

# Lady Cats rally to win first game of season, tourney opener



***Louisburg's (from left) Sabra Brueggen and Shylar Whiting come out to celebrate with Sami Lane following the Lady Cats' win over Northeast Kansas on Tuesday in the opener of the Louisburg Invitational.***

As the Louisburg coaches walked into the locker room following Tuesday's opening round game of the Louisburg Invitational, the sounds that emitted from beyond the walls were something they haven't heard all season.

The joyous screams were that of elation, mixed with a little bit of relief.

Their losing streak was over.

Louisburg snapped an eight-game losing skid and picked up its first win of the season as the Lady Cats downed Northeast Kansas, 49-41, to get a victory in the first round of their home tournament.

"This was a really important win for us," Louisburg coach Adrienne Lane said. "I told them before the game that (Tuesday) was the night and we needed to get this. I really think that this will help us the rest of the week and even into the next week. Hopefully we can get some momentum going from this. We just really needed this so the girls know that they can do it and that we are good enough."

The Lady Cats entered the 23-24 season with little to no varsity experience and were thrown into the fire of what was mostly a difficult Frontier League schedule.

Louisburg got that first win over Northeast Kansas, a homeschool program based out of Topeka, and the Lady Cats had to overcome some obstacles along the way.



***Louisburg junior Ashlyn Kuhlman scored a team-high 16 points Tuesday against Northeast Kansas.***

The Lady Cats were down five points with four minutes to go, but they were able to flip a switch as they outscored the Nighthawks 18-5 in the fourth quarter to pull away for an eight-point victory.

"I told the girls that we need to play to win and not be scared with the ball," Lane said. "We came down and hit a 3, then hit a 2 and then Morgan (Latham) got fouled and hit a pair of free throws. It seemed like the girls took that to heart and did a good job of going to the basket when they were open.

Latham started the run by hitting 3 of 4 from the free-throw line, then Sami Lane hit a 3-pointer with two minutes remaining to give Louisburg a 40-39 lead.

The Nighthawks scored on a runner to take the lead back, but junior Ashlyn Kuhlman knocked down a runner to put Louisburg up on its next possession.

Northwest was then called for an intentional foul and sophomore Zyleigh Melton hit a free throw to put the Lady Cats up two. Kuhlman would go on to hit four straight free throws to put the Lady Cats up six.

Melton hit two more free throws late to seal the win for Louisburg.

"Those were awesome free throws," coach Lane said. "Mo started it, Zyleigh hit a couple and Ash hit four in a row. If we don't make those we don't win and that was a game changer for us. They seemed calm up there and those also helped us reset on defense as well."



***Louisburg's Morgan Latham (front) and Zyleigh Melton go in for a rebound Tuesday at home.***

Louisburg had three players score in double figures and it started with Kuhlman as she finished with a team-high 16 points to go along with four rebounds and two blocked shots.

Junior Shylar Whiting gave the Lady Cats a spark offensively, especially in the first half, with 11 points. Lane finished with 10 points to go along with four rebounds.

Latham finished with seven points, while sophomore McKenna Lohse had a team-high six rebounds. Junior Jillian Asher finished with five boards and Melton had a team-high three assists.

The Lady Cats will try for back-to-back wins tonight as they host Chanute in the second round of the Louisburg Invitational. Tipoff is set for 5:30 p.m.



Louisburg will end tournament play at 7 p.m. on Friday against Girard.

“Chanute will be a lot different because they like to play at a slower pace, and they will play a zone defense, so we will have to see how that goes,” coach Lane said. “I am glad that we got this one and hopefully it will carry into the final two games of the tournament.”

**LOU 5 15 11 18 – 49**

**NEK 3 18 15 5 – 41**

LOUISBURG (1-8): Ashlyn Kuhlman 5-11 4-4 16; Shylar Whiting 5-8 1-4 11; Sami Lane 3-8 2-2 10; Morgan Latham 2-4 3-4 7; Zyleigh Melton 0-1 3-4 3; Jillian Asher 0-5 2-2 2. Totals: 15-45 15-20 49. 3-point field goals: 4, (Kuhlman 2, Lane 2)

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## **Lady Cats find positives in road loss to Spring Hill**



***Louisburg junior Sabra Brueggan battles for a rebound Thursday***

***at Spring Hill. The Lady Cats fell 59-46.***

SPRING HILL – The Louisburg girls basketball team may still be looking for its first win of the season, but the Lady Cats are taking positive steps forward.

Louisburg took a big step Thursday at Spring Hill. The Lady Cats found themselves down just five points at halftime, but the Broncos were able to pull away in the second half and hand Louisburg a 59-46 loss.

“I thought we played pretty well,” Louisburg coach Adrienne Lane said. “I think that was one of the better games we have played all year against one of the best teams we have seen. I do think we are getting better every game. We ran some better offense than we have been and we played some different defenses than we were used to. I thought they did a great job.”

Spring Hill got out to a fast start with a 15-5 lead, but the Wildcats went on a 15-5 run of their own and took a 20-19 lead on a 3-pointer from Ashlyn Kuhlman. The Louisburg junior had eight points during that stretch.

The Broncos batted back and eventually took a 27-22 lead into halftime, but the Wildcats had a lot of positives go their way in the first half.

“Going into halftime, I think the girls were pretty excited and optimistic knowing that they can play with teams like that,” Lane said. “I think there were times in the second half where our offense was even better. I just keep telling the girls that this is all experience for them after not starting the season with any varsity experience. It hasn’t even been half the season yet, but we are getting better.”



***Sami Lane pulls up for a 3-pointer Thursday during the Lady Cats' game at Spring Hill.***

Spring Hill eventually built a double-digit lead in the second half. Junior Sami Lane hit a 3-pointer to make it an eight-point game, but it would be as close as Louisburg would get.

Louisburg junior Sabra Brueggen was active inside with a team-high 13 points as she got to the free-throw line 12 times. Kuhlman also scored in double figures with 11.

Sophomore McKenna Lohse led the Lady Cats with eight rebounds on the night, while Sami Lane finished with seven points and six rebounds.

The Broncos' Isla Herman and Sydney Buscher combined for 42 of Spring Hill's 59 points. Buscher finished with a double-double of 21 points and 11 rebounds and Herman also scored 21 points.

Louisburg will try for that first win starting tonight as the Wildcats host Northeast Kansas, a home school team out of Topeka, in the first round of the Louisburg Invitational. Tipoff is set for 7 p.m.

**LOU 10 12 11 13 – 46**

**SH 17 10 17 15 – 59**

LOUISBURG: Sabra Brueggen 3-5 7-12 13; Ashlyn Kuhlman 4-9 1-2 11; Sami Lane 3-7 0-0 7; Ally Brown 2-7 0-0 5; Jillian Asher 1-5 0-0 3; McKenna Lohse 0-1 3-6 3; Addy Stohs 1-2 0-0 2; Mogan Latham 0-0 1-2 1; Shylar Whiting 0-3 1-3 1. Totals: 14-40 13-27 46. 3-point field goals: 5, (Kuhlman 2, Asher, Lane, Brown)

## **Lady Cats fall to Baldwin**

A rough start sunk any hopes of an upset for the Louisburg girls basketball at home Friday as Baldwin scored 32 points in the first half and ran away with a 52-31 win over the Lady Cats.

Baldwin took a 32-9 lead at halftime and the Lady Cats struggled to get much going offensively as they shot just 24 percent for the game.

Jillian Asher led Louisburg in scoring with eight points and sophomore Morgan Latham finished with seven.





***Louisburg sophomores McKenna Lohse (4) and Morgan Latham (13) go up for a rebound Friday against Baldwin.***

Junior Ashlyn Kuhlman had a team-high five rebounds to go along with eight blocked shots.

Baldwin's Alyssa Reichard had a team-high 19 points to lead the Bulldogs.

**LOU 5 4 8 14 – 31**

**BAL 17 15 17 3 – 52**

LOUISBURG (0-8): Jillian Asher 2-5 3-4 8; Morgan Latham 2-5 3-3 7; Ashlyn Kuhlman 1-7 2-2 4; Shylar Whiting 2-9 0-0 4; Sami Lane 1-7 0-0 3; Ally Brown 1-3 0-0 2; Addy Stohs 1-3 0-1 2. Totals: 10-42 9-14 31. 3-point field goals: 2, (Asher, Lane)

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# Wildcats rally to take down Spring Hill in overtime



***Louisburg senior Nathan Parker came off the bench to score a team-high 19 points, including a game-tying 3-pointer to force overtime Thursday at Spring Hill.***

SPRING HILL – After the first quarter was complete Thursday at Spring Hill, things were looking bleak for Louisburg.

The Broncos jumped out to a 14-point lead early and nothing seemed to be going right on the Louisburg sideline.

That all changed the rest of the way.

Louisburg's defense stiffened and Nathan Parker hit a game-tying 3-pointer with just seconds left to force overtime. The Wildcats took care of business in the extra period and left Spring Hill with a 60-57 victory.

"I am super proud of them," Louisburg coach Ben Doll said. "We talked about how we can't overlook people and have to do a

good job starting the game. It is was an issue to start the game, but the fact that we just kept battling back is awesome. We had some guys off the bench and really gave us a big boost in Nate (Parker), Luke (Hill) and Jaymes (Melton)). All our bench really helped us.”

Parker certainly gave the Wildcats a boost at the biggest moment. With 20 seconds left, Parker came off a screen and knocked down a game-tying 3-pointer that would force overtime.

The Louisburg senior came off the bench to score a game-high 19 points and he also led the Wildcats with four assists and three steals.

“Nate’s shot was definitely huge,” Doll said. “He is a good shooter and we were trying to run something to get him that look and he drained it. He is a very confident shooter. It was awesome.”





***Louisburg sophomore Bristol Barbour pulls up for a jump shot Thursday at Spring Hill.***

In the overtime, Spring Hill opened the extra period by knocking down a 3-pointer and took the lead. Parker would go on to hit a pair of free throws and then hit a shot to give Louisburg a one point advantage.

Junior Conlee Hovey added another basket to push the Wildcat lead to three. Spring Hill cut it to 1 on a couple different occasions, but senior Luke Hill hit a pair of free throws late to seal the win.

Hill came off the bench to score 11 points, while Hovey finished with nine points and nine rebounds. Hickey added seven points and four assists and five rebounds, while Brock Vohs added six boards as well.

It wasn't always great for the Wildcats as they found themselves down 17-3 to start the game, but eventually whittled away to force overtime. After giving up 22 points in the first quarter, Louisburg held Spring Hill to just 35 points the rest of the game.

"We did a really good job on defense on getting to their shooters after the first quarter," Doll said. "Luke did a really good job on one of them and we did a lot better job of locking up their guys late in the game.

"We were just horrendous with the ball to start the game. I think the first four possessions of the game were all turnovers. We did a better job of that, especially in the fourth quarter and overtime. It was one of our keys coming in, and we didn't do that early. You can't start like that against any varsity high school team or you are going to have a heck of a time."

Louisburg is back in action tonight as the Wildcats host the Louisburg Invitational. The Wildcats will face off with Northeast Kansas of Topeka tonight at 5:30 p.m.

**LOU 9 12 12 17 10 – 60**

**SH 22 8 6 14 7 – 57**

LOUISBURG: Nathan Parker 6-15 5-7 19; Luke Hill 3-8 2-2 11; Conlee Hovey 3-5 3-4 9; Brady Hickey 2-10 2-4 7; Myles Vohs



1-3 2-2 4; Jaymes Melton 1-1 1-1 3; Brock Vohs 1-3 1-2 3; Bristol Barbour 1-1 0-0 2; Gavin Lohse 1-5 0-2 2. Totals: 19-51 16-24 60. 3-point field goals: 6, (Hill 3, Parker 2, Hickey)

## **Wildcats lose to state-ranked Baldwin**

Louisburg knew it wasn't going to be easy as it hosted No. 9-ranked Baldwin on Friday.

For the second time this season, the Bulldogs handed the Wildcats a loss as Baldwin jumped out to an early lead and never looked back in a 62-46 victory over Louisburg.

Baldwin opened the game on a 30-6 run and the Wildcats weren't able to recover.



***Louisburg senior Brady Hickey gets on the floor for a loose ball Friday against Baldwin.***

Nathan Parker and Luke Hill led Louisburg in scoring with nine points each, while junior Gavin Lohse had a team-high six rebounds. Bristol Barbour and Jaymes Melton each tallied five rebounds.

Baldwin's Cooper Carr nearly put together a triple double as he tallied a game-high 27 points to go along with 13 rebounds and eight assists.

**LOU 4 12 10 20 – 46**

**BAL 16 17 16 13 – 62**

LOUISBURG (4-4): Nathan Parker 2-14 4-4 9; Luke Hill 3-12 2-2 9; Conlee Hovey 3-6 1-2 7; Brady Hickey 2-6 0-0 4; Luke Schultz 2-2 0-0 4; Brock Vohs 1-6 1-2 3; Bristol Barbour 1-4

0-0 2; Myles Vohs 1-7 0-0 2; Gavin Lohse 1-5 0-0 2; Jaymes Melton 1-4 0-0 2; Derek Frederick 1-1 0-0 2. Totals: 18-68 8-10 46. 3-point field goals: 2, (Parker, Hill)

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## Louisburg girls fall short against Eudora in first game of 2024



***Louisburg junior Ashlyn Kuhlman goes up for a shot Thursday against Eudora.***

EUDORA – The new year may have not brought the Louisburg girls basketball team its first win, but the Lady Cats still showed signs of growth Thursday in Eudora.

The Cardinals, who were undefeated going into the game, held a large lead in the second half. Louisburg went on a big run to cut it to nine, but it would be as close as it would get in a 56-37 loss.

"I was so proud of the girls to keep working in the second half," Louisburg coach Adrienne Lane said. "They kept battling and got within single digits. If we can value the basketball and hit a few more shots, I feel like our offensive game will improve tremendously."

Eudora, which held a 27-18 lead at halftime, expanded its lead to 20 late in the third quarter, but the Lady Cats were able to respond.

Junior guard Jillian Asher started the run with a 3-pointer, sophomore McKenna Lohse hit a pair of baskets and junior Addy Stohs had another to cut the Eudora lead to nine.

It didn't stay that way for long as the Cardinals went on a mini 8-0 run to push the lead back out and Eudora handed the Wildcats a loss.

"I thought the girls played very hard and never gave up," Lane said. "We did a good job getting the ball inside and then passing it out when the posts were not open."

"Eudora is a great team. They have four returning starters back and one fantastic freshman that I felt like made their team work."



***Louisburg junior Sami Lane drives to the basket Thursday at Eudora.***

That freshman is point guard Brynn Deterding. Along with senior guard Jayla Erpelding, Deterding caused problems for the Louisburg defense.

The two Cardinals guards combined for 30 points, including 18 points from Deterding. The two also combined for nine steals on defense.

Louisburg did a good job on the boards to keep itself in the game. The Lady Cats outrebounded Eudora by 13 and pulled down 11 offensive rebounds.

Asher led the Lady Cats in scoring with 10 points and junior Ashlyn Kuhlman finished with eight points and six rebounds.

Junior forward Sabra Brueggen also had a good outing with



seven points, along with a team-high seven rebounds and three assists.

The Lady Cats will try for their first win Wednesday as they are scheduled to travel to Spring Hill for a Frontier League matchup. Tipoff is set for 6 p.m.

**LOU 9 9 11 8 – 37**

**EUD 19 12 13 12 – 56**

LOUISBURG (0-6): Jillian Asher 4-10 0-0 10; Ashlyn Kuhlman 3-11 0-0 8; Sabra Brueggen 3-8 1-2 7; McKenna Lohse 2-4 0-0 4; Addy Stohs 2-2 0-0 4; Sami Lane 0-4 2-2 2; Ally Brown 1-4 0-0 2. Totals: 15-48 3-4 37. 3-point field goals: 4, (Asher 2, Kuhlman 2)

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## Wildcats can't overtake Eudora on the road



*Louisburg senior Brock Vohs battles for a rebound Thursday during the Wildcats' contest at Eudora.*

EUDORA – In its first game back from the holidays, the Louisburg boys basketball team found itself in position to get a big road win.

The Wildcats were down by just a couple possessions to Eudora late in Thursday's contest. Unfortunately, Louisburg couldn't get the late stops it needed in a 53-46 loss to the Cardinals.

"It is disappointing because I think it was an opportunity lost," Louisburg coach Ben Doll said. "We played well enough in a lot of ways to win. One of our emphasis going in was to win 50-50 balls, and there were 2 or 3 possessions where they had a miss, got an offensive rebound and scored. In a close game like this one, you have to get 50-50 balls."

For the first time since their season opener, the Wildcats almost had their full complement of players and they got contributions from up and down their line up.

It all started inside for the Wildcats as juniors Conlee Hovey and Gavin Lohse provided a presence underneath the basket.

Hovey finished with team-high nine points and led the Wildcats with seven rebounds. Lohse added eight points and four rebounds.

Senior Brock Vohs tallied seven points and four rebounds, while senior forward Jaymes Melton added four each.

"Over the entire break, we made an emphasis with our big guys of finishing and going off two feet," Doll said. "We have guys that can rebound, ones that we can get the ball inside to and we definitely have an advantage down there. We just aren't doing a great job of finishing there yet, but we did better."



***Louisburg senior Jaymes Melton goes up for a basket Thursday at Eudora.***

The Wildcats (3-3) made several runs on the Cardinals, but Eudora always seemed to have an answer – especially Logan Sullivan. The Eudora senior scored a game-high 23 points and made things difficult on Louisburg.

“He is really tough,” Doll said. “There are times we did a bad job on him and he made shots, but we could have done better. But there were at least 2 or 3 shots where there was great defense and he shot over fingertips and knocked it down. In basketball, that is just the way it goes sometimes. You can’t get mad about those things because he is a really good player in this league.”

Louisburg senior Brady Hickey helped keep the Wildcats in it as he knocked down three 3-pointers and tied Hovey for a a

team-best nine points. Junior Myles Vohs had a team-high three assists and four rebounds.

Eudora took a 27-19 lead at halftime, but the Wildcats got out to a fast start in the third quarter with an 8-2 run and cut the Cardinal lead to two.

Lohse started the run with a driving basket and Hovey followed with another basket on an assist from Brock Vohs. Lohse added two free throws and Brock Vohs had a put back to cut the Eudora lead to 29-27.

The Cardinals expanded the lead back to eight to start the fourth quarter and the Wildcats could never get over the hump.

Louisburg will try and get back on the winning track Tuesday when it travels to Spring Hill. Tipoff is set for 7:30 p.m.

**LOU 12 7 12 15 – 46**

**EUD 16 11 14 12 – 53**

LOUISBURG (3-3): Conlee Hovey 3-5 3-4 9; Brady Hickey 3-9 0-0 9; Gavin Lohse 2-4 4-4 8; Brock Vohs 2-10 3-6 7; Nathan Parker 1-2 2-2 5; Jaymes Melton 2-3 0-1 4; Bristol Barbour 0-1 2-2 2; Myles Vohs 0-4 2-2 2. Totals: 13-40 16-21 46. 3-point field goals: 4, (Hickey 3, Parker)

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## **Top 10 Louisburg Sports Stories of 2023**



It was a successful, and eventful, 2023 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 a few programs brought back state hardware.

Below are the top stories from 2023, along with a brief explanation of each. Included in the writeup is the link to the actual story from the event.

When putting the list together, I took a lot of things into account – whether it was team vs. individual, popularity of the sport, historical achievements and the interest it drew on the web site.

This year was a blast to cover and I am looking forward to seeing what 2024 will bring. Thank you to everyone for their support and can't wait for it all to begin again.





## 10. Brings Plenty earns first state cross country medal

WAMEGO – Jerynce Brings Plenty had been eyeing this race since the beginning of the season.

After missing out on the opportunity to run at the Class 4A Kansas State Cross Country Championships in 2022 due to an injury, Brings Plenty was itching at the chance to run against the state's best.

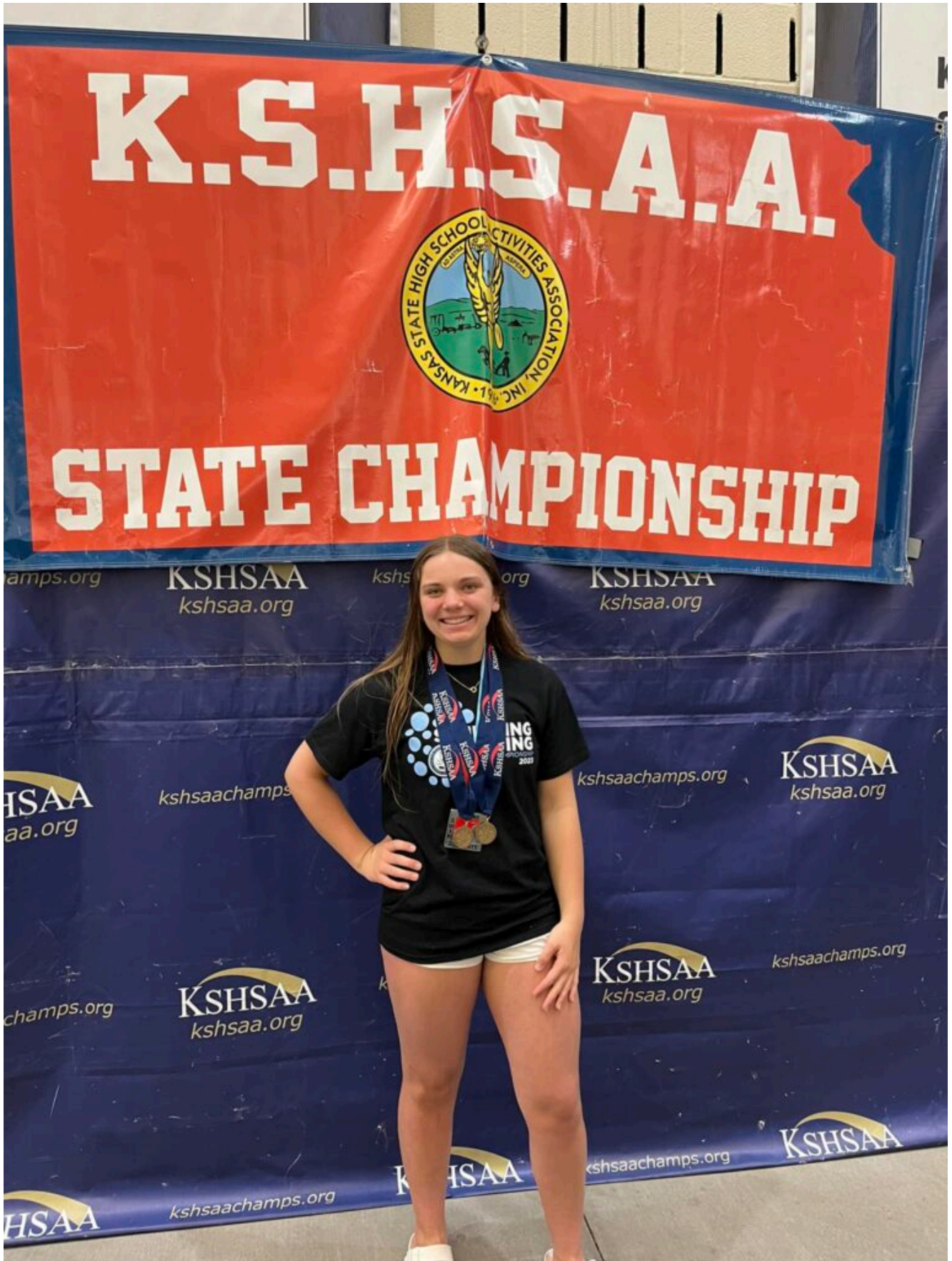
He got that opportunity at the Wamego Country Club and he took full advantage.

Brings Plenty earned his first state cross country medal as he took 12th overall in a time of 16 minutes and 57 seconds. It

has been a long time coming for the Louisburg junior.

“Getting 12th place and a state medal meant everything to me,” Brings Plenty said. “All season my main focus was to place as high as I could at state, especially since I had only placed 51st as a freshman and didn’t race my sophomore year.”

The 2023 season was a successful one for Brings Plenty as he earned a medal in every race he finished. He also moved up the school’s all-time leaderboard and currently holds the second fastest time.



## **9. Brueggen wins two state swim medals; Brown earns first boys state medal**

Sabra Brueggen and Colin Brown put together a pair of historic seasons for their respective swim teams in 2023.

Brueggen doubled her medal count back in May at the state meet at the Capitol Federal Natatorium in Topeka. The Louisburg sophomore earned state medals in both the 100-yard backstroke and 50 freestyle.

After earning the one medal as a freshman a year ago, Brueggen was happy to find the medal stand in both races this season.

However, it has been a long road for Brueggen to get back to the state meet. After suffering a knee injury last summer, she had to work hard to get back in time for this go-round in a recovery that lasted nine months.

“Going into high school swim this season, I only had one personal goal in mind, making it back to finals at state,” Brueggen said. “Little did I know that I was going to make it back to the ‘A’ final in both my events, allowing me to medal. This truly meant the world to me because this past year has been one of the toughest ones yet. Overcoming this nine month long recovery, and accomplishing this at state, was an indescribable feeling.”





As for Brown, the Wildcat freshman earned the school's first state medal in boys swimming back in February at the Shawnee Mission School District Aquatic Center in Lenexa.

Brown recorded a time of 56.46 seconds in the finals of the 100-yard butterfly to take eighth overall. He swam a season-best time of 55.85 in the preliminaries to garner a spot in the finals.

"Colin's swim in the medal finals was so fun to watch," coach Mary Argeropoulos said. "Hardware from state is not easy to earn and he did a marvelous job all season working toward that final."

In all, Louisburg sent four swimmers to the state meet in Brown, Brayton Brueggen, Colton Prettyman and Andrew Jamison and the Wildcats turned in several times that earned spots in the consolation finals. As team, the Wildcats finished 15th overall with 44 points.





## 8. Cheer takes fourth at state

TOPEKA – Louisburg cheer has been no stranger to the big stage when it comes to the state competition.

The Wildcats have become a mainstay in the Class 4A Game Day Spirit Showcase in the last several years that has included a state championship and a pair of state runner-up finishes.

Louisburg found itself in position for another state plaque in November at the Stormont-Vail Events Center in Topeka. The Wildcats qualified for the finals with an impressive performance, but came up just short of another state plaque as they took fourth overall in Class 4A.

“I am so proud,” Louisburg coach Breanna Kostroske said. “This team had to welcome not one, but two new coaches and has

worked so hard since May on their competition material and it truly showed on the floor Saturday. Being a new coach you are automatically stressed that you haven't given enough to all aspects of a game day routine, but we put our faith in the team and they showed up and truly represented themselves in a huge way."

Members of the Louisburg cheer team are: Elizabeth George, Brooklyn Harmon, Addison Drake, Maddie O'Keefe, Maddy Carpenter-Ross, Caroline Dugger, Anna Brizendine, Reece Jones, Addie Vargo, Laney Stohs, Taryn Osborn, Kayleigh Ramsey, Will Leach, Brooklyn Roney, Harper Boyle, Kimmie Powls, Reece Younggren and Reese Anderson. The Wildcats are coached by Breanna Kostroske and Heather Brummel.



## **7. Pfannenstiel takes AD position, Wildcat basketball hires new coach Ben Doll**

The 2023-24 school year for Louisburg High School activities had little different look to it – especially at the top.

Ty Pfannenstiel was hired as the school's new activities director and took over for Michael Pickman, who will focus on his assistant principal duties and curriculum.

Pfannenstiel, who has been the boys basketball coach for the last six years, resigned his post to take on the activities director position. He also stepped down as an assistant football coach.

"This is very exciting for me," Pfannenstiel said. "It's definitely going to be a change. I have been a teacher and a coach for 18 years. I still get to be a teacher half-time, and now I get to step into a new role as an administrator. It is going to be all sports and activities and I am looking forward to the new direction."

Louisburg then hired Ben Doll to replace Pfannenstiel as the new Wildcat boys basketball coach. Doll has patrolled the sidelines as an assistant for two state championship teams and has coached in numerous state tournaments over his 24 year career.





This is Doll's first head coaching position after spending time as an assistant at St. Thomas Aquinas, Johnson County Community College, Lansing and Blue Valley North.

"I am really excited to get going," Doll said. "It has been a long time coming. I have a lot of great experiences and I am ready to apply those things I have learned into this job. I am ready to put my own stamp on some stuff as well."



## 6. Wrestling qualifies six for state, Eslinger medals

SALINA – Just like a year ago, Elijah Eslinger found himself one win away from a spot in the state championship match.

Eslinger, who has been ranked in Class 4A at different times throughout the season, has had a long road as a Wildcat heavyweight. One that included a rough freshman year, to progressively getting better.

With a spot in the semifinals at the Class 4A Kansas State Wrestling Championships already wrapped up, he had already secured his second state medal in Salina. Although he didn't make that championship match, Eslinger still left Salina with some hardware.

"To make the semifinals was exciting, especially since it was



the closest match I had," Eslinger said. "It was probably close to the hardest match that I had over the weekend. I feel like I could have done better looking at my matches in hindsight."

The Wildcats nearly had two more wrestlers earn spots on the medal stand. Junior J'Lee Collins (126 pounds) and sophomore Ashton Moore (175) both made their way to the blood round and needed a win to secure a state medal.

The Wildcats also experienced some heartbreak as senior Kaven Bartlett fell short of his goal of earning another state medal. At 138 pounds, Bartlett finished the state tournament with a 1-2 record.

Senior Trace Eslinger (215) and sophomore Jay McCaskill (157) also represented the Wildcats at the state tournament, but finished with an 0-2 record.



## 5. Lohse wins three state medals, Lady Cats sixth at state

WICHITA – Emma Lohse blazed the track for the Louisburg girls track and field team all season, and the Class 4A Kansas State Track and Field Championships was no different.

Lohse picked up three medals and helped the 4×100-meter relay to another school record at Wichita State’s Cessna Stadium. In all, the Lady Cats medaled in five events and finished sixth in the team standings with 29 points.

“Coming back from Wichita with three state medals was something I had to work for and was happy about the outcome,” Lohse said. “Leaving Cessna Stadium one last time, I was very proud of the way I competed and proud of what I came home

with.”

Lohse was just inches away from winning a state championship in the 100-meter dash. At the finish line, the Louisburg senior was step-for-step with Rose Hill’s Kate Dare.

As the two leaned for the finish line, Dare edged Lohse for first as Lohse ran a time of 12.46 seconds. Dare ran a 12.44.

Later in the 200-meter dash, Lohse earned another state medal as she took seventh in 26.77 seconds.





***Louisburg's (seated from left) Kendall Crossley, Suzanna Dansel, (standing from left) Mackenzie Rooney and Emma Lohse***



***pose with their third place state medals in the 4×100 relay. The Lady Cats broke their own school record for the fourth straight time in the prelims.***

Sandwiched in between those two races, Lohse helped the 4×100-meter relay of Mackenzie Rooney, Suzanna Dansel and Kendall Crossley to a medal of their own.

The Lady Cat relay finished third overall with a time of 49.70 seconds. Andale won in 49.24 and McPherson was second at 49.67.

However, in the preliminaries on Friday, the team broke their own school record for the fourth consecutive time in 49.26 seconds and had the fastest time going into the finals.

Another Lady Cat to find the medal stand was Emma Prettyman. The Louisburg senior put together a strong showing in the discus.

Prettyman earned her first state medal as she finished sixth in the event with a throw of 115 feet, 9 inches.



## 4. Wildcat pole vaulters dominate 4A state meet

WICHITA – Maddy Carpenter-Ross, Caden Caplinger and Cooper Wingfield had been considered as some of the top pole vaulters in Class 4A for most of the season.

All three had finished at, or toward the top of each of their meets this year, and all of them had high hopes going into state meet at Wichita State.

Carpenter-Ross and Caplinger reached the highest summit Class 4A had to offer as both were crowned state champions following their respective events.

Caplinger became a two-time state champion first as he cleared 15 feet to win the 4A boys pole vault. Wingfield finished as the state runner-up.

“It means a lot and I am just blessed to have the opportunity to be here and win the title, especially with Cooper right on my tail,” Caplinger said.

Carpenter-Ross thrived under the pressure in the girls competition as she, not only looked for her second consecutive state medal, but her first state championship.

The Louisburg junior captured her first state title after she cleared 11 feet, which tied a personal best. This coming off a season where she medaled fifth at state a year ago.

“I think it is fantastic,” Carpenter-Ross said. “Going to 11 feet, I was tied with the one girl and I was hoping that I would get it on my first try. Then when I did, it was just an amazing feeling.

“It was just awesome for me, plus to see my family’s faces up in the stands was really cool too. Being a state champion is awesome and I plan to do it again.”



### **3. Wildcat football wins back-to-back Frontier League titles**

SPRING HILL – It had been 16 years since the Louisburg football team last repeated as back-to-back Frontier League champions.

That drought ended on an October night in Spring Hill.

In a battle of undefeated league teams, Louisburg proved it was the best. The Wildcats scored 21 unanswered points, and shutout the Broncos in the first half, as they cruised to a 35-21 victory.

Louisburg earned back-to-back league crowns for the first time since the 2006 and 2007 campaigns. The Wildcats also finished the regular season with an 8-0 record.



"It is pretty exciting," Louisburg coach Drew Harding said. "We talked to the guys before the game about how long it is has been since we have won back-to-back league titles and it has only been done four times in our school's history. So to chalk another one up there feels pretty good."

The Wildcats advanced to the regional round of the state playoffs in early November, but lost a heartbreaker to Basehor-Linwood, 22-20, and ended a nine game winning streak.

"This season was a lot of fun," Harding said. "It is a great group of kids and they worked incredibly hard. They were loose and made it fun every single day. I can't say enough about how good of kids they are and how hard they work. We hoped to still be moving on, but this loss doesn't take away from what these kids did all year."





## **2. Wildcat volleyball takes fourth at state for second straight year**

HUTCHINSON – For the second time in as many years, Louisburg is leaving the state volleyball tournament with some hardware.

The Wildcats, for the second straight season, finished fourth Saturday at the Class 4A Kansas State Volleyball Championships in Hutchinson. It marked the 20th appearance for the Wildcats in the tournament.

Getting that hardware and making it to Saturday was certainly a battle for the Wildcats, who had to fight through adversity during pool play on Friday. Louisburg had to deal with injuries and had its fate rest in another team's hands.

Despite all that, Louisburg left with a fourth place medal following a tough 23-25, 25-8 and 25-16 loss to Andale in the third-place match Saturday at Hutchinson Sports Arena.

"We are very proud of this team for making it back to the state tournament and finishing in the final four again," Louisburg coach Leanna Willer said. "We, of course, will always strive for higher finishes until we reach that ultimate goal of state champions, but we are proud of where we finished the season and were happy with the success of this team."

Members of the Louisburg volleyball team are (from left) Adelyn Moore, Caileigh Kilgore, McKenna Lohse, Delaney Nelsen, Aspen Coulter, Evyn Richardson, Ashlyn Berck, Katie Elpers, Izzy Moreland, Megan Quinn, Hailey Sword, Madie Williams and head coach Leanna Willer.



# **1. Wildcat boys track finishes as state runner-up; Dobbins wins state title in high jump as team medals in 13 events**

WICHITA – The Louisburg boys track and field team had the resume of a state champion.

The Wildcats racked up 87 points during the Class 4A Kansas State Track and Field Championships at Wichita State.

Louisburg medaled in all 13 events it competed and the Wildcats finished the meet with two individual state champions. The ending was supposed to feature the Wildcats holding up a state championship plaque.

“If you would have told me at the beginning of the year we

would score 87 points at state and not win a championship, I would have just ignored you and said 'Whatever,'" Louisburg coach Andy Wright said. "No way that would happen."

As it turned out, the Wildcats found themselves on the outside looking in for a team state title. Andale finished first with 87.5 points. Louisburg had 87.

It was an emotional letdown for the Wildcats as they were so close to that team goal.

"To beat Andale, we had to score 88 and that is just a testament to how good they are," Wright said. "They have really good athletes, especially in the throws. At the same time, I couldn't be more proud of my guys and how they competed. It was just so much fun to watch them lay it all out there. They really did have a great season."

Mason Dobbins reached new heights at the Class 4A Kansas State Track and Field Championship.

Ok, well maybe not literally.

Dobbins who broke a school record in the high jump earlier this year, didn't reach that height at the state meet – but he didn't need to. The Louisburg senior cleared 6 feet, 6 inches to win the Class 4A high jump title.

It was the first of four state medals that Dobbins would win on the day as he helped lead the Wildcats to the Class 4A state runner-up plaque.



“It meant everything to be a state champion and to be able to medal in all of my events this year since I didn’t last year,” Dobbins said. “Our team trains so hard, and to be able to be runner up by .5 points, is incredible.”

Dobbins nearly earned his second state title in the 110-meter hurdles as he found himself in a battle with Rose Hill’s Teagan Cobb. The two were stride-for-stride going into the final hurdle, but Cobb nipped Dobbins at the finish line.

Later on, he joined Caden Caplinger, Colyer Wingfield and Ethan Ptacek in the 4×100-meter relay and the team medaled third in 43.38 seconds. Ptacek had to run for Ashton Moore, who was injured during the preliminaries.

Then toward the end of the meet, Dobbins, who was sitting seventh in the 200-meter dash after the preliminaries, battled



to keep his team in the state championship race and medaled third in 23.07.

Louisburg senior Nathan Vincent got his team a lot of points in the throwing events as he medaled in the javelin, discus and shot put – with the latter being his best event of the weekend.



Vincent, who just started doing shot put this year, put together his best performance of the season. He recorded a personal best throw of 51-8 in the finals to take third overall. He also went on to take fifth in the discus and sixth in the javelin.

Sophomore Jerynce Brings Plenty also came away with three state medals in the distance events, but none was more precious to him than the 3,200-meter run.

Brings Plenty broke the school record in the event as he medaled third in 9 minutes and 49.41 seconds. He surpassed the old mark of 9:50.60 that was set by Jason Rose in 2007.

He continued his medal streak for the Wildcats as he joined Hunter Heinrich, Blaise Vohs and Colton Blue to medal seventh in the 4×800-meter relay.

Later in the day, Brings Plenty competed in the 1,600 run and took sixth in 4:34.42.

Louisburg senior Nathan Apple left his final state meet with a pair of medals in both hurdle events. Apple finished fourth in the 110-meter hurdles in 15.29 seconds on Saturday.

Apple also went on to take fourth in the 300 hurdles in 40.55 seconds as he ended his Wildcat track career on a positive note.

The Wildcats ended the state meet with the 4×400-meter relay as the team of Heinrich, Vohs, Colyer Wingfield and Ptacek needed a third place finish or better to win the state title. Unfortunately, the Wildcats came up just short as they took fourth in 3:23.98.

Louisburg set a new personal record by three seconds and was .25 seconds away from tying the school record. The Wildcats also scored points in all three relay events.

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## **Week 3 Athlete of the Week: Nathan Parker**



Here is the Louisburg Sports Zone Athlete of the Week for week three of the winter sports season, sponsored by Louisburg Family Dental.

## **NATHAN PARKER, SENIOR, BASKETBALL**

Louisburg senior Nathan Parker came up big for the Wildcat basketball team in their final game before the holidays. Parker scored a game-high 26 points as he helped the Wildcats to a 57-46 victory on the road at Frontenac last Thursday. The victory gave Louisburg a 3-2 record going into the break.

Two days earlier in a loss to Baldwin, Parker finished with a team-high six assists and accumulated three steals in the two games. On the season, Parker is averaging 13 points and two assists through five games.

The athlete of the week award is announced every Wednesday morning during the winter season and the winner is selected by Louisburg Sports Zone with the help of nominations from coaches.

### **Previous Winners:**

Week 1: Myles Vohs

Week 2: Andrew Jamison

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## Parker's 26 points lift Wildcats past Frontenac



*Louisburg senior Nathan Parker goes up for two of his 26 points Thursday at Frontenac High School.*



The Louisburg boys basketball team received the early Christmas present it was looking for Thursday at Frontenac.

Louisburg got a much-needed victory in its final game before the holidays – thanks in part to Nathan Parker. The Wildcat senior exploded for 26 points in the Wildcats' 57-46 victory over Frontenac.

The win pushed the Wildcats' record to 3-2 on the season and gave them some nice momentum going into break.

"It was huge," Louisburg coach Ben Doll said. "With this break we have now, it just feels better off a win. Makes practices better and there are good vibes all around. It was also big cause it gives us a winning record and we were able to bounce back off a big loss."

Parker provided the Wildcats with a big boost in the scoring column as he helped carry his team offensively in a game where they trailed after one quarter.

Louisburg went on to outscore Frontenac 17-10 in the second quarter to take a 25-23 halftime advantage. After an even third, the Wildcats broke the game open in the fourth behind 10 points from Parker in the frame.

The Wildcats also relied on seniors Brady Hickey and Brock Vohs, who played nearly the whole contest as the Wildcats still have several players out due to injury and illness.

"He is one that is a big scorer for us," Doll said of Parker. "When he is on it is glaring cause he can be so good. He carried us against Frontenac. He built off that game against Baldwin where he had a lot of assists, but didn't shoot as well. He did some of that on Thursday and he showed what he is capable of as a scorer.

"He also played good defense too with Myles (Vohs) in foul trouble and Brady (Hickey) did a good job in that game as

well. I don't think Brady or Brock (Vohs) came out, and we really leaned on those guys as well."



***Louisburg junior Gavin Lohse finished Thursday's contest at Frontenac with a game-high 13 rebounds.***

Junior Gavin Lohse put together a strong performance underneath the basket and provided the Wildcats with a good rebounding presence. Lohse finished with a double-double as he had a team-high 13 rebounds to go along with 11 points.

"Gavin was huge," Doll said. "He had most of those rebounds on defense. We haven't done a good job of keeping teams off the offensive boards so far this year. Gavin was really elevating and he was cleaning it up. He is an emerging guy for us and we are going to need that play down the stretch. He is averaging 9-10 rebounds a game and he got some big ones there in the second half."

The Wildcats took a 3-point lead going into the final quarter, but the Louisburg defense buckled down and held the Raiders to just seven points.

Parker's 10 points in the final frame helped the Wildcats pull away, but defense was also a big factor.

"Frontenac didn't get many second chances and Brady did a good job on their best player and limiting his looks," Doll said. "We made some free throws and those are things we need to do to win games. We took care of the basketball, and even though we weren't great at the free-throw line, we made them in the fourth quarter when it mattered."

Louisburg will try for back-to-back wins out of the break as the Wildcats travel to Eudora on Jan. 4 in their first game back from the holidays.

**LOU 8 17 16 16 – 57**

**FRON 13 10 16 7 – 46**

LOUISBURG (3-2): Nathan Parker 9-17 6-9 26; Gavin Lohse 4-7 3-4 11; Brady Hickey 3-8 1-2 9; Brock Vohs 1-4 1-4 4; Bristol Barbour 1-3 1-2 3; Myles Vohs 1-3 0-0 2; Jaymes Melton 1-1 0-0 2. Totals: 20-43 12-21 57. 3-point field goals: 5, (Parker 2, Hickey 2, B. Vohs)

## **Wildcats fall to No. 5-ranked Baldwin**

BALDWIN CITY – If playing the No. 5 team in the state wasn't difficult enough, Louisburg had the unenviable challenge of playing without four of their players.

Last Tuesday against Baldwin, the Wildcats had two injured players out and two more who were out with an illness. It wasn't exactly ideal and the Wildcats found themselves down

big at halftime.

Still, the Wildcats didn't back down in the 60-42 loss to the Bulldogs and were able to take away some positives from a tough situation.

"We had to have the mentality of just moving on to the next play and thought we did a good job with that, especially considering it was looking like it might be a running clock," Louisburg coach Ben Doll said. "But we were able to cut it under 20 and we won the second half, which was a big thing for us. I was really happy that our guys didn't quit and we cleaned some stuff up. We just have to build on that because we just aren't healthy right now. It's not an excuse, it is just where we are at right now."

Louisburg scored just 14 points in the first half and trailed by 21 at halftime. The Wildcats weren't able to rally from such a big deficit, but still played with a purpose as they outscored Baldwin 28-25 in the second half.

Senior Brady Hickey led the Wildcats offensively with 13 points, including three 3-pointers. Sophomore Bristol Barbour also finished in double figures with 10, while senior Brock Vohs had eight points and six rebounds.

Jaymes Melton and Ethan Kush also led the Wildcats in rebounding with six each. Nathan Parker led the Wildcats with a team-high six assists.

**LOU 6 8 12 16 – 42**

**BAL 16 19 12 13 – 60**

LOUISBURG: Brady Hickey 5-13 0-0 13; Bristol Barbour 5-13 0-2 10; Brock Vohs 4-8 0-4 8; Nathan Parker 1-11 4-4 6; Jaymes Melton 2-3 0-0 4; Myles Vohs 0-6 1-2 1. Totals: 17-59 5-12 42. 3-point field goals: 3, (Hickey 3)



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# Lady Cats come up short on road to Frontenac



***Louisburg junior Jillian Asher pulls up for a shot in the lane Thursday at Frontenac. Asher finished with a team-high 10 points in the Lady Cats' loss at Frontenac.***

FRONTENAC – The Louisburg girls basketball team is inching closer to that first win, but the Lady Cats will have to wait till after the holiday break to get it.

Louisburg put together its best offensive performance of the season Thursday at Frontenac, but came up just short in a 55-48 loss to the Raiders.

“It was nice to see some offense working in this game,” Louisburg coach Adrienne Lane said. “This is the most points we have scored and I hope the girls can build off this.”

Despite the good offensive performance, the Lady Cats had to play catch-up from the start as they had a tough first quarter and trailed 17-7.

Louisburg put together a comeback as it scored 16 points in the second quarter and the Lady Cats got a spark from Jillian Asher. The junior guard scored seven of her team-high 10 points in the second quarter, including a runner at the buzzer to trim the lead to just five at halftime.

"We have been talking a lot about playing all four quarters, but we got off to a slow start last night with only 7 points in the first quarter, but then we played with them the rest of the game," Lane said. "We just need to put together four good quarters. Jill hitting a couple shots did help us get some momentum going into the second half."



***Louisburg junior McKenna Lohse goes up for a shot Thursday at Frontenac.***

The Lady Cats continued to chip away at the lead in the second half. This time, they pounded the ball inside.

Forwards Sabra Brueggen, Morgan Latham and McKenna Lohse each scored on the inside, while Latham had back-to-back buckets in the fourth quarter to tie the game at 42-all with five minutes left in the contest.

Latham was second on the team with eight points, while Brueggen and Lohse had seven and six points, respectively.

"I thought the posts had a big night for us," Lane said. "Sabra did a great job fighting for position, causing a lot of havoc under the basket. Kenna came in and gave us some great minutes and Morgan did as well. The posts were not afraid to take the ball to the basket or even look for an outside shot. I was very proud of them and how they played.

"I thought the guards did a great job forcing the ball inside at the end of the third quarter and beginning of the fourth. I feel like that is how we got back into the game."

However, in the final five minutes, Frontenac pulled away as it did to start the game. The Raiders finished on a 13-6 run to hand the Lady Cats their fifth loss of the season.

Junior Ashlyn Kuhlman also finished with seven points to help the Lady Cat offense, while junior Sami Lane had a team-high seven rebounds. Junior Ally Brown and Asher tied for team-high three assists and Brown also added five boards.

Louisburg will try and turn things around after the holiday break as the Lady Cats travel to Eudora on Jan. 4 in their first game back.

**LOU 7 16 13 12 – 48**

**FRON 17 11 12 15 – 55**

LOUISBURG (0-5): Jillian Asher 4-7 0-0 10; Morgan Latham 4-6 0-0 8; Sabra Brueggen 2-3 3-6 7; Ashlyn Kuhlman 2-12 2-3 7; McKenna Lohse 3-7 0-0 6; Shylar Whiting 2-4 0-0 5; Ally Brown 1-6 0-0 3; Sami Lane 1-7 0-0 2. Totals: 19-53 5-9 48. 3-point

field goals: 5, (Asher 2, Kuhlman, Whiting, Brown)

## **Lady Cats fall on road to Baldwin**

BALDWIN CITY – Despite getting off to a slow start offensively, Louisburg found itself still in the game last Tuesday against Baldwin.

Unfortunately, a rough third quarter helped give Baldwin a 42-23 victory over the Lady Cats at Baldwin Jr. High School.

The Bulldogs outscored Louisburg 14-4 in the third quarter and took an 18-point lead that the Lady Cats couldn't come back from.

Louisburg trailed by just four after the first quarter, but scored a combined five points in the next two.

Junior Shylar Whiting led the Lady Cats in scoring with nine points and Ashlyn Kuhlman finished with five in the loss. Kuhlman also finished with a team-high eight rebounds and three assists.

Morgan Latham had six rebounds, while Sami Lane and Ally Brown each finished with five. Brown also had a team-high three steals.

**LOU 7 1 4 11 – 23**

**BAL 11 5 14 12 – 42**

LOUISBURG: Shylar Whiting 1-7 6-8 9; Ashlyn Kuhlman 1-8 2-4 5; Sabra Brueggen 1-2 0-2 2; Jillian Asher 1-3 0-0 2; Sami Lane 1-3 0-0 2; Morgan Latham 1-3 0-0 2; Ally Brown 0-7 1-2 1. Totals: 6-34 9-16 23. 3-point field goals: 2, (Kuhlman, Whiting)



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# Lady Cats battle but come up short in home loss to Anderson County



***Louisburg junior Sami Lane pressures an Anderson County player into a turnover Friday at home. The Lady Cats fell to the Bulldogs, 35-31.***

It ended up being another close loss for the Louisburg girls basketball team Friday against Anderson County, but the progress was there for the Lady Cats.

Anderson County had a size advantage, played a zone defense and both were obstacles for Louisburg. Still, the Lady Cats found themselves in a tight game with the Bulldogs.

Although it ended with a 35-31 Louisburg loss, there were definite positives to build on.

"I thought overall we played hard and we battled till the end," Louisburg coach Adrienne Lane said. "I do feel like we

got better Friday. Our defense was great and we got some really good looks at the basket.”

Louisburg had to deal with Anderson County’s size underneath the basket, including that of Kylie Disbrow and Caitlyn Foltz. The Lady Cats held them to 13 and nine points, respectively.

They also held Anderson County to just 28 percent shooting and forced 19 turnovers.

“I thought defensively we did great,” Lane said./ “Any time you can hold a team to 35 points is great. Our key was to double team (Foltz and Disbrow) when they caught the ball and the girls did a great job with this. Our rebounding was also big, we did a great job being physical and going and getting the ball.”

Offensively, the Lady Cats had to find a way to get going against the Anderson County 2-3 zone. Louisburg showed patience, and got good looks at times, but couldn’t get the shots to fall.

Louisburg shot 21 percent from the field, but did pull down 15 offensive rebounds in order to get extra chances.



***Louisburg junior Shylar Whiting goes up for a shot Friday against Anderson County.***

"The girls did a good job running the offense and getting into the middle of the zone," Lane said. "We wanted to make their girls work hard on defense so they would be tired on offense. I felt we were getting great shots of the offense, we just couldn't get enough to fall."

The Lady Cats took a 19-18 lead at halftime thanks to a 3-pointer from Ashlyn Kuhlman and a bucket from Zyleigh Melton late in the second quarter.

Anderson County built another lead in the second half, but the Lady Cats cut into the Bulldog lead again as Shylar Whiting hit a 3-pointer and knocked in a free throw late in the fourth to cut deficit to two.

It would be as close as the Lady Cats would get as the

Bulldogs knocked down enough free throws to seal the win.

Kuhlman led Louisburg in scoring with 10 points to go along with a team-high five rebounds and three steals. Junior Sami Lane scored seven, all in the first quarter, to help get the Lady Cats get out to a good start. She also finished with four rebounds.

Melton and Whiting each finished with five points and junior Sabra Brueggen added four points. Junior Ally Brown also tallied a team-high five rebounds and two assists.

Louisburg will try and pick up its first win today as the Lady Cats travel to Baldwin. Tipoff is set for 6 p.m.

**LOU 11 8 4 8 – 31**

**AC 14 4 8 9 – 35**

LOUISBURG (0-3): Ashlyn Kuhlman 3-14 2-2 10; Sami Lane 3-12 0-0 7; Shylar Whiting 1-5 2-6 5; Zyleigh Melton 2-2 0-1 5; Sabra Brueggen 2-10 0-2 4. Totals: 11-52 4-11 31. 3-point field goals: 5, (Kuhlman 2, Melton, Whiting, Lane)