

Adam Gries is All-Ohio Special Mention

Gries gets all-state special mention

By MATTHEW HORN
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Fremont Ross senior Adam Gries' goal was to improve in every category across the board from his junior campaign.

And from scoring to rebounding to assists to blocks, Gries did exactly that to earn Division I special mention all-Ohio honors.

"I was

more proud of raising everything from last year (than one specific statistic),"



GRIES

Gries said. "I knew I had to get my numbers up for us to be successful like we were. I wanted to get everything up and I did so that was nice."

Gries averaged 17.7 points, 8.1 rebounds, was third on the team in assists (two shy of second), shot 67 percent from the field and 73 percent from the free throw line with 53 blocked shots. He scored 863 points in his career and passed Charles Woodson for third on the all-time scoring list in the final contest, a Greater Buckeye Conference title-clinching win over Findlay.

The Little Giants went 9-1 to win the league and finished 16-6 overall.

"Winning the league," Gries said of what stands out from the season. "That was one of the team goals going in. We all thought we

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could win the league. And cutting down the net at sectionals felt good, too. Those were pretty much equal."

After teasing the program as a sophomore and junior, Gries developed into a player that could be counted on consistently.

"I think he turned into the player we were hoping for this year in terms of being the focal point and go-to guy," said Ross coach Mark Gedeon. "He had an impact on every single game. I still think Adam will get significantly better at the college level because he finally realizes the potential he has and how to achieve the goals he's set for himself."

Gries has signed to play basketball at Division II Saginaw Valley in Michigan.

Luke Lyle was the last all-Ohio performer for Ross. He was first-team in 2003 and now plays at Baldwin-Wallace.

"It reflects not only on (Gries) but our program and his teammates as well," Gedeon said. "Without his teammates he doesn't achieve the individual awards and for the program it shows we are putting out quality players and it's respected enough to have players receive these type of awards. For Adam — who talked about being player of the year in the league — and we thought he had a chance at state awards but I don't know how much he thought about it."

Gedeon said Saginaw Valley will be getting a confident player intent on continuing to improve.

"I definitely think it helps his confidence and reinforces some of the things he's heard," Gedeon said. "Using that confidence will hopefully springboard him to having an impact on the next level. Will he be content or will he keep working hard to have the kind of impact he had as a senior? See if he can make an impact on every possession rebounding, passing, getting position,

blocking shots... He has the ability to do something on every possession. As an underclassman we saw it every few possessions. This year we saw him make an impact almost every possession."

Gries was excited about his all-state recognition.

"I was hoping to get some all-state honors," Gries said. "I'm excited. It's nice. There's a lot of good players in Ohio so it's nice to be named."

Gedeon said Gries' increased commitment to the dirty work was impressive.

"Two things stick out," Gedeon said. "Versus St. John's at home even though we lost by 10, seeing him go against Andrew Taylor — who's going to Hillsdale — Adam was really physical and aggressive throughout the game. That was the first we saw that out of him for a long stretch. And against Willard he just went after it and was physical and aggressive. (Willard) was the most aggressive I've ever seen him play."

Gedeon said Gries' special-mention status is simple.

"He was the best player on a good team," Gedeon said. "He was able to put up impressive numbers against the top teams in our area. He had 26 points against St. Francis and 26 against Willard. Word gets out when you have a player the opponent needs to stop. That helped him earn accolades and I firmly believe if the team is not as successful as it was he wouldn't have gotten all these awards. It's also a tribute to all his teammates."

And Gries still has some unfinished business.

"I plan on coming in and getting some minutes," Gries said of Saginaw Valley. "I think I should be able to. I just have to keep getting better — I just have to keep going."

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■ The Fremont Ross boys won their first Greater Buckeye Conference title and fourth overall title since Mark Gedeon became coach, and Adam Gries racked up individual accolades. The big man, who's going to Saginaw Valley State in the fall and playing basketball, was named the GBC player of the year, first team all-district and special mention in the state. He averaged more than 17 points a game for the Little Giants.