Rough second quarter hurts Louisburg in loss



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Wildcats hope to stop their losing skid when they return from the holiday break on Jan. 6 when they travel to Baldwin. Tipoff is set for 7:30 p.m.

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

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

Lady Cats down Ottawa for third straight win



Louisburg senior Tayler Lancaster tries to drive around an Ottawa defender during the Lady Cats' game Monday in Ottawa. The Lady Cats defeated the Cyclones 55-40.

OTTAWA – Madisen Simpson had the type of scoring night only a handful players in Louisburg girls basketball history can relate to.

During Monday's game in Ottawa, Simpson exploded for a career-high 28 points, including 6-for-8 from 3-point range and the Cyclones didn't have an answer for the Louisburg senior guard.

More importantly, Simpson's scoring output helped give the Lady Cats a big boost in their 55-40 win over Ottawa. It was the third straight victory for Louisburg as it heads into the holiday break with a 3-3 record and a 2-0 mark in the Frontier League.

As big as Simpson was for the Lady Cats, it was their defense that propelled them to a fast start as they finished with 15 steals on the night as they kept Ottawa at arm's length, despite a slow second quarter.

“I challenged some of the seniors at halftime and their response was great,” Louisburg coach Shawn Lowry said. “They responded like you would have hoped they would. I am really proud of them. I think the thing you are seeing too is that it is a collective effort. Madisen had a great night, obviously, but other girls did good things defensively and rebounding so it was a good team win.”

Louisburg jumped out to a quick start as it took a 21-11 lead into the second quarter, and from there, the Lady Cats had a tough time keeping that same momentum going to finish the half as Ottawa outscored them 9-6.



Louisburg senior Madisen Simpson goes up for two of her game-high 28 points Monday in Ottawa.

The Lady Cats still took a 27-20 lead into halftime, but Lowry wanted to see more and the team responded to his challenge.

“We really came out strong,” Simpson said. “Our defense was high-intensity to start the game, but once the second quarter started we dropped a little bit. We got into a little bit of foul trouble, but we were able to pick it back up and worked

hard as a team. Even when the younger players came in at the end, they finished it for us and it really was a good win."

The players seemed to take to heart whatever their coach said as Louisburg went on to outscore Ottawa 16-8 in the third quarter to go up by double digits and all but seal the win over the Cyclones.

As much as Simpson helped the Lady Cats in the scoring department, she also performed on the defensive end. Simpson, along with sophomore Carson Buffington and senior Tayler Lancaster, led the team with four steals each.

Senior Paige Buffington and junior Isabelle Holtzen also provided a lot of defensive pressure on the perimeter.

"Madisen has taken that point guard role on for us this year and she has not missed a beat there for us," Lowry said. "However for her, it all starts defensively. When she came in as a freshman, I challenged her a lot. I knew she wanted to be an offensive player, but I am so proud of the defensive player that she is. Yes, she had 28, but her defense is what I am most proud of.

"I thought Paige was really solid too, and she wasn't feeling really well, but that is why she is a captain for us. She will give whatever her team needs her to give, even when she is not feeling great. Proud of her for that."

Lancaster almost reached double digits in scoring with nine points, while Carson Buffington led the Lady Cats with eight rebounds and senior Chloe Renner added five.

The win provided the Lady Cats with a big boost heading into the holiday break. They have already matched their win total from a season ago and are looking for several more wins in the season's final two months.

"I knew that we were going to be better than last year with

all the hard work we put in during the preseason and commitment week," Simpson said. "I didn't think that our defensive intensity would be this high, this soon. Our defense is absolutely amazing right now, and as we go further into the season, I can't imagine what it is going to be like later on."

Louisburg returns to action on Jan. 6 when it travels to Baldwin. Tipoff for the girls game is set for 6 p.m.

LOU	**21**	**6**	**16**	**12 – 55**
OTT	**11**	**9**	**8**	**12 – 40**

LOUISBURG (3-3): Madisen Simpson 28, Tayler Lancaster 9, Haley Cain 6, Paige Buffington 4, Isabelle Holtzen 3, Chloe Renner 3, Carson Buffington 2. Totals: 22-48 4-10 55. 3-point field goals: 7, (Simpson 6, Lancaster)

Eudora uses big second half to get past Louisburg



Louisburg junior Dalton Ribordy puts up a shot over a couple Eudora defenders Tuesday at Louisburg High School. Ribordy

finished with eight points in Louisburg’s 64-49 loss.

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

The next 16 were a different story.

Eudora doubled up Louisburg in the third quarter and the No. 7 Cardinals spoiled the Wildcats’ home opener Tuesday and handed Louisburg a 64-49 loss at Louisburg High School.

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

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

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



Senior Jayce Geiman pulls up for jumper Tuesday against Eudora.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Lady Cats roll Eudora for

back-to-back wins



Louisburg senior Madisen Simpson puts up a shot in the lane during Tuesday's home opener against Eudora. The Lady Cats scored 19 unanswered points to open the game and ran away for 43-23 win.

It was a rough fourth quarter Tuesday as the Louisburg girls basketball team failed to score in the game's final eight minutes.

For most teams that would spell doom and gloom, but not Louisburg. Even after that rough patch, the Lady Cats still won – and they did it comfortably.

That should tell you about all you need to know as Louisburg dominated Eudora 43-23 in its home opener at Louisburg High School. The Lady Cats scored 19 unanswered points to jump out to a big lead to start the game and captured their second consecutive win in the process.

"Defense really set the tone for the game and our offense kind of fed off that, especially early," Louisburg coach Shawn Lowry said. "The girls have challenged each other hard at practice and we played well.

"It was just a great effort. We were on the floor getting all the loose balls and I think that is our identity. We found that out early on and we are going to have to be a team that fights for every loose ball. We are going to have to be disciplined about how we rebound the ball and how we defend."



Louisburg senior Chloe Renner goes up for two points Tuesday against Eudora.

Defensively, the Lady Cats (2-3) smothered the Eudora offense as they held the Cardinals scoreless for more than eight minutes and Eudora didn't score its first field goal until 47 seconds left in the first half.

Louisburg was active defensively most of the night and tallied 12 steals as a team. Five of those steals came from guard Isabelle Holtzen as the Lady Cat junior was one of several players to turn up the pressure on the perimeter.

"They really responded," Lowry said of his team "After the tournament last week, they responded about some of the things

I talked to them about defensively. I think they saw some sparks of that in some of the games that we played in before, and our practices since then have been preparing to do this kind of defensive work and they really embraced that. It is another step for us to become the team that we know we can be later this year.

“I thought Isabelle really sparked us defensively. “She is such a scrappy kid and she is one of the kids that you love to have around because she is going to battle for everything.”

Senior Tayler Lancaster opened the game with five consecutive points to help build a 7-0 lead and senior Madisen Simpson finished the first quarter with seven points to put Louisburg up 19-0.

Free throws from senior Chloe Renner and a basket from senior Paige Buffington gave Louisburg a 20-point advantage to start the second quarter. Holtzen had a steal and a score and Simpson followed with five straight points to put the Lady Cats up 29-2 right before halftime.

Louisburg put together a 43-12 lead going into the fourth quarter and eventually forced a running clock. The Lady Cats also performed well from the free-throw line as they converted 15 of 20 opportunities.

Simpson led the Lady Cats in scoring with 14 points and Holtzen was next on the team with seven points to go along with her five steals. Buffington, Renner and Lancaster all finished with six points.

Sophomore Carson Buffington led Louisburg with seven rebounds and freshman Haley Cain added five.

“We have kids that are growing up and doing more,” Lowry said. “Chloe is starting to feel more comfortable and more confident. You can see that in her play and defensively is where it started for her. Haley is a freshman, and she is

still trying to figure out the high school game, but she is getting things as well.”

Louisburg will try for its third consecutive win today when it travels to Ottawa for its final game before the holiday break. Tipoff is set for approximately 6 p.m.

LOU	**19**	**10**	**14**	**0 – 43**
EUD	**0**	**5**	**7**	**11 – 23**

LOUISBURG (2-3): Madisen Simpson 14, Isabelle Holtzen 7, Tayler Lancaster 6, Paige Buffington 6, Chloe Renner 6, Carson Buffington 4. Totals: 12-33 15-20 43. 3-point field goals: 4, (Simpson 2, Holtzen, Lancaster)

Lady Cats down Anderson County for first victory



Louisburg freshman Haley Cain battles for a rebound during the final game of the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic against Anderson County at Burlington Middle School. Cain and sophomore Carson Buffington led the Lady Cats with seven rebounds each.

BURLINGTON – Louisburg girls basketball coach Shawn Lowry has seen some sort of improvement from his team every time the Lady Cats hit the floor.

They just haven't had much to show for it – that was until Friday.

Louisburg faced off with Anderson County in the final game of the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic in Burlington and the Lady Cats got their first notch in the win column. The Lady Cats defeated Anderson County 46-34 to snap a three-game losing streak to start the season – a season that began by playing two state-ranked teams and a Class 5A program.

"We are currently building and we aren't the team that we are going to be midway through the season and we aren't the team we are going to be at the end of the year," Lowry said. "We have a lot of growth to do yet, and I think the girls recognize that, but what I do love is how they are playing. The way they are getting on the floor for loose balls, the way they are defending and rebounding for the most part."

The Lady Cats (1-3) had to do a lot of dirty work against an Anderson County team that wanted to slow down the pace of the game and the Bulldogs made it difficult for them to get in a rhythm offensively.

Louisburg won the game thanks to hustle plays and big baskets from seniors Madisen Simpson and Paige Buffington. Simpson, who scored a game-high 17 points, connected on three 3-pointers and came up with big baskets to stop an Anderson County run.

Buffington and fellow senior Tayler Lancaster were also big as they finished with nine and eight points, respectively.

"All of the girls are embracing their roles and that is really

cool to see as a coach," Lowry said. "We have some good senior leadership, and when there is adversity, they are going to step up. I don't have any doubt in that.

"The others are going to follow their lead, and they are leading by what they are doing, and not what they are saying. You see girls like Paige, Tayler and (junior) Isabelle Holtzen diving for loose balls and that is great to see."

Anderson County got off to a quick start with a 4-0 lead to start the game, but the Lady Cats took control of the game after that with an 18-6 run that carried over into the second quarter that started thanks to a couple quick baskets from senior Chloe Renner.



Senior Madisen Simpson draws a foul as she goes up for a shot during Friday’s contest against Anderson County.

Simpson tied the game at the end of the first quarter with a steal and a score, and then gave the Lady Cats the lead with a pair of free throws. Simpson then hit a pair of 3-pointers in the second quarter, while Buffington converted on a 3-point play to help Louisburg to a 27-19 lead at halftime.

The Bulldogs cut the Louisburg lead to five points early in the third quarter, but would get no closer. Along with a few baskets down the stretch, the Lady Cats made their living at the free-throw line as they converted 18 of 31 for the game.

“I knew Anderson County was going to make it tough and that they were going to make it a sloppy dogfight and that is what it was,” Lowry said. “We talked about that going into the game. The good thing about that is that we can play that way. We can play several different styles. The girls were really excited to get the win, though.”

Although they didn’t have a big scoring line, the Lady Cats had a nice rebounding game from three players. Sophomore Carson Buffington and freshman Haley Cain had seven rebounds to lead Louisburg and senior Emalee Overbay had six in the win.

Junior Isabelle Holtzen also played well defensively with a team-high four steals and Simpson added three.

Louisburg will leave tournament play behind and get started in Frontier League play beginning Tuesday when it hosts Eudora for its home opener. The Lady Cats will then hit the road again next Monday to play Ottawa before taking a break for the holidays.

“After getting a chance to play Baldwin the other night in this tournament, we are ready to get league play started,” Lowry said. “More importantly, we are ready to play at home. We want to play in front of our crowd and fans and we are excited for that as much as anything.”

LOU	**12**	**15**	**8**	**11 – 46**
AC	**10**	**9**	**8**	**7**

– 34

LOUISBURG (1-3): Madisen Simpson 17, Paige Buffington 9, Tayler Lancaster 8, Chloe Renner 4, Carson Buffington 3, Haley Cain 2, Emalee Overbay 2, Ryan Caldwell 1. Totals: 12-41 18-31 46. 3-point field goals: 4, (Simpson 3, Lancaster)

Guetterman, Harding pace Wildcats in blowout win



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

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

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

Guetterman scored a game-high 26 points as he helped Louisburg to its second straight win with a 75-49 victory over Anderson County. Several of those points came thanks to senior teammate

Grant Harding who found an open Guetterman while driving to the basket.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

LOU	**20**	**11**	**26**	**18 — 75**

BUR 9 17 9 14 – 49

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

Wildcats get first victory of season over Baldwin



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

LOUISBURG LOSES TOURNEY OPENER TO BURLINGTON

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Louisburg girls battle Baldwin in loss



Louisburg junior Isabelle Holtzen dribbles past a Baldwin defender Tuesday in the second game of the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic. The Lady Cats fell 56-50.

BURLINGTON – As Louisburg coach Shawn Lowry was gathering his things and getting ready to leave the floor, a group of parents walked over to him with something to say.

Those kind of conversations aren't always the most pleasant, especially after his Louisburg team just lost a hard fought contest. However, these parents weren't from his school – but his opponent.

"We had Baldwin parents stop us after the game and tell me that our kids play so hard and a great game," Lowry said. "Those are great things to hear. These girls give everything. They play their tails off and they are just tough kids."

It wasn't something it could put in the win column, but for the Louisburg High School girls basketball team, Tuesday's game with Baldwin had its fair share of small victories.

The Lady Cats faced off with the Bulldogs in the second game

of the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic at Burlington Middle School and left with a 56-50 loss. Still, against one of the top teams in the Frontier League, Louisburg showed it wasn’t going to back down.

Louisburg (0-3) trailed by as many as 17 points in the second quarter and whittled the Baldwin lead all the way down to a two possession game late in the fourth quarter. The Lady Cats did all this as they were saddled with foul trouble for most of the contest.

Starters Carson Buffington, Paige Buffington and Madisen Simpson all had three fouls in the first half and the Lady Cats had to rely on their bench for much of the second quarter and into the second half.



Senior Paige Buffington puts up a shot in the lane Tuesday against Baldwin at Burlington.

Juniors Isabelle Holtzen, Haven Turner and Ryan Caldwell, along with freshman Haley Cain, all gave Louisburg valuable minutes to keep the game within reach.

“That is a good team we played,” Lowry said. “Baldwin is as good as any team that we will see and there are a lot of good players in that group. We had other kids step up when we

needed them to. We had freshmen and sophomores come and contribute when we need them. That was great to see. We had a lot of players that had to sit down and just couldn’t play. We had players foul out at the end and we had players still battle away and that is awesome to see.”

Louisburg whittled the Baldwin lead to single digits in the third quarter on a quick 6-0 run on baskets from Paige Buffington, Carson Buffington and Lancaster as Baldwin battled foul trouble itself.

Baldwin ballooned its lead to double digits again in the fourth quarter, but with 45 seconds left Lancaster hit a 3-pointer to cut the lead to six again. Louisburg could get no closer.

Still, the Lady Cats outscored Baldwin 25-17 in the second half and hope to carry that forward for the rest of the season.

“We have struggled a lot with the third quarter,” Lowry said. “But this time we won the third and fourth quarters and that was big for us. It is a confidence builder because we haven’t been doing that. We haven’t been winning that third quarter, which is something that I think is important for the entire game.

Simpson led Louisburg in scoring with a team-high 15 points and Lancaster also finished in double figures with 11. Carson and Paige Buffington each added seven points.

Carson also pulled down a team-high six rebounds and senior Emalee Overbay added five. Holtzen came off the bench to lead Louisburg with four steals.

Louisburg will try for its first win of the season Friday in the final game of the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic as it faces off with Anderson County.

BAL	**17**	**22**	**8**	**9 – 56**
LOU	**12**	**13**	**13**	**12 – 50**

LOUISBURG (0-3): Madisen Simpson 15, Tayler Lancaster 11, Paige Buffington 7, Carson Buffington 7, Isabelle Holtzen 6, Haley Cain 1, Ryan Caldwell 1. Totals: 13-33 20-31 50. 3-point field goals: 4, (Simpson 2, Lancaster, Holtzen)

BUFFINGTON BREAKS REBOUND RECORD IN LOSS

Louisburg sophomore Carson Buffington had the night of her life Monday – at least as far as rebounds are concerned.

Buffington broke her own school rebounding record as she pulled down 22 boards in the first round game of the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic against Burlington. In the season opener, Buffington pulled down 18 rebounds against Pittsburg on Friday when she eclipsed her school record of 17 a year ago.

“That is impressive,” Louisburg coach Shawn Lowry said. “To average about 20 rebounds in two games is pretty good. I peeked at the state record and it is like 423, which is a crazy number. Who knows though, Carson has a lot of ball to play left.”

Buffington’s record-breaking performance was the lone positive in what was a rough night for Louisburg as it lost to Burlington 60-35. Burlington, which is ranked No. 4 in Class 4A-Division II, put pressure on the Lady Cats for most of the night.

Louisburg trailed 40-26 going into the final period, but Burlington went on a 20-9 run in the final frame to secure the win.

“It was ugly for us,” Lowry said. “It was night and day from how we played against Baldwin. Our effort wasn’t really good and our defense wasn’t where it needed to be.”

Paige Buffington led Louisburg in scoring with nine points and Tayler Lancaster finished with eight. Carson Buffington also had seven points and four steals in the loss, while senior Emalee Overbay added seven rebounds.

BUR	**12**	**16**	**12**	**20 – 60**
LOU	**7**	**12**	**9**	**9 – 35**

LOUISBURG: Paige Buffington 9, Tayler Lancaster 8, Carson Buffington 7, Haley Cain 4, Madisen Simpson 3, Isabelle Holtzen 3, Emalee Overbay 2, Chloe Renner 1. Totals: 13-72 7-23 35. 3-point field goals: 4, (Lancaster 2, P. Buffington, Simpson)

Wildcats suffer setback against Pittsburg



Louisburg senior T.J. Dover goes up for a basket Friday during

the Wildcats' season opener at Pittsburg High School. Dover finished with a team-high 14 points in Louisburg 53-46 loss.

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

Athleticism isn't one of them.

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

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

"I thought our teamwork was fantastic," Louisburg coach Jason Nelson said. "When we had the opportunity to run our two-man game, we did a really good job with that. Pittsburg is just faster than what we can show in practice, but we just have to have that mentality. The boys played their tails off. They were the SEK champs last year and we played them at their place. We knew it would be tough, but we had our chances."

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

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



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

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

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

“They put perimeter pressure on us really, really well,” Nelson said. “Looking back, and it is something we emphasize, we give up 12-14 second chance points and that is your ball game right there. Even despite their pressure, we exploited

their weaknesses in the post on occasion. There are still so many good things to look back on, and if we can get a couple of those shots to fall that almost went in, then it might have been a little different."

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

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

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

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

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

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

LOUISBURG (0-1): T.J. Dover 14, Grant Harding 9, Jayce Geiman

7, Sam Guetterman 6, Dalton Ribordy 5, Ben Minster 5. Totals 17-40 13-16 46. 3-point field goals: 1, (Geiman)

Lady Cats fall to Pittsburg in season opener



Louisburg senior Emalee Overbay stretches out for a rebound Friday during the Lady Cats' season opener at Pittsburg High School. Overbay finished with seven rebounds in a 51-35 loss.

PITTSBURG – It went up against a bigger school on its home floor, but the Louisburg girls basketball team didn't back down.

The Lady Cats traveled to Pittsburg for their home opener Friday and stayed with the Purple Dragons for much of the contest, but Pittsburg used a couple different runs to pull away for a 51-35 win over Louisburg.

Both teams got out and ran, especially in the first half, which made for a back-and-forth contest for much of the night.

"I liked it," Louisburg coach Shawn Lowry said. "At this point, with this being the first game out against a good 5A team who will probably win their league, I thought we did OK.

This is a tough place to play. We work hard enough though that we can play any style of play.”

Louisburg made things difficult on Pittsburg early as it took a one-point lead when sophomore Carson Buffington got an offensive rebound put back to give the Lady Cats a 12-11 lead. Down 13-12 to start the second quarter, Paige Buffington connected on a 3-pointer to give Louisburg the lead right back.

The game was tied again with six minutes left in the second quarter when senior Madisen Simpson hit a jump shot to give Louisburg a two-point lead again. It was there where Pittsburg went on an 11-2 run toward the end of the first half.

Senior Tayler Lancaster knocked down a 3-pointer and Simpson hit a basket to cut the Pittsburg lead to four with 33 seconds left in the first half, but Louisburg could get no closer.

The Lady Cats had a chance to get back in the game at the free-throw line, but couldn’t convert as they were 5-for-17 for the game.

“I think Pittsburg might have been a little shocked that we were playing that tough early,” Lowry said. “We have a lot of stuff to shore up like free throws and stuff around the basket, but it is all fixable.

“You can’t leave free throws on the table, especially against a team like this. It also starts to build upon itself. If you aren’t hitting those, then the score starts to spread out a little bit, it starts to affect your other shooting too.”



Louisburg senior guard Tayler Lancaster finished the game with a team-high 11 points.

Lancaster led Louisburg in scoring with 11 points, while Paige Buffington and Simpson each finished with eight points.

Carson Buffington added seven points in the loss, but that wasn't where she made the most impact. Carson pulled down a career-high 18 rebounds, eclipsing her previous high of 17 rebounds last season.

"Carson takes a great deal of pride in doing something that very few want to give the kind of effort that is required," Lowry said.

Pittsburg's Taylor Muff also proved to be a difficult matchup as the 5-foot-11 forward brought the ball up the floor, drove the basket and hit baskets from all over the floor. Muff, who

has signed with Northern Colorado to play volleyball, is a state track champion.

Louisburg senior Emalee Overbay drew the challenge of guarding Muff for most of the night and did her job as she, and the rest of the Lady Cats, held her to 13 points.

“She is a really good player,” Lowry said of Muff. “She is one of the best players that we will get a chance to see this year. But I thought Emalee did a good job on her. Emalee is a good defender, she is physical and she limited her a little bit. I thought a lot of our individual efforts were good. Pittsburg has some good guards and I thought Madisen, Paige, Tayler and Isabelle (Holtzen) all did good things defensively.”

Pittsburg pulled away in the third quarter as it opened the frame on a 12-2 run and built a 15-point lead late. Louisburg struggled to find an offensive rhythm in the second half as it scored just 11 points in the two quarters combined.

“The first couple minutes of the second half was just a stalemate,” Lowry said. “Both teams were trying to find some rhythm in that first quarter and we just couldn’t. That is something we are going to have to fix. Last year, we weren’t a very good third quarter team and that is going to have to change. We have to play well in the third quarter. We can’t play a decent half and then come out flat.”

Louisburg will have a busy week ahead of itself this week as it competes in the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic in Burlington. The Lady Cats will play Burlington, the No. 4 in Class 4A-Division II, tonight and then face No. 8 Baldwin (4A-DII) on Tuesday. The tournament will wrap up with games Friday.

“It is going to be fun,” Lowry said of the tournament. “They have worked their tails off in practice and they are just happy to be on the court playing someone. We are going to be playing two ranked teams back to back in Burlington and

Baldwin and the girls are ready to go play them. That is what I like about this group is they are tough kids.”

LOU	**12**	**12**	**5**	**6 – 35**
PITT	**13**	**17**	**12**	**9 – 51**

LOUISBURG (0-1): Tayler Lancaster 11, Madisen Simpson 8, Paige Buffington 8, Carson Buffington 7, Haley Cain 1. Totals: 12-55 5-17 35. 3-point field goals: 6, (Lancaster 3, P. Buffington 2, Simpson)