

2000 Division I District Tournament

Eight teams set for district

Giants to battle with Bulldogs tonight

Tonight

Ross vs. Defiance 8:30 p.m., district semifinal at Hopewell

By MICHAEL MOHR
Staff writer

The Fremont Ross girls basketball team picked a perfect time to start playing well.

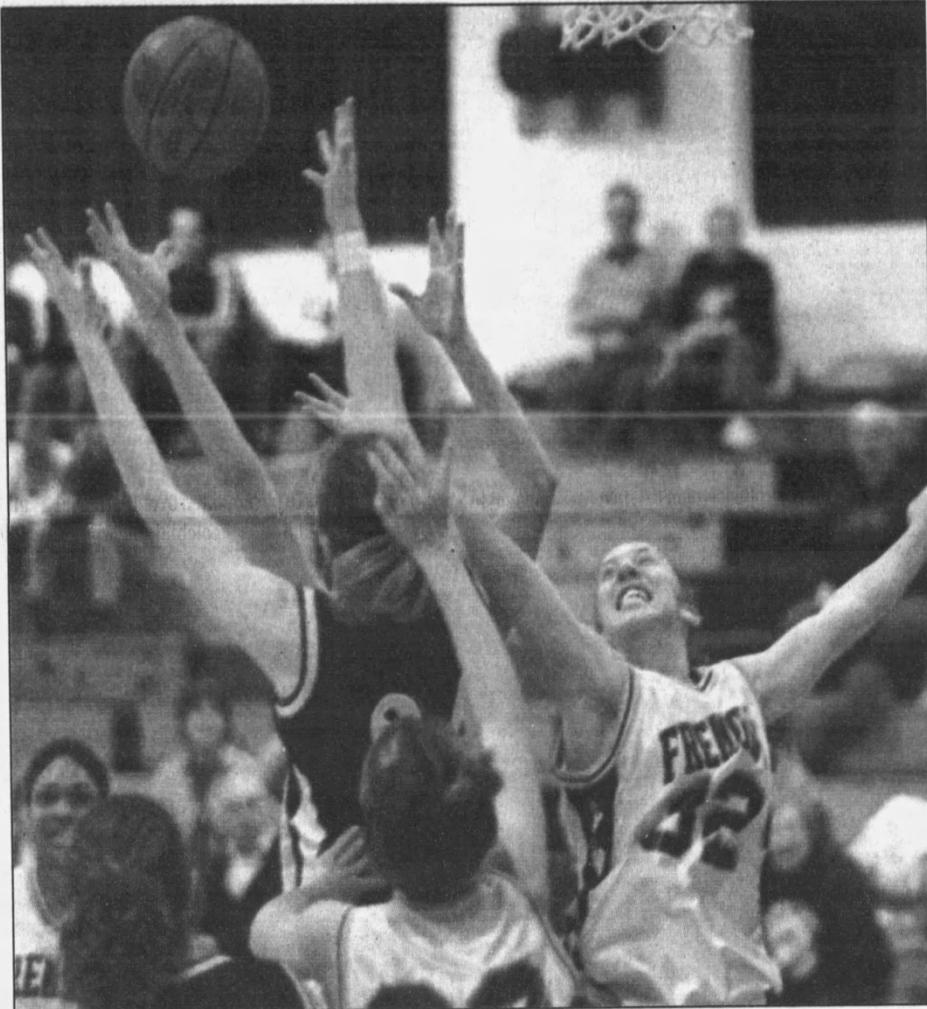
It has won the two tournament games it has played by a combined 30 points, 44-36 over Ashland and 64-42 over No. 8 Mansfield Sr.

The Little Giants seem to be improving with every practice, as they get ready for a district semifinal game against Defiance at 8:30 p.m. tonight at Hopewell-Loudon.

"I just told them," said Ross coach Sue Wolf. "I'm one person who's very honest, I don't tell them anything I don't believe, and they've really been stepping up big time.

"Everybody's stepping up, some people that haven't been doing as well as I would have liked to have seen are really stepping up right now."

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News-Messenger file photo/Liz Margerum

SAMMANTHA SCHNEIDER and Ross (16-6) take on Defiance (20-2) in a district semifinal tonight at Hopewell-Loudon.

Ross looks to prove upset was no fluke

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"We've got some people," Wolf said. "Alison Decker's defense is just improving leaps and bounds right now, Laura Wilson's defense is getting better. I'm on their case all the time about their defense, so I'm happy to see how they are doing right now."

"Fallon Bailey is stepping up, Sashay Price is being a real leader, Oodie (Taneschia) McKinstry, she'd

do anything to play the best defense she can play on the person she's been guarding, Sam (Schneider) in the middle, she's so outsized in the middle, she's just working so hard to do what has to be done, everyone out there is working."

The Little Giants are out to prove the win over Mansfield was no fluke.

"I told them, 'Enjoy the win Saturday night and Sunday,'" said Wolf. "'Monday you haven't proved anything to anybody, you have to go

out and earn it on Thursday. You can't have a big head, it should give you confidence, but it can't go up here. You've got to prove it again on Thursday. What you did Saturday basically means nothing right now."

One of the problems the Little Giants will encounter is 6-foot-2 Erin Murphy, a senior post, who averages 7.5 points, about 7 rebounds, and 4.4 blocked shots per game.

The Bulldogs, coached by Rod Hersha, will shoot a lot of 3-pointers. Kara Jones

and Emily Rolf both shoot 39 percent from behind the arc.

"I've coached against Rod before," Wolf said. "When he was at Napoleon when they were in the GLL (Great Lakes League), he's going to try anything and everything to win the game, same as we're going to do. At this point we need to be ready for anything."

Defiance (20-2) averages 62.8 points per game, giving up 41.6. The Little Giants (16-6) score 49.4 points per game, giving up 41.5.

Cold-shooting Ross ousted

By MICHAEL MOHR
Staff writer

BASCOM — All season Fremont Ross has done everything well, everything except make shots. Thursday's Division I district semifinal was more of the same.

The Little Giants dropped a 42-25 Division I district semifinal decision to the Defiance Bulldogs in a game that was marred by poor shooting on both sides.

Defiance gave Ross a chance to get on top early, but the Little Giants went 1-of-6 from the free throw line and only made one shot from the floor in the first quarter.

"We did everything right except put the ball in the basket," Ross coach Sue Wolf said. "That's what I told them when I went in after the game. I said 'We did

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a lot right, I can't fault you for the hustle you had, you had great hustle but we've got to be able to put the ball in the basket.

"I felt that even if we could have made some of the foul shots in the first half it could have been a lot different ballgame. They were under no pressure the entire game because they were always out in front."

The Bulldogs only made three shots from the floor in the first quarter but two of those were 3-pointers by junior guard Emily Rolf and senior wing Kristin Ort. Defiance led 8-3 after eight minutes.

See ROSS, B4

Ross eliminated by Defiance in Bascom

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The shooting woes for Ross continued over the course of most of the ballgame but the majority of Defiance's lead was built in the second quarter when it outscored Ross 16-8 to lead 24-11 at the half. The lone bright spot in the quarter for Ross was junior Sashay Price scoring eight of her game-high 12 points including a buzzer-beating 3-pointer which gave Ross a huge momentum boost going into the halftime break.

"We came out and hit the

first basket of the second half, and I thought we could get it turned it around," Wolf said. "But then we gave them an easy one on their next time down the floor."

Ross broke part of the Bulldogs 2-2-1 press in the backcourt fairly well, getting down the floor quickly. The only problem was the "1" part of the 2-2-1 waiting at the other end was 6-foot-2 center Erin Murphy. Murphy blocked four shots and caused a lot of havoc when the Little Giants looked for fast break baskets.

"We don't always do that intentionally because we want our

perimeter people to do a good job of guarding the basketball," said Defiance coach Rod Hersha. "But it gets back to the fact that Erin does a great job of knowing when to stay home and when to come out and help a little bit, but when you have to shoot over Erin at the end of the press it obviously it makes everything you do look a little better."

Murphy finished the game with 11 points and 16 rebounds to go with her four blocks. Rolf had 10 for the Bulldogs.

Price led Ross with her 12 points as the Little Giants finish

the season 16-7. Ross, however, has nothing to hang its head about, as they get almost everyone back, including Price, Alison Decker, Laura Wilson, Taneshia McKinstry and Sammantha Schneider, which comprised its starting five for most of the season.

Ainsley Watkins, Tiffany Sweeney and Shannon Hall all played their final game for Ross on Thursday.

Defiance, 21-2, play Celina, which beat Tiffin Columbian 49-47 in the first game at Hopewell-Loudon, Saturday night in a district championship game.