

Top 10 Stories of 2017



It was a successful, and eventful, 2017 for Louisburg High School athletics and for those who are connected to the Wildcat program. This past year created a lot of school history for LHS and several programs brought back state hardware to Louisburg.

Below are the Top 10 stories from 2017, along with a brief explanation of each. Included in the explanation is the link to the actual story from the event.

This year was a blast to cover and I was blessed to have the opportunity to go along for the ride with many of these. As much fun as it was, I can't wait for 2018 to begin. Looking forward to it!



Louisburg's Calvin Dillon earns his first state golf medal as a freshman as he took 10th at the state meet.

10. Dillon medals at state golf

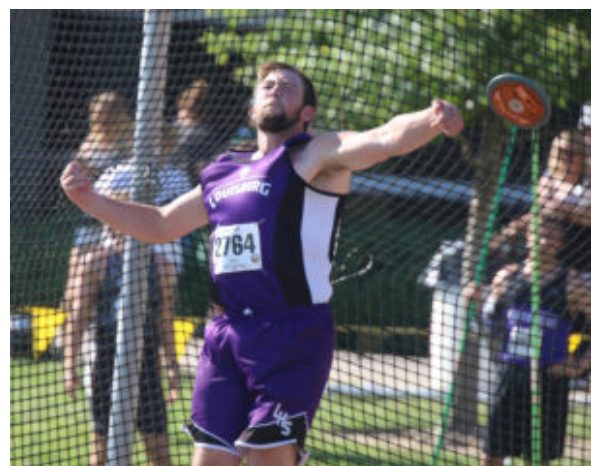
Louisburg freshman Calvin Dillon certainly didn't play like a first-year varsity player as he led the Wildcat golf team all season. Dillon finished 10th at the Class 4A state tournament in Wamego and became the first Wildcat golfer to earn a state medal in several years.

Dillon made the state tournament alongside senior Ty Martin, who finished in 28th place overall after he earned his second straight state appearance.



Isabelle Holtzen earned her first state medal in the pole vault as she took seventh back in May.

9. Holtzen, Dover earn first state track medals



T.J. Dover finished eighth

**in the discus at the Class
4A Kansas State Track and
Field Championships in
Wichita.**

Junior Isabelle Holtzen and senior T.J. Dover both ended their track and field seasons on a good note as they earned state medals in late May at the Class 4A state meet in Wichita.

Holtzen had a big season in the pole vault as she ended seventh in the state after she cleared 10 feet. Earlier in the year, Holtzen broke a 15-year old school record in the pole vault as she topped 11-1.

Dover made his second consecutive trip to the state meet and finished strong in his final high school performance. He took eighth with a throw of 143-4.

The Wildcats qualified for the state meet in 10 events and had two regional champions in junior Quinn Rigney (100-meter dash) and sophomore Chris Williams (400 dash).



8. Frontier League adds three schools, says goodbye to another

For the Frontier League, 2017 brought a lot of changes to a league that has featured seven schools for the last several years.

Starting in the 2018-19 season, the Frontier League will add three new schools. Piper, Tonganoxie and Bonner Springs each accepted invitations to join the league last April to create a 10-team league.

It is didn't stay 10 teams for long as De Soto will make the move to a different league during the same season. The current league will be made up of nine schools: Louisburg, Paola, Ottawa, Spring Hill, Baldwin, Eudora, Piper, Tonganoxie and Bonner Springs.



7. Louisburg boys soccer wins regional crown

The Louisburg High School boys soccer team was trying to make its second consecutive trip to the state tournament this past season and the Wildcats almost got there.

Although the Wildcats fell to McPherson in the state quarterfinal game in late October, Louisburg put together another successful season that included a 1-0 victory over Independence in the regional championship game.

The Wildcats finished the season with a 13-6 record and earned the school's first Frontier League championship since 2010.



Junior Ryan Adams celebrates after he earned a state medal at 138 pounds.

6. Wildcat wrestling qualifies eight for state, Adams picks up medal

The Louisburg High School wrestling team had an historic season as it qualified eight for the Class 4A state wrestling tournament, which tied for the most in school history, during the regional tournament in February at Frontenac High School

Thad Hendrix (106 pounds), Nathan Keegan (120), Kyle Allen (126), Ryan Adams (138), Dylan Meyer (145), Austin Moore (170), Austin Raetzel (195) and Mason Koechner (285) all competed at the state tournament in Salina.

Adams earned the school's lone state medal on the season as he finished sixth overall at 138 pounds.



Louisburg head football and boys track and field coach Gary Griffin retired from the district after 32 years. It was one of many changes for the LHS athletic department.

5. LHS goes through staff/coaching changes

The 2017-18 school year looked a lot of different than in previous years for Louisburg High School athletics.

LHS saw a lot of changes in its coaching staff and in the administration as well. Activities director Darin Gagnebin stepped down and was replaced by current director Jeremy Holloway.

In the coaching department, former head and assistant football Gary Griffin retired from the district after 32 years with the high school and Louisburg promoted assistant Robert Ebenstein

as the new Wildcat head football coach.

Jason Nelson resigned his post as the Wildcat head boys basketball coach and he was replaced with Ty Pfannenstiel. Griffin and Greg Darrington also resigned as the boys and girls track and field coaches, and were replaced by Andy Wright (boys) and John Reece (girls).



Louisburg cross country runners (from left) Tim Smith, Trinity Moore and Wyatt Reece each ended the season with a state medal.

4. LHS cross country earns three state medals, qualifies girls team

The Louisburg High School cross country team might have had

its best season in its 19-year history in 2017.

The Wildcats thrived against some of the state's best competition as seniors Wyatt Reece, Tim Smith and sophomore Trinity Moore all earned state medals at the Class 4A meet in Wamego.

Moore recorded the highest finish for a female runner in school history as she finished fifth in the state and broke her own school record in the process with a time of 19 minutes and 47 seconds.

In the boys race, Reece picked up his first state medal with a time of 17 minutes and finished 11th overall. Smith, who won a regional title the week before, came in 15th with a time of 17:05. Smith was the first Wildcat to win a regional title in school history.

Louisburg also made history as the Wildcat girls team qualified for the state meet for the first time after they finished third at their regional in Burlington. Moore joined Isabelle Holtzen, Reilly Alexander, Carlee Gassman, Kaitlyn Lewer, Payton Shaffer and Emily Williams to make up the seven-member squad that finished 10th in the team standings at state.

Earlier in the year, Moore became the school's first Frontier League champion, while Reece recorded the highest league finish in boys history as he took second at the league meet.



3. Louisburg boys basketball earns first state tournament berth in 12 years

The season may not have started out the way the Louisburg boys basketball team would have liked, but it certainly finished on a positive note.

Louisburg knocked off rival Paola in the sub-state semifinals and then defeated Fort Scott in the championship game in early March to earn its first sub-state championship since 2005.

The Wildcats earned the No. 6 seed and squared off with eventual champion Bishop Miege at the Class 4A state tournament in Salina. The Stags ended the Wildcats' season with an 81-47 loss.



2. LHS girls soccer finishes fourth at state tournament

Louisburg's girls soccer program has only been around for two years, but the Wildcats have set high expectations from the beginning and that continued in 2017.

The Wildcats advanced to the Class 4-1A state semifinals for the first time in school history as they defeated Piper with a 2-1 victory in overtime. This victory came off their second consecutive regional title as they knocked off Bonner Springs.

At the state tournament, Louisburg faced off with Thomas More Prep and suffered a heart-breaking 1-0 loss in the semifinals. The Wildcats moved on to the third-place game against Maize South and eventually finished fourth overall.



1. Lady Cat volleyball ends season as state runner-up

The Louisburg High School volleyball team was just one point away from not only becoming the school's first state volleyball champion – but also the first female team to win a state title in Louisburg history.

As close as the Lady Cats got, they came up just short against defending state champion Rose Hill in late October at the Class 4A-Division I state championship. Louisburg fell 23-25, 25-10 and 29-27 in heartbreaking fashion to finish as the state runner-up.

Still, it was an impressive season for Louisburg volleyball as it finished with a 34-10 record. The Lady Cats reeled off wins over Basehor-Linwood, Bishop Miege and Rose Hill in pool play and then downed Wellington in the state semifinals.

The Lady Cats received several accolades as junior Anna Dixon

and senior Sophie McMullen earned first team all-state and all-league honors. Dixon was also named as the Co-Player of the Year in Class 4A-Division I.

Junior Carson Buffington was also named to the all-state tournament team with Dixon and McMullen.

Lady Cats get win over Ottawa before holiday break



Senior Mikayla Quinn goes up for two of her nine points Tuesday during Louisburg's home contest against Ottawa. The Lady Cats rolled to a 64-37 victory to even their record at 3-3 on the year.

The Louisburg High School girls basketball team got it exactly what it needed before taking some time off during the holiday break – a victory.

After losing in overtime last week to Eudora, the Lady Cats rebounded in a big way as they controlled Ottawa from the opening tip Tuesday and never looked back in a 64-37 win at Louisburg High School.

The victory evened the Lady Cats' record at 3-3 and was

important as they wrap up the first part of their season.

"After letting one slip away from us against Eudora, we had a week to prepare and the girls worked hard to get ready for this," Louisburg coach Shawn Lowry said. "It was at home, and our last game before break and it is always tough with it being finals week. The girls were really focused though, and they were really focused in practice and I thought it carried over into the game."

Focus certainly wasn't a problem for Louisburg as it dominated almost every aspect of the game and it started on the defensive end. Louisburg forced 23 Ottawa turnovers, a lot of which turned into transition points and easy baskets on the other end.

The Lady Cat offense took a big step forward Tuesday as it bounced back from just scoring 37 points in a loss against Eudora.

"It just shows that we can get out and run the floor," Lowry said. "We have some things that we want to work on over break with that, but we were good offensively. It was a good collective effort from everyone and I thought it was good to get the win.

"Defensively, I still see some breakdown stuff, but we are working hard and the effort is good because we care about being good for each other. We still need to clean up some stuff on the defensive end, but I like our effort and how hard the girls are playing."

Louisburg got a nice boost off the bench from Madilyn Melton. The freshman forward scored a team-high 14 points, including three 3-pointers and had six rebounds. Senior Bailey Belcher also finished in double figures with 12.



Sophomore Haley Cain puts up a shot over two Ottawa defenders Tuesday.

Seniors Isabelle Holtzen and Mikayla Quinn each added nine points in the win and junior Carson Buffington just missed out on a double-double with eight points and 11 rebounds.

The outcome of the game never seemed in doubt as the Lady Cats opened the game on a 16-6 run, and after an evenly-played second quarter, led 31-21 at halftime.

Ottawa would get no closer as Louisburg put the game away in the third quarter as the Lady Cats outscored the Cyclones 17-4 in the frame and never looked back.

The big lead allowed Lowry to play young bench players at several different points throughout the contest.

“That is what you hope for as a program is that you can get girls experience that are on the sophomore and freshman

levels,” Lowry said. “I talk to them all the time in practice about making sure they are doing the things to put themselves in position when it is their time to be on the floor. They have taken it to heart. Those young players are going to make those young player mistakes, but their effort is really good and they are starting to figure out that toughness piece.”

Louisburg will open the 2018 part of the schedule on Jan. 4 when it hosts Baldwin at 6 p.m. The Bulldogs are currently the No. 1-ranked team in Class 4A-Division II.

LOU	16	15	17	16 –
64				
OTT	6	15	4	13
– 37				

LOUISBURG (3-3): Madilyn Melton 14, Bailey Belcher 12, Isabelle Holtzen 9, Mikayla Quinn 9, Carson Buffington 8, Haley Cain 4, Carlee Gassman 4, Alyse Moore 3, Reilly Ratliff-Becher 1. Totals: 17 12-24 64. 3-point field goals: 6, (Melton 3, Buffington, Holtzen, Quinn)

Wildcats can't keep up with No. 4 Cyclones



Louisburg senior Ben Minster goes up for two of his 12 points during the Wildcats' contest with Ottawa on Tuesday at Louisburg High School. The Wildcats fell to the No. 4-ranked Cyclones, 55-39.

Down by just two points at halftime to the No. 4-ranked team in the state, the Louisburg High School boys basketball team couldn't have asked to be in a better position.

The Wildcats had an opportunity to pull off one of the bigger upsets of the early season against Ottawa and give themselves some momentum going into the holiday break.

Unfortunately for the Wildcats, the second half didn't go as well as the first.

Ottawa held the Louisburg offense to just five points in the third quarter and the Wildcats couldn't keep up with the Cyclones in a 55-39 loss.

"I thought the first half we were playing well, defensively and offensively," Louisburg coach Ty Pfannenstiel said. "I thought we had a lot of energy, which I think is so important for us. The second half, for some reason, we didn't have that energy. Ottawa came out fired up and got some buckets to go in. We got six possessions without a basket and we just looked deflated. That is the difference. We have to find ways to fight through that, and that is two games in a row where we have been flat in the second half."

In the first quarter, Louisburg and Ottawa traded the lead

five times before the Cyclones went up 14-11 going into the second quarter.

Louisburg junior Dylan DeShazer gave the Wildcats a lead early in the second on a 3-pointer, before the Cyclones took it back until late in the first half. Junior guard Brayden Gage hit a runner in the lane to put Louisburg up one with just more than a minute left before halftime.

Ottawa ended the second quarter with a 3-pointer to give the Cyclones a 24-22 advantage going into the locker room. Still, the Wildcats had the momentum on their side.

The second half turned out to be a different story. The Wildcats (1-5) watched as Ottawa opened the second half on an 11-2 run and Louisburg struggled to find success on the offensive end.



Senior Parker Perentis drives past an Ottawa defender

Tuesday in Louisburg.

"We were patient on offense, especially in the first half," Pfannenstiel said. "Then when we had a few possessions where we didn't score in the second half, then we started going back to doing stuff on our own and standing around and watching other guys. I was disappointed in our body language when things weren't going right for us."

"We just have to keep fighting no matter what the score is, we just have to keep fighting. We are not very good when we are not playing with energy, and we lost that in the second half."

Ottawa started the fourth quarter on another big 11-3 run to put the game out of reach for the Wildcats and hand them their third straight loss.

Senior Ben Minster led the Wildcats in scoring with 12 points, while senior Dalton Ribordy and Gage each finished with seven points.

Louisburg will try for a fresh start following the holiday break when it hosts Baldwin on Jan. 4. The Wildcats defeated Baldwin earlier in the season.

"Ottawa is a good team," Pfannenstiel said. "I think we proved we can play with those teams, but you can't say you played with a team for a half – you have to play that kind of basketball for four quarters. We have to keep that fight and try and build that momentum. We have lots of work to do, but I don't think we are that far away."

LOU	11	11	5	12 –
39				
OTT	14	10	12	19 –
55				

LOUISBURG (1-5): Ben Minster 12, Dalton Ribordy 7, Brayden Gage 7, Dylan DeShazer 5, Kohl Vogel 3, Justin Sievert 3, Desmond Doles 2. Totals: 14-39 8-14 39. 3-point field goals: 3, (Vogel, Sievert, DeShazer)

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.”

LOU	7	17	10	15 –
49				
EUD	17	7	19	16 –
59				

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)

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.”

LOU	13	6	7
10	1 – 37		
EUD	8	6	15
7	10 – 46		

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

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.

LOU	18	17	6	13 –
54				
AC	16	14	8	18
– 56				

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)

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.

AC

11

7

3

11 – 32

LOUISBURG (2-2): Bailey Belcher 14, Isabelle Holtzen 9, Haley Cain 8, Carson Buffington 7, Alyse Moore 7, Madilyn Melton 4, Mikayla Quinn 3, Carlee Gassman 2. Totals: 20 8-13 54. 3-point field goals: 2, (Holtzen, Quinn).

Defense sparks Wildcats to first victory



Louisburg senior Ben Minster draws a foul in the lane against Baldwin on Tuesday during the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic at Baldwin High School. Minster led the Wildcats with 14 points and 10 rebounds.

BALDWIN CITY – The first two games didn't unfold the way new Louisburg head coach Ty Pfannenstiel had hoped.

One ended in a double-figure loss to a state-ranked Pittsburg team, and in the other, Louisburg struggled from the field in a close loss to Burlington to open the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic.

Needless to say, the Wildcats helped make up for those losses

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.

LOU	14	15	20	16 –
65				
BAL	12	12	12	15 –
51				

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.

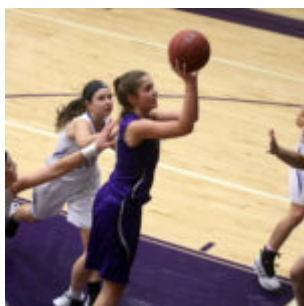
“I thought we played pretty well defensively, but we have to find ways to score,” Louisburg coach Ty Pfannenstiel said. “We just really struggled to capitalize on scoring opportunities.”

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.

LOU	13	7	7	8 –
35				
BUR	7	16	9	8 –
40				

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)

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.

46

BUR	22	23	15	16 –
76				

LOUISBURG (1-2): Carson Buffington 16, Isabelle Holtzen 10, Madilyn Melton 9, Carlee Gassman 5, Haley Cain 3, Bailey Belcher 2, Alyse Moore 1. Totals: 15-52 7-16 46. 3-point field goals: 3, (Buffington 2, Gassman)

LOU	8	9	8	6
– 31				

BAL	22	14	14	12 –
62				

LOUISBURG: Isabelle Holtzen 11, Carson Buffington 9, Bailey Belcher 5, Haley Cain 4. Totals: 10-45 7-18 31. 3-point field goals: 4, (Holtzen 2, Buffington, Belcher)

Pittsburg spoils Louisburg's season opener



Louisburg senior guard Justin Sievert drives the lane on a Pittsburg defender Friday at Louisburg High School. Pittsburg defeated the Wildcats 76-48 in their season opener.

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."

LOU	12	10	16	10 –
48				
PITT	19	19	21	17 –
76				

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)