m.

<b>LOU</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>13 -</b>
<b>54</b>				
<b>AC</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>- 56</b>				

LOUISBURG (1-3): Brayden Gage 14, Desmond Doles 10, Ben Minster 9, Kohl Vogel 7, Dylan DeShazer 6, Justin Sievert 4, Dalton Ribordy 4. Totals: 23-55 5-12 54. 3-point field goals: 3, (Gage 2, Vogel)

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## Rebounding lifts Lady Cats to win over Anderson County



Louisburg junior Carson Buffington leads a fast break down the floor Friday against Anderson County in the final game of the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic at Baldwin High School. Buffington pulled down a team-high 20 rebounds in the Lady Cats' 54-32 win.

BALDWIN CITY – The shooting percentage may not be where he wants it yet, the execution wasn't always there either, but Louisburg girls head coach Shawn Lowry couldn't help but smile.

His team showed him exactly what he wanted to see.

The Lady Cats' effort and aggressiveness was in midseason form Friday during the final game of the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic against Anderson County and it showed on the glass. Louisburg pulled down 42 rebounds, including 20 on the offensive end,

that led to a 54-32 victory over the Bulldogs at Baldwin High School.

Louisburg finished the tournament with a 1-2 record after it opened with losses to a pair of state-ranked teams in Burlington and Baldwin.

“We knew those two games against Burlington and Baldwin would be challenging and tough games,” Lowry said. “We just wanted to come out against Anderson County and be physical and aggressive. We wanted to set the tone and the girls took that to heart. Our rebounding was really good, but we are still making a lot of mistakes as a young team. At the same time, that is great to do with a win.”

At the heart of those rebounding numbers was Carson Buffington. The Louisburg junior forward pulled down a game-high 20 rebounds to go along with her seven points and four steals.

Buffington was all over the floor for the Lady Cats as she created several second chance opportunities with her nine offensive rebounds.

“No one can coach that and no one can tell her to do that – it is just what she does,” Lowry said. “I have officials that are coming over and talking to me saying ‘That No. 4 (Buffington) is a beast and she is what – like 5-7?’ She plays like she is 6-2. That is someone who hasn’t seen her play before.

“It is crazy, but it is all about want-to. It is nothing other than she wants to rebound more than anyone else and wants to get to that ball more than anyone else. It is special.”



**Freshman Alyse Moore battles for a loose ball on the floor Friday against Anderson County.**

Buffington's willingness to rebound has seemed to rub off on the rest of her teammate as the rest of the Lady Cats are constantly fighting for rebounds or loose balls.

Senior guard Bailey Belcher is a prime example as she was next on the team with six rebounds to go along with a team-high 14 points. Point guard Carlee Gassman and freshman forward Alyse Moore each had four rebounds, while Moore finished seven points off the bench and Gassman added four assists.

Isabelle Holtzen, who battled foul trouble in the first half, responded well in the second half as she finished with nine points to go along with a pair of assists and two steals. Sophomore Haley Cain added eight points and three rebounds in the win.

“I am seeing our guards crash the boards more and I thought Holtzen and Belcher really rebounded well,” Lowry said. “Haley is starting to get into her own rebounding and Alyse Moore comes in off the bench as a freshman and she has some of the same characteristics that Carson had as a freshman about how she sees and reads the ball. It is neat that Alyse, and the rest of the younger girls, get to see Carson play and that will just help them later.”

Louisburg (2-2) struggled offensively early on as Anderson County took an 11-8 lead, but the Lady Cats closed out the first quarter on a 9-0 run to grab a 17-11 advantage.

It was all Louisburg in the second quarter as it outscored Anderson County 17-7. The Lady Cats’ defense also came up big as it held Anderson County to just 10 points in the second and third quarters combined.

“Defensively we did some things that helped us do some things offensively,” Lowry said. “It gave us that attacking mentality. Our shooting percentage is not where we want it to be yet, and we are not doing some things the way we need to, but our effort and toughness is really good. That is probably what I am most proud of right now.

“Our effort never changed and our toughness didn’t change no matter who we were playing in this tournament. The other stuff we can continue to work on, but those are things that I would be really concerned if we weren’t doing that.”

Louisburg will try and make it back-to-back wins Tuesday when it travels to Eudora for its Frontier League opener. Tipoff is set for approximately 6 p.m.





in a big way Tuesday as they picked up their first win of the season in a 65-51 victory in the second round of the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic at Baldwin High School.

The Wildcats got the victory thanks to their defense as that helped spark a big third quarter run that helped widen their lead to double digits over the Bulldogs.

“It was a much-needed win for us and our kids played hard,” Louisburg coach Ty Pfannenstiel said. “I thought our defense was good all night, but we took it to a different level in the third quarter. When we get out and guard and get in passing lanes, that’s going to lead to some transition points, which needs to be one of our strengths this season.”

Up by just three points midway through the third quarter, the Louisburg defense came to life and helped spark a 16-6 run to end the frame the give the Wildcats a 49-36 lead going into the fourth quarter.

Seniors Desmond Doles and Justin Sievert had to back-to-back steals that led to easy layups in transition and gave them a 42-32 lead.

Louisburg had a balanced scoring effort as it had three players score in double figures. Senior Ben Minster recorded a double-double led the Wildcats with 14 points and 10 rebounds, while Doles and Sievert each finished with 13 to go along with seven and six rebounds, respectively. Senior Dalton Ribordy finished just missed double figures with eight points.



**Desmond Doles goes up for two of his 13 points in a win Tuesday over Baldwin.**

Defensively, Minster led the Wildcats with four steals and Sievert added three. As a team, the Wildcats forced 17 Baldwin turnovers.

“We were balanced offensively,” Pfannenstiel said. “Ben, Justin and Dez did a great job of attacking the rim. Again, their defensive pressure led to a lot of those buckets.”

Except for the first few minutes of the first quarter, Louisburg held the lead the entire way starting when Brayden Gage broke open a tie game with a 3-pointer early.

Louisburg built a 25-17 lead in the second quarter, before Baldwin went on a mini 7-2 run to end the frame to cut into the Wildcat lead.

Doles and Ribordy opened the second half with back-to-back baskets and the Wildcat defense took care of the rest as they held Baldwin to just 31 percent from the floor.

Louisburg will try for its second straight win tonight when it travels back to Baldwin for the final game of the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic against Anderson County. Tipoff is set for 5:30 p.m.

<b>LOU</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>16 –</b>
<b>65</b>				
<b>BAL</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>15 –</b>
<b>51</b>				

LOUISBURG (1-2): Ben Minster 14, Justin Sievert 13, Desmond Doles 13, Dalton Ribordy 8, Brayden Gage 5, Parker Perentis 4, Dylan DeShazer 4. Totals: 23 15-28 65. 3-point field goals: 3, (Gage, Perentis, Sievert)

## **Wildcats come up short against Burlington**

Louisburg almost picked up its first win of the season Monday when it opened the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic against Burlington, but the Wildcats struggled from the field in a 40-35 loss.

Although the Wildcat defense held Burlington to just 35 percent from the floor and forced 16 turnovers, Louisburg struggled on the other end as it shot just 31 percent despite getting out to a 13-7 lead at the end of the first quarter.

Senior Ben Minster led the Wildcats in scoring with 13 points and fellow senior Desmond Doles finished the game with nine. Doles also had four steals on the defensive end to lead Louisburg.

“I thought we played pretty well defensively, but we have to find ways to score,” Louisburg coach Ty Pfannenstiel said. “We just really struggled to capitalize on scoring opportunities.”

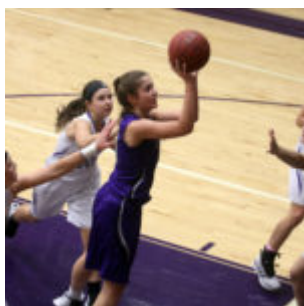
The second quarter wasn't a friendly one for the Wildcats as Burlington took the lead back as it outscored Louisburg 16-6 before halftime. It turned out to be the difference in the contest.

<b>LOU</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>–</b>
<b>35</b>					
<b>BUR</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>–</b>
<b>40</b>					

LOUISBURG: Ben Minster 13, Desmond Doles 9, Justin Sievert 5, Dalton Ribordy 4, Parker Perentis 3, Dylan DeShazer 1. Totals: 14 4-8 35. 3-point field goals: 2, (Sievert, Perentis)

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## **Lady Cats fall to back-to-back state-ranked teams**



Louisburg junior Haley Cain puts up a shot in the lane Tuesday against Baldwin in the second round of the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic at Baldwin High School. The Lady Cats fell 62-31 to

**the Bulldogs, who are ranked No. 5 in the state.**

BALDWIN CITY – Not even a full week into the season, the Louisburg High School girls basketball team wrapped up what might be its toughest two games of the year.

After getting a season opening victory Friday against Pittsburg, the Lady Cats opened the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic with back-to-back games against a pair of state-ranked opponents.

On Monday, Louisburg faced off with Burlington, which is the No. 4 team in Class 4A-DII and then had to meet Baldwin, the No. 5 squad in 4A-DII, the following day.

For a team with just one returning starter from a year ago, it was a tall task for the Lady Cats as they fell to Burlington, 76-46, and then lost to Baldwin, 62-31, on Tuesday. Despite the setbacks, Louisburg coach Shawn Lowry believes his team can learn from this experience.

“I think it’s very beneficial for our young team to play some of these top caliber teams early in the season as we are learning and growing,” Lowry said “It provides a great platform to develop the type of toughness we want to play with. I am confident this group of girls will continue to improve throughout the season as they gain experience and confidence.”

Against Burlington, the Lady Cats got a big game from their two team captains. Junior Carson Buffington recorded her second straight double-double with 16 points and 10 rebounds, to go along with four steals.

Senior Isabelle Holtzen also scored in double figures with 10 points to go along with seven assists and six rebounds. Freshman Madilyn Melton scored nine points and had five

rebounds, while senior Bailey Belcher pulled down six boards.

Despite that, the Lady Cats just couldn't slow down Burlington as it scored 45 first half points on its way to a 45-21 halftime advantage.

It was the same type of start Tuesday against Baldwin. The Bulldogs used pressure defense and 3-point shooting to take a 36-17 lead at halftime. Baldwin hit 10 3-pointers on the night to pull away from the Lady Cats.

"Burlington and Baldwin are very good teams that are well deserving of their current state rankings," Lowry said. "Both teams returned some very talented players from last year and are well coached. We expected these to be very competitive games and I was proud of how our girls responded."

Holtzen and Buffington once again led the Lady Cats on both ends of the floor. Holtzen responded with a team-high 11 points, while Buffington added nine points and a team-high 18 rebounds.

Sophomore Haley Cain was also a factor on the glass for Louisburg as she was second on the team with 10 rebounds.

"Through these first few games, Carson and Isabelle have been great leaders and unselfish in their play," Lowry said. "Haley, Bailey and Carlee (Gassman) have and continue to gain valuable experience and are getting more confident with each outing. We have some younger players that are beginning to see they can compete at this level and how they can contribute to the team's success"

Louisburg will try and end the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic with a win Friday when it travels back to Baldwin for a matchup with Anderson County. Tipoff is set for 7 p.m.



Starting off the season with just one returning starter from a state tournament team last year is difficult enough, but to do it against the No. 7 team in the state is even more challenging.

The Louisburg High School boys basketball team hosted No. 7 Pittsburg on Friday in its season opener and the Purple Dragons handed the Wildcats a 76-48 loss.

The defeat also spoiled the debut of Wildcat head coach Ty Pfannenstiel, who is in his first season with Louisburg.

“I was very impressed with them,” Pfannenstiel said of Pittsburg. “I thought we battled hard early, got down and then fought back again which was good versus this team. Pittsburg just opened it up in the second half and they are relentless on the boards.

“They have some athletes out there, but our kids will learn from this. We will watch film and to see how hard we are really playing. It isn’t that we aren’t trying to play hard, I just don’t think they realize what it takes yet.”

Louisburg faced adversity early as three starters picked up two fouls in the first quarter, including the team’s lone returning starter in senior forward Dalton Ribordy. Junior point guard Brayden Gage and senior Ben Minster were also saddled with a pair of fouls, but Ribordy and Gage later picked up their third in the second quarter.





**Louisburg junior Dylan DeShazer goes up for an easy basket Friday. DeShazer led Louisburg in scoring with 16 points.**

The Wildcats were forced to go to their bench early and they were able to keep their team in the game in the first half.

“We did some good things out there,” Pfannenstiel said. “We had some cold shooting and I don’t think we expected three starters to get in foul trouble early. With Ribordy, I don’t think that is what he was expecting from his first game and I think he was a little over aggressive. I liked his intensity, but he just needs to play a little smarter after getting the first foul early.

“We just have to learn and that will come. Pittsburg played with a different speed than what we have seen in practice and hopefully that will open their eyes.”

Junior Dylan DeShazer came off the bench in place of Ribordy and had a big night with a team-high 16 points, including a pair of 3-pointers. DeShazer scored eight straight points in the second quarter to trim Pittsburg's lead to eight.

Senior Desmond Doles hit a pair of free throws to make the deficit just six, but Pittsburg ended the first half on a 10-0 run to go up 38-22 at halftime.

"Dylan did some good things and he can really shoot it," Pfannenstiel said. "He bodied up well, played good defense and grabbed some big rebounds. He is going to be a player for us and I was proud of the way we battled back. I don't think we understand the momentum we could have had if we could have kept building on that."

DeShazer was the lone Wildcat to score in double figures, but had some help as Minster finished the game with nine points, while Doles and fellow senior Justin Sievert each scored seven.

Louisburg will try and get back on track starting today as it travels to Baldwin High School for the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic. The Wildcats will face off with Burlington at 5:30 p.m. today and then will meet Baldwin at 7 p.m., tomorrow.

"This is the best way to get that taste out of your mouth is to get right back on the court," Pfannenstiel said. "We will see what kind of mistakes we can correct and we have to make sure we are ready to go."

<b>LOU</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>10 -</b>
<b>48</b>				
<b>PITT</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>17 -</b>
<b>76</b>				

LOUISBURG (0-1): Dylan DeShazer 16, Ben Minster 9, Justin

Sievert 7, Desmond Doles 7, Dalton Ribordy 3, Parker Perentis 3, Noah Hill 2, Kohl Vogel 1. 3-point field goals: 4, (DeShazer 2, Sievert, Perentis)

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## **Lady Cats hold on to win season opener over Pittsburg**



**Louisburg junior Carson Buffington (right) and Isabelle Holtzen battle a Pittsburg player for a loose ball Friday in Louisburg during the Lady Cats' season opener. Louisburg defeated Pittsburg 46-43.**

In its first game after losing four starters from a year ago, there were times where Louisburg High School girls basketball team looked like a seasoned club.

The Lady Cats jumped out to a double digit lead in the first half thanks to an offensive burst against Pittsburg on Friday in their season opener.

Then came the second half where both teams filled up the stat sheet with turnovers.

"I kept asking the official, 'This has to be the first game, right?'" Louisburg coach Shawn Lowry said. "It was, and those

are some things you expect from a young team first team out.”

However, the Lady Cats accomplished something a lot of others didn't expect – a victory. Despite a late charge from the Class 5A school, Louisburg held on for a 46-43 win and got its season off on the right foot.

“It felt so good,” junior Carson Buffington said. “I know there are a lot of people out there who are doubting us, but it felt so good to prove that we can do it and that we are actually a pretty good team.”

Buffington, the team's lone returning starter, couldn't have asked for a better start to her season as she was three steals shy of a triple-double. She finished with a team-high 12 points and 13 rebounds to go along with seven steals.

Louisburg's other team captain, senior Isabelle Holtzen, rose to the occasion as well as she added seven points, six rebounds, four assists, two steals and two blocks.

As a team, the Lady Cats forced 25 turnovers that included 14 steals and four blocked shots. Defensively, Louisburg held Pittsburg to 28 points through three quarters.

“The defense did play well at times, but we have a lot of stuff to work on rotation wise,” Lowry said. “Our veterans in Carson and Isabelle really stepped up at different times for us and we are going to learn a lot from this win.”

The Lady Cats (1-0) got help from several other players as well.



**Louisburg freshman Madilyn Melton goes up for two of her nine points Friday against Pittsburg.**

Freshman Madilyn Melton came off the bench to score nine points in her first varsity game and added seven rebounds. Sophomore Haley Cain scored seven points, while senior Bailey Belcher made her varsity debut and scored seven points as well. Sophomore point guard Carlee Gassman added four points.

“It was great to get a win, at home, and in our season opener,” Lowry said. “We had a great crowd and a great student section and it was a lot of fun. For what we are right now, we learned so much throughout this game and grew up so much. Then watching film on their mistakes is going to be so awesome for them and understanding their responsibilities.”

Louisburg got off to a quick start as it took an 8-2 lead on baskets from Belcher, Gassman and a 3-pointer from Buffington, who knocked down three in the game. Pittsburg eventually

whittled the lead down to one, before Cain hit a jumper at the buzzer to give Louisburg momentum into the second quarter.

The Lady Cat built their lead to start the second as they went on a 10-1 run that was keyed by a pair of 3-pointers from Holtzen. Melton ended the run with a steal and score to put Louisburg up 10 points and took a 32-23 lead at halftime.

“Everyone played really well and stepped up,” Buffington said. “It is amazing to see how far we have come since we started practice two weeks ago.”

Both teams took a step back in the third quarter as the defenses took over as Louisburg and Pittsburg combined to commit 21 turnovers during the eight minute stretch.



**Point guard Carlee Gassman puts up a shot in the lane Friday in the Lady Cats' win over Pittsburg.**

“The first half was good offensively, but we knew that team over there (Pittsburg) is a good team and they are well coached and that it was going to be a battle in the second half,” Lowry said. “It was a sloppy, slow third quarter and it probably wasn’t a lot of fun to watch.”

Louisburg held a 42-30 lead with four minutes left in the contest, before Pittsburg turned up the pressure and forced the Lady Cats into eight turnovers. The Purple Dragons whittled the Lady Cats’ lead down to three, but Louisburg wouldn’t let them get any closer.

“They persevered and they were tough through adversity,” Lowry said of his team. “They did the things that you hope for as a coach and that you constantly talk to them about and it is up to them to pull through. They were faced with adversity and making a lot of mistakes that a young, immature team will make, but they got through it and came together.”

The schedule doesn’t get easier for the Lady Cats this week as they take part in the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic at Baldwin High School. Louisburg will face Burlington today and will play Baldwin tomorrow before finishing up with Anderson County on Friday. Burlington and Baldwin are both ranked in the top 10 in Class 4A-Division II.

“This is the last year for the tournament, so the girls are looking forward to playing in it one more time,” Lowry said. “Burlington is always well-coached and a really good team that returns a lot from last year. They do a lot of things that we will have to prepare for. Baldwin is one of the best teams in 4A and Anderson County is always a scrappy team, so it should be a fun tournament.”

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LOUISBURG (1-0): Carson Buffington 4-7 1-2 12; Madilyn Melton 2-7 4-6 9; Bailey Belcher 3-13 1-4 7; Haley Cain 3-10 1-6 7; Isabelle Holtzen 2-6 1-3 7; Carlee Gassman 1-7 2-5 4. Totals: 15-54 10-26 46. 3-point field goals: 6, (Buffington 3, Holtzen 2, Melton).

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## Wildcat boys basketball hopes to build on state appearance



Louisburg head coach Ty Pfannenstiel is in first year with the Wildcat boys basketball team as he tries to build off the program's best finish in 12 years.

Last season, the Louisburg High School boys basketball team had its best finish in 12 years as the Wildcats earned a spot in the Class 4A-Division I state tournament.

It was a senior-laden team that caught fire at the right time and put together one final run.

However, almost every part of that team is gone and the Wildcats are ready to start anew for the 2017-18 season – from



the players all the way to a new coaching staff.

Louisburg returns just one starter from a season ago and two other players that saw varsity time. The rest is a different lineup and a new head coach in Ty Pfannenstiel, who took over for Jason Nelson after he resigned at the end of last year.

Although there will be several fresh faces for the Wildcats, they hope this team can build on what last year's version accomplished.

"Absolutely we want to build off of that momentum," Pfannenstiel said. "The schedule is going to be grueling right off the bat, so we will have a battle on our hands each night. These guys are competitors and the expectations are extremely high for this group."

It has been a good offseason for the new Wildcat head coach as he used that time to get to know his team and what to expect out of this group. He also wanted to make sure the players knew what to expect from him.

Pfannenstiel came to Louisburg from Oakley High School, where he was the school's athletic director, head football coach and head girls basketball coach. He also spent time as an assistant boys basketball coach at Gardner-Edgerton.

"I feel like the transition has been very smooth," Pfannenstiel said. "We got a good start with our summer workouts and are just continuing to build off of that. My expectations are for our kids to be good representatives of Louisburg High School in how we prepare and compete on the court, and how we conduct ourselves off of the floor.

"Obviously, my system and terminology is new to these guys so there is a big learning curve. I think as the year moves on we will get more comfortable in what we do."



**Senior Dalton Ribordy is the team's lone returning starter from last season's state tournament team.**

The Wildcats will lean heavily on their five returning seniors, including returning starter Dalton Ribordy. The Louisburg forward was a factor inside for the Wildcats last season and was among the team leaders in rebounds.

Ribordy (6-foot-4) will join seniors Ben Minster (6-1), Desmond Doles (6-4), Justin Sievert (6-0) and junior Brayden Gage (5-9) in the starting lineup. Minster and Doles also saw a lot of varsity minutes a season ago.

"I really like this group," Pfannenstiel said. "First of all, they are all good kids which makes coaching so much fun. Even though we have five seniors, our varsity experience will still be pretty limited at the start. Dalton has the most experience on the court. He has really emerged as a leader for us in

practice. He's a workhorse day in and day out and we are expecting a big year out of him. I think all the seniors are going to be major contributors for us, each in their own way."

Senior Parker Perentis (5-10), juniors Dylan De Shazer (6-4), Noah Hill (6-4), Kohl Vogel (6-1) and sophomore Madden Rutherford (6-3) will all see varsity time as well off the bench.

Pfannenstiel is also excited about the depth he has this season, which will allow the Wildcats to do some different things on both ends of the floor.

"I think we have pretty good depth and athleticism," he said. "I think this will allow us to play up tempo and be great on defense each night. Our kids are excited to play. We have a lot to learn, but I think we have made good progress each day."

Louisburg will get its season started Friday when it hosts Pittsburg. The tipoff will follow the varsity girls game, at approximately 7:30 p.m.

The Purple Dragons were picked to win SEK League and Pfannenstiel knows his team will be tested early and throughout the season.

"I want us to be extremely competitive each night," he said. "I think with last year's success, the expectations have been raised for this group, which is exactly how we want it. We expect to be great each night we step on the court."

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# Louisburg girls basketball excited for upcoming season



Senior Isabelle Holtzen is one of three seniors for the Louisburg girls basketball team this season and one of just four returning varsity players from a season ago.

The Louisburg High School girls basketball team will have a little different look to it this season – and for good reason.

Louisburg had to say goodbye to five seniors, four of whom were starters, off a team that improved by seven wins last year and finished with a 10-11 record and a close defeat in the sub-state semifinals.

The loss of production will be a hurdle for the Lady Cats to overcome this season, but they are welcoming the challenge with open arms as head coach Shawn Lowry is excited about his group of players.

“With having new and young players that have limited experience in the program, and at this level, the players with experience will be asked to play different roles at different times and I expect there to be a learning curve,” Lowry said. “However, what’s great about this group is that they are making big improvements each day because of how hard they work, their passion for wanting to learn and their unselfishness to do what’s best for their team.”

Lack of varsity experience is something the Lady Cats will have to deal with from time to time during the season.

Junior forward Carson Buffington is the team's lone returning starter. Buffington is a two-time all-Frontier League player after earning honorable mention honors a season ago.

Buffington led the Frontier League with 11 rebounds a game to go along with six points and two steals a contest. Lowry is hoping Buffington can have an even bigger season this year, especially on the offensive end.



**Junior Carson Buffington is the lone returning starter for Louisville, who led the Frontier League with 11 rebounds a game.**

Louisville returns senior guards Isabelle Holtzen and Mikayla Quinn, who gave the Lady Cats minutes off the bench last season. Senior Bailey Belcher, who is in her first year with

the program, will also look to give the Lady Cats some help at the guard/forward spot.

“Isabelle and Mikayla have been in the program for all four years,” Lowry said. “They have both grown so much in that time and have really matured into good leaders. They embrace the process, they are great teammates and have a great deal of pride in their program.

“Bailey is a great fit and has already made an immediate impact to our team by her work ethic, toughness and athleticism. She is a great competitor and will continue to make big gains with each day.”

Buffington, Holtzen and Belcher will begin the season in the starting lineup and will provide the Lady Cats with a lot of quickness and athleticism.

Louisburg will also feature a new point guard in sophomore Carlee Gassman, who transferred in from Iowa this year. Gassman will be the floor general and will be joined by sophomore forward Haley Cain in the starting five. Cain saw some time off the bench last season as a freshman.

Quinn, along with sophomores Sydney Keagle, Reilly Ratliff-Becher and freshman Madilyn Melton, will also see time off the bench.

The new personnel will bring some changes to the Lady Cats’ offensive and defensive philosophy, but the attitude hasn’t changed.

“What’s been great about our program the last couple of years has been the growth and maturation in the leadership of our young players,” Lowry said. “We have several sophomores that came into this season much stronger, more confident and with much improved fundamentals because of their commitment.

“Although the mentality with how we want to play the game

doesn't change year to year, we will look to change up some things we do both offensively and defensively based on our personnel this year."

Like most seasons, Louisburg will be competing in a difficult Frontier League as it will face off with state-ranked teams such as Paola (Class 4A-DI, No. 5), Baldwin (4A-D2, No. 10) and De Soto (5A, No. 9). The Lady Cats will also see Burlington (4A-D2, No. 6) early in the year.

"The Frontier League will again have some of the very best teams in the state," Lowry said. "In addition to a very strong league, we will have the opportunity to play some very good and ranked teams in our non-conference and tournament schedule. With all this said, I trust in our players to compete with great effort and pride every time we take the floor."

Louisburg will open its season at home Friday when it hosts Pittsburg. Tipoff is set for approximately 6 p.m., and the Lady Cats are ready to get the game started.

"The girls have worked hard in preparing for the upcoming season," Lowry said. "Our upperclassmen have helped foster an environment that is competitive and positive with their work ethic and attitudes.

"The girls are always anxious to start playing games after the preseason conditioning work and three weeks of practice."