

2012 Division I Sectional Tournament

## BOYS BASKETBALL SECTIONAL TOURNAMENTS

|                     |           |
|---------------------|-----------|
| <b>FREMONT ROSS</b> | <b>50</b> |
| <b>OREGON CLAY</b>  | <b>23</b> |

# Fremont seniors show will to win

By Nick Marlow

News-Messenger sports correspondent

FINDLAY — And the Little Giants move on.

Ross had its way with Clay in the opening round of the Division I sectionals Tuesday at Liberty-Benton, defeating the Eagles for the third time this season by way of a 50-23 rout.

Seniors Diante Pettiford, Jay Carnicom and Skylar Reffner made it evident they did not want their high school basketball careers to end in round one and all turned in double-digit scoring efforts. Reffner led the way with 15 points while the other two each chipped in 10.

The Little Giants will play again at Liberty-Benton Friday in the sectional finals against Findlay. Ross lost twice to the Trojans in Three Rivers Athletic Conference play.

"It feels great," Reffner said. "It was a good team win, we played hard and we played together."

The Little Giants' dominion was established early as they held Clay to four points in each of the first two quarters and carried a 25-8 lead into the locker room at the break. Ross would hold Clay to four points again in the fourth quarter which marked a crossing into uncharted territory as far as Coach Mark Gedeon can remember.

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## Fremont

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"I don't think I've had that before at any level in my 26 years of coaching," he said. "I thought our kids just did a great job of position D and talking, communicating and supporting each other."

Carnicom led an abashed Little Giants rebounding edge over the Eagles, 32-17, with seven boards and Pettiford and sophomore guard Jack Gedeon contributed six apiece. Ten were pulled down on the offensive glass which resulted in 12 points on second-chance tries.

Clay sophomore guard Patrick Booth, who leads the team in scoring, led a stifled Eagles offense with ten points on 5-of-18 shooting. Clay's next highest scoring total was five from Ross Achter.

The Eagles were 11-for-42 from the field and 0-for-3 from the stripe.

The game started with both teams trading buckets to get to 4-4 before Ross closed the frame out on an 8-0 run capped with a trey from Carnicom from the right wing at the 1:19 mark to go up 12-4.

Clay would finally end a 10:23 scoring drought, which began at the 5:30 mark in the first, when Booth entered the scoring column on a 10-foot leaner from the left side of the floor with 3:07 to go in the half. The bucket also ended a 15-0 spurt from Ross, which held a 6-2 scoring advantage the rest of the way to get to the halftime margin.

But Clay wasn't going away quietly.

The Eagles went on a 7-0 run to start the second half to pull within ten. A triple from Achter from the right corner was sandwiched with two layups coming on baseline drives from guard Jack Nagy and Booth which forced Gedeon to blow a timeout at the 6:28 mark.

"When you're playing that poorly offensively you might as well do something, the only way you can go is up," Clay's Rob Belegren said. "We came out and got a little spark going (in the third)."

But Ross would refocus its efforts thereafter and quell Clay's comeback hopes by outscoring it 25-8 the rest of the way. Reffner accounted for 12, four coming on second-chance putbacks, of the 25 — all coming in the paint.

"I was just trying to help the team win the best way I can," Reffner said. "Offensive rebounding is one of my strong points, and I try to get points off that. My teammates gave me some good assists, and I just had to finish for them."

Now it's on to the Trojans. "We've been competitive (against Findlay)," Gedeon said. "Findlay's an outstanding team, you've got to outwork them and be mentally tough ... we're just going to have to go out and compete every possession."

"This time of year our kids just say 'let's go out and play, just tell us when and where, and we'll go out and compete. Hopefully it will be a good battle."

Ross shot 21-of-46 against Clay. Along with the said six rebounds, Gedeon also added six points.

## BOYS BASKETBALL

# Ross' early energy fizzles in loss

By Nick Marlow

News-Messenger correspondent

FINDLAY — After eight minutes of play Friday, Ross looked like it was going to pull off the upset over Findlay at Liberty-Benton.

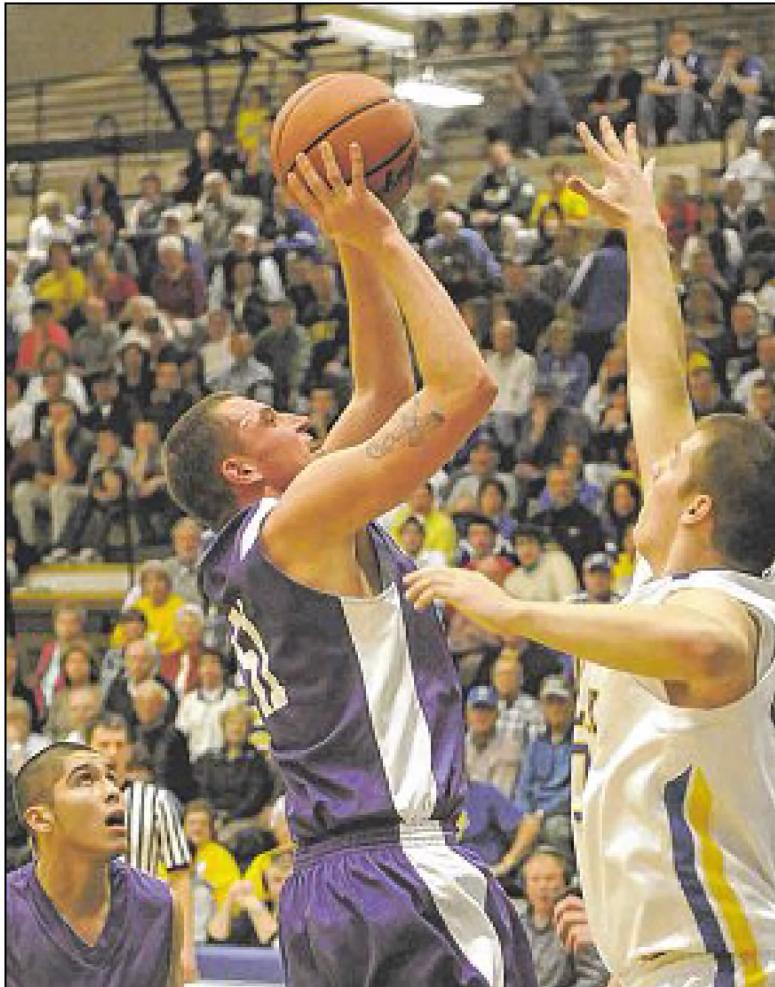
Their game plan was simple: stop 6-foot-11 center C.J. Gettys, and for a while it worked. Ross led by three heading into the second quarter and had complete control of the game.

But, with two Little Giants lying on the North Carolina-Wilmington recruit in the paint each time the Trojans brought the ball up the court, something eventually had to give. The Trojans heated up from the perimeter, and it was all they needed to get the offense rolling toward a 49-29 victory and a Division I sectional crown.

The Trojans (16-5) outscored Ross 39-16 the rest of the way and turned the Little Giants' first-quarter surge into fool's gold.

Gettys would finish with a game-high 15 points after scoring just four in the first half, and guard Boston Ballmer was right at his heels with 13. Ballmer also poured in four of the team's six three-pointers.

While Ross' offense tapered drastically after the first quarter, Skylar Reffner and Jay Carnicom were still able to finish in double digits. In what turned out to be their high school basketball



Fremont Ross' Nick Steacker takes a shot over the reach of Findlay's Austin Gutting during the Division I semi-final at Liberty Benton High School on Friday. JONATHON BIRD/NEWS-MESSENGER

finale, the seniors finished with (Mark) Gedeon and the other 11 and 10, respectively.

"I just wanted to give Coach

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# ROSS

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seniors on my team everything I had," Reffner said. "I didn't want to leave anything out, so I could look in the mirror tomorrow and say I left it all on the court.

"I'd do anything for these guys because they're my teammates, and I love them to death."

After Findlay jumped out to a 5-3 lead, Carnicom scored the next three baskets in an 8-0 run that put Ross (11-11) up 11-8 with 2:11 to go. The Trojans would get it back to three by the horn on Ballmer's first triple and a put-back layup from Gettys.

Reffner and Carnicom combined for 11 of the team's 13 points and Ross held Gettys scoreless until the last minute of the quarter.

And then Findlay awoke.

Adam Twining would start to take advantage of the Little Giants' commitment to defending the paint and scored seven points in the second quarter. And

as Findlay started getting production out of the offense, it served as the pyre from which the defense was set ablaze.

"We weren't getting the ball inside at all and were relying solely on jumpers and fortunately we hit a few," said Findlay head coach Jim Rucki. "We tried to get the ball inside (in the second quarter) and I'm not sure we did much better, but I thought we defended better."

After shooting 6-of-12 in the first quarter, Ross was just 7-of-29 the rest of the game. They were only able to produce four points in the paint in the second and third quarters.

But coach Mark Gedeon was satisfied with the effort.

"My kids are great," he said. "I've said that all year long. They work hard, come to practice, they're responsible."

"Our five seniors I think set the table for that ... They're the ones that are bringing Fremont Ross basketball to what it used to be."

Gettys had five blocks on the night and Joseph Davidson had three.

# **Findlay 49, Fremont Ross 29**

|                |           |           |           |           |          |           |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| <b>Findlay</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>14</b> | <b>15</b> | <b>—</b> | <b>49</b> |
| <b>Ross</b>    | <b>13</b> | <b>2</b>  | <b>5</b>  | <b>9</b>  | <b>—</b> | <b>29</b> |

## **FINDLAY (49)**

Danny Todd 1-2, Michael Clark 1-1-3,  
Adam Twining 3-7, Joseph Davidson 1-2,  
Daniel Peak 2-2-7, Boston Ballmer 4-1-13,  
CJ Gettys 6-3-15. Totals 18-7-49.

## **TOLEDO CHRISTIAN (45)**

Diante Pettiford 0-1-1, Jarrett Koonce 1-2,  
Skylar Reffner 5-1-11, Drew Starks 1-2,  
Jay Carnicom 5-10, Nick Streacker 1-2,  
Dylan Jagodzinski 0-1-1. Totals 13-3-29.

## **TEAM STATISTICS**

3-pointers — Findlay 6 (Ballmer 4,  
Twining, Peak); Ross 0. Rebounds —  
Findlay 18; Ross 19. Turnovers — Findlay  
8; Ross 11. Records — Ross 11-11.  
Findlay 16-5.