

2025-2026 SECTIONAL TOURNAMENT

Meanwhile, Start burst out of the gates with an 11-0 run in the first 2:24 against Fremont Ross, then scored off a couple nice backdoor passes in an 8-0 run to begin the third quarter. A young Fremont Ross team with nearly all freshmen and sophomores in its program pulled within 14-8 early in the second quarter, but an experienced and upperclassmen-heavy Start squad responded in taking a 26-14 halftime lead.

“I thought coming out in the second half, we did a much better job of being physical, playing Spartan basketball, and doing some really good things offensively that we’ve been focusing on in practice and has been a point of emphasis probably for the last couple of weeks,” Franklin said.

Ava Pietras buried three 3-pointers and a long jumper in the first half for a game-high 11 points to front a balanced Start attack. Damilola Olufemi had 10 points and five rebounds; Jade Latson chipped in seven points and seven rebounds; and Honey Harper also had seven boards to go with five points.

Tearney Hardin’s 10 points led Fremont Ross. Brynn Ward, a 6-foot freshman center and the NLL Cardinal Division player of the year, picked up three fouls in the first quarter, sat the entire second quarter, and ended up with five points and 11 rebounds.

“When our leading scorer was out for the second quarter because of foul trouble, and then they’re doubling her down low, and being a young team, we don’t have that yet,” Fremont Ross coach Juan Vela said. “I was hoping to get some shots in and get them comfortable, and that didn’t happen.”

Start forced 20 turnovers while committing just five. Fremont Ross had a 41-37 rebounding edge, but made just 11 of 45 shots and missed all eight of its 3-point attempts.