

2012-2013 Season Review

BOYS BASKETBALL » FREMONT ROSS 53, TOLEDO WAITE 41

Ross holds tight, wins its opener

By Yaneek Smith
News-Messenger correspondent

TOLEDO — It's always nice to get the season started off on the right foot.

That's just what Fremont Ross did in its opener Saturday with a 53-41 win over Toledo Waite.

After playing the Indians to a 10-all tie in the first quarter, the Little Giants took the lead for good early in the second quarter and pushed the advantage to seven points at half-time for a 23-16 margin.

Ross (1-0) harnessed that

momentum heading into the third quarter, going on a 9-0 run to push the lead to 32-16. In fact, Waite (0-2) didn't score until Jordan Dumas connected on a putback with 4:22 remaining in the period.

Throughout the rest of the second half, Ross' lead fluctuated between six and 16 points as it held off several Indians rallies. A layup by Tyler Wolf gave the Little Giants a 47-37 advantage with 1:46 remaining and put the game out of reach.

"We weathered the storm," Little Giants coach Mark Ge-

deon said.

"(Waite) got it down to six there. I've got a couple of experienced seniors, in terms of the Stark twins and Alex Metcalf, that understand the game of basketball really well. They understood that it wasn't time to push the panic button."

Ross was anxious to get the season underway.

"Waite is a team that plays with a lot of energy and a lot of enthusiasm and they feed off that," Gedeon said. "They can shoot the ball well from the outside, which is what we were worried about, and they

did a nice job on the offensive glass. That's something we're going to have to do a better job of and that's defensive rebounding."

"There were some first-game jitters in some aspects. We know there (are) a lot of things to work on, but I was very pleased with our team."

Ross had a balanced scoring attack that was led by Metcalf, who finished with 11 points. Wolf had nine points, Dylan Jagodzinski finished with seven and Jack Gedeon, Jarvis Jones and Drew Solander added six points apiece.

"That's a good sign," Coach Gedeon said. "We know we need to play team basketball and that's something these guys have accepted. We know we don't have any superstars on the floor (and) we're going to need everybody to be successful this year. They're a very unselfish team."

"They want to go out and compete to win, that is their No. 1 goal, and they don't care who gets the credit. And that's why I think they're going to be a very, very fun team to watch

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Giants

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this year."

Waite guard Taywyn Mason led all scorers with 14 points and Kenyatta Bowen added eight.

"We missed too many lay-ups and we turned the ball over," Waite coach Adam Rodriguez said. "Our inexperienced showed. We're try-

ing to get better, we're learning every day and (Saturday) was a lot better than yesterday."

The Indians left a lot of points on the floor as they missed a number of shots in the paint.

"We missed too many lay-ups to win a close game," Rodriguez said. "We got offensive rebounds, but when we got the offensive rebounds, we weren't making the putbacks."

BOYS BASKETBALL » FREMONT ROSS 68, OREGON CLAY 41

Ross routs Clay in TRAC opener

Little Giants start fast in conference victory

By Yaneek Smith
News-Messenger correspondent

OREGON — Just about everything that could go wrong for the Clay boys basketball team did go wrong, and Fremont Ross was there to capitalize, defeating the Eagles in convincing fashion, 68-41, to improve to 2-0 on the season and 1-0 in the Three Rivers Athletic Conference.

The Little Giants never trailed as they raced out to an 11-2 lead and held a 19-9 advantage after one quarter. In the second quarter, Ross began to pull away, outscoring the Eagles 26-12 in the period to take a 45-21 lead into the half. After Clay guard Patricc Booth hit a 3-pointer to cut the deficit to 25-16, Ross went on an 8-0 run and never looked back.

The Little Giants played good, stout defense that featured a lot of trapping, making it hard for the Eagles (0-1, 0-1 TRAC) to get the ball inside and score. Offensively, Ross worked the ball around the perimeter and broke down the defense to get a number of high-percentage shots.

"I loved the intensity and the passion the kids played with," said Ross head coach Mark Gedeon. "I loved our defensive rotations; we forced 15 first-half turnovers. I loved how much (the players) were willing to share the basketball with each other. We never lost our intensity."

The Little Giants featured a balanced scoring attack that saw 10 players score. Dylan Starks, Jack Gedeon and Tyler Wolf led the way with 11 points apiece, and Grant McConnell and Alex Metcalf each had six.

Mark Gedeon talked about the unselfishness of his team and how working together as a unit has helped Ross to a 2-0 start this season.

"We need all five players to go for the rebounds and score it,"

Gedeon said. "We don't have that one go-to player that some teams have. And these guys have already bought into it."

Drew Starks scored all of his 11 points in the first half when the Little Giants built their lead.

"We played hard, we played as a team (and) executed fairly well," he said. "Anybody can score on the court at any time. We had a little too many turnovers but we still kept pushing the ball and they couldn't keep up. We made them go faster and we were in the right place at



Fremont Ross' Tyler Wolf goes up for a shot against Oregon Clay's Andrew McCrory. LEE WELCH/NEWS-MESSENGER CORRESPONDENT

right time and got steals."

Clay got 16 points from their starting backcourt duo of Jack Nagy and Patricc Booth, but was never able to get anything going consistently on the offensive end.

"It's hard to blend right now (as a team)," said Nagy. "I've been learning the system for 3-4 years and it's still hard for me sometimes. We're working with new guys that are stepping into roles that they're probably not ready for yet. We've

just got to work the kinks out.

"They were pressuring us the whole game. We knew that if we broke the pressure, we'd be in the game, but, obviously, we didn't handle the pressure well. We run our stuff in practice hard all the time but it's different when you get in a varsity-game situation and you've got the crowd going and people in your face. It's different for people that don't get a whole lot of varsity experience."

BOYS BASKETBALL

Fremont Ross 68, Clay (Oregon) 41					
Fremont Ross	19	26	9	14	— 68
Clay	9	12	13	7	— 41

Fremont Ross

Jared Ballenger 2 1 5, Jack Gedeon 3 5 11, Dylan Jagodzinski 1 2 4, Jarvis Jones 4 8, Grant McConnell 1 3 6, Alex Metcalf 2 2 6, Drew Starks 4 3 11, Dylan Starks 2 4, Tyler Wolf 5 1 11. Totals 25 17 68.

Clay

Patricc Booth 5 2 16, Jack Nagy 7 2 16, Anthony Ramirez 2 5, Dillon Twining 1 2, Dexter Williams 1 2. Totals 16 4 41.

3-Point Goals - Fremont Ross 1 (Grant McConnell 1), Clay (Oregon) 5 (Patricc Booth 4, Anthony Ramirez 1). [N](#)
Records: Fremont Ross 1-0; Clay (Oregon) 0-1.

Boys Basketball

Ross 66, Toledo Start 60

TOLEDO — Ross had four guys reach double-figures in scoring on Saturday, as the Little Giants remained unbeaten with a 66-60 win in non-league play at Toledo Start.

Alex Metcalf led the way with 14 points for Ross (3-0). Jarvis Jones contributed 13 points, while Drew Solander had 12 and Tyler Wolf tallied 11. Solander added nine rebounds. Jack Gedeon provided seven boards and seven assists.

“We’re getting a lot of contributions right now,” Little Giants coach Mark Gedeon said. “There’s not really a go-to guy on this team right now. The kids are sharing the ball very well and they’re working well together.”

The game was tied at 60 all with 46 seconds remaining. Metcalf proceeded to sink two foul shots to give Ross the lead, Gedeon then canned two more, before Dylan Stark’s steal led to two more charity stripe makes.

The Little Giants will return to Three Rivers Athletic Conference action Friday when they host St. John’s Jesuit.

“For us, we’ll have to bring our A game,” coach Gedeon said. “I know our kids are going to play with a lot of energy. Hopefully there will be a lot of energy in the energy in the gym as well.”

Fremont Ross 66, Start 60

Fremont Ross	15	16	20	15	—	66
Start	10	20	13	17	—	60

Fremont Ross

Totals 24 15 66.

Start

Keith Foreman 2 10, Scott Hicks 6 3 16, Dion Ivery 6 2 15. Totals 23 10 60.

3-Point Goals - Fremont Ross 3, Start 4 (Keith Foreman 2, Scott Hicks 1, Dion Ivery 1).

Records: Fremont Ross 3-0; Start 1-2.

BOYS BASKETBALL

St. John's hands Fremont Ross its first loss

By Yaneek Smith
News-Messenger correspondent

FREMONT — One of Ohio's best basketball players entered "The Purple Pit" on Friday evening looking to show that his team is one of the best in the area.

And St. John's Jesuit forward Marc Loving, who has committed to playing basketball at Ohio State next season, was a force to be reckoned with inside, leading all scorers with 21 points, a few thunderous dunks as he led the Titans to a 67-40 victory over Fremont Ross.

After the Little Giants kept the score relatively close after one quarter at 17-9, St. John's took control in the second period, outscoring Ross 16-6 to take a 33-15 lead into the half. From there, the Titans (4-0, 2-0 TRAC) pulled away, outscoring the Little Giants, 34-25, in the second half.

In addition to Loving's 21 points, St. John's got 10 points apiece from guards Anthony Glover, Austin Gardner and Tyler Thompson.

"It was very physical defensively," said St. John's head coach Ed Heintschel. "Both teams really played hard. Mark's guys played very, very hard. We were able to get the ball inside more in the second half. We wanted to get the ball inside a little bit more. (But) they don't let you (into the paint) very easily. We were able to get the ball inside and finish a little bit. That was the difference in the game."

While Ross was able to play good defense at times and force some missed shot, Loving and his teammates were often there to clean up the offensive glass and score a number of second-chance points.

"Marc, he's special," Heintschel said. "He has such body control for his height — he can draw contact and not charge and split guys, sidestep them, which most 6-8 guys can't do. He's gifted, and he's got a lot of talent."

At times, Ross' big men were able to cause trouble for Loving, but he ultimately overcame, scoring inside and grabbing a number of key rebounds. When Loving and the rest of his team

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Ross

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got their defense going, they were able to speed up the game and create opportunities on the other end for themselves.

"Our defense picked up which created more offense for us and we put points on the board," said Loving. "When we picked the defense up, it got the game speed going like we wanted."

With the loss, the Little Giants drop to 3-1 overall and 1-1 in the Three Rivers Athletic Conference.

"We were playing an outstanding St. John's team," said Ross head coach Mark Gedeon. "They're not only one of the top teams in our league but one of the top teams in the state. They can hurt you in so many ways, whether it's with the defensive pressure that they displayed tonight or it's with the rebounding or outside shooting.

"Obviously, when you've got a go-to player like Loving, it that makes (them) difficult to defend and gives them options."

Jack Gedeon led the Little Giants with 10 points. Alex Metcalf chipped in with seven points and Grant McConnell and Dylan Jagodzinski finished with five points apiece.

"Offensively, we got a little tentative there and we need to make sure that we have our five players moving whether it's with or without the ball than we did in the first half," Coach Gedeon said. "We did a little bit better job (of that) in the second half. It just shows what the level is that we have to get to if we want to compete against not only St. John's but in this league, too. Hopefully our kids have a little better understanding of the bar and how important each little detail is for us to be successful."

St. John's Jesuiy 67, Fremont Ross 40

St. John's Jesuit	17	16	18	16	—	67
Fremont Ross	9	6	12	13	—	40

St. John's Jesuit

Parker Ernsthausen 2 4, Austin Gardner 4 10, Anthony Glover 4 10, Gabe Kynard 1 2, Marc Loving 8 5 21, Greg Patrisso 1 2, Keith Smith 1 2, Chris Stearns 1 4 6, Tyler Thompson 3 4 10. Totals 25 14 67.

Fremont Ross

Jared Ballenger 2 4, Jack Gedeon 5 10, Dylan Jagodzinski 2 1 5, Grant McConnell 2 5, Alex Metcalf 3 7, Drew Solander 1 2, Drew Starks 1 2, Dylan Starks 1 1 3, Tyler Wolf 2 2. Totals 17 4 40.

3-Point Goals - St. John's Jesuit 3 (Austin Gardner 1, Anthony Glover 2), Fremont Ross 2 (Grant McConnell 1, Alex Metcalf 1).

SPORTS ROUNDUP

Lima boys fall in 4th to Ross

News-Messenger staff reports

LIMA — Tyler Wolf scored a team-high 15 points for Ross, which overcame a 10-point fourth-quarter deficit to top the Lima Senior in Tuesday Three Rivers Athletic Conference action.

Jared Ballenger and Jack Gedeon added 11 and 10 points, respectively, for the Little Giants (4-1, 2-1). Ross outscored the Spartans (4-2, 2-1) 28-8 in the fourth quarter.

Lima Senior was paced by a game-high 23 points from Shawn Devon Allen.

Fremont Ross 71, Lima 61

Fremont Ross	12	19	12	28	—	71
Lima	20	16	17	8	—	61

Fremont Ross

Jared Ballenger 3 4 11, Jack Gedeon 4 1 10, Dylan Jagodzinski 3 6, Jarvis Jones 3 6, Grant McConnell 1 1 3, Alex Metcalf 4 9, Drew Solander 1 2, Drew Starks 3 6, Dylan Starks 1 3, Tyler Wolf 5 2 15. Totals 28 8 71.

Lima

BRADY ALLEN 1 3, SHAWN DEVON ALLEN 9 2 23, MALIK BINGMON 1 5, DAMARIANTE' DILLINGHAM 1 2 4, RUBEN FLOWERS 4 8, TREYVONTAY GUNN 1 2, ISIAH SIMPSON 3 2 10. Totals 23 9 61.

3-Point Goals - Fremont Ross 6 (Jared Ballenger 1, Jack Gedeon 1, Alex Metcalf 1, Dylan Starks 1, Tyler Wolf 3), Lima 6 (BRADY ALLEN 1, SHAWN DEVON ALLEN 3, MALIK BINGMON 3, ISIAH SIMPSON 2).

Records: Fremont Ross 4-1; Lima 4-2.

Whitmer vacates wins from 2011-12

By **Vince Guerrieri**

News-Messenger

TOLEDO — More than a year after the fact, Findlay has become the first Three Rivers Athletic Conference football champion — and the Ross football and boys basketball teams have accumulated a couple more wins.

In a joint news conference Thursday morning, Washington Local Schools Superintendent Patrick Hickey and Ohio High School Athletic Association Commissioner Dan Ross announced that Whitmer would vacate all their wins from the 2011 football season and 2011-12 boys basketball season for using an ineligible player.

At issue was senior LeRoy Alexander, now a freshman on the football team at the University of Nebraska. Alexander had transferred to the district from Springfield, and Lucas County Common Pleas Judge Frederick McDonald ordered the school district to allow Alexander to be on the football and boys basketball teams. The OHSAA ruled that he was an improper transfer and thus not eligible, leading to the forfeiture of games by the football team, which went 10-0 to win the inaugural TRAC title and advanced to the Division I state semifinal, and the basketball team, which went 23-3 and was TRAC champions and state runner-up. Ross said the players will be allowed to keep their runner-up medals.

"We disagree, but we will comply," Hickey said.

The district has also agreed to share the cost of the investigation, paying \$50,000 to the OHSAA out of its general fund money. Ross, who couldn't put a dollar amount on the total cost of the investigation but said it was close to six figures, said there has been no discussion about any tournament revenue in basketball or football going back to the OHSAA. Hickey took pains to point out that it wasn't a fine, and said they paid the money rather than go into a court battle that could cost more.

"I believe a fine indicates wrongdoing," Hickey said. "There's no wrongdoing. There has been a lack of full due diligence, which we have corrected."

The investigation into Washington Local Schools started 17 months ago, with the OHSAA looking into allegations of improper certification for coaches and residency checks by the district. Hickey estimated that 1,000 students a year transfer into the district. Ross said steps have been taken to address those concerns, and the district will not be put on any further probation.

TRAC Commissioner Ken Myers of Fremont said the forfeiture means that Findlay is retroactively the first champion for football, and the Trojans finish as co-champions in boys basketball with St.

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Whitmer

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John's Jesuit and Toledo Central Catholic.

Alexander had four carries for 104 yards against Ross in 2011, with two going for touchdowns in a 58-20 Panthers win. The forfeit might have helped the Little Giants into the football playoffs last year. Ross finished 5-5, but going into its final game against Findlay, could have won and gotten into the playoffs. But coach Derek Kidwell said it was unfortunate to see any athletes work hard and have their accomplishments vacated through no fault of their own.

"Those are the kids you feel sorry for," he said.

Hickey, himself a father of one of the Whitmer basketball players, said that's why the decision wasn't reached lightly.

"These forfeits are extremely painful," he said. "All the kids who weren't involved are being punished, and that's a harsh life lesson."

Alexander scored 11 points against Ross at Whitmer, a 59-43 Panthers win, and didn't play in the game at Ross, a one-point Little Giants loss, because he was on an official visit to the University of Nebraska.

"They had a tremendous season last year," Ross basketball coach Mark Gedeon said of Whitmer. "They were a pretty darn good team."

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BOYS BASKETBALL

Little Giants downs rival Streaks

Ross escapes Sandusky with 60-50 victory

By Chris Gruber
News-Messenger correspondent

SANDUSKY—Despite a dominant effort by Sandusky in the third quarter, Ross managed to escape with a 60-50 win on the road in non-conference play Thursday.

Consistent play for 32 minutes and a 39-17 rebounding advantage for the contest proved to be crucial factors in the Little

Giants' effort.

Ross' Drew Solander, who tied for a team-high 16 points to compliment eight rebounds, said that the unselfishness of his team allowed the team to come away with the win.

"I think (point guard) Jack Gideon does a great job," Solander said. "He doesn't have the most points, but he always leads us in the assist column and Dylan (Jagodzinski) had a great

game, too.

"It was definately more a post game and they played a lot of zone."

Gideon totaled six points, eight assists and nine rebounds. Jagodzinski added 16 points and nine rebounds at center.

"We don't have anybody averaging double digits (in scoring)," Little Giants coach Mark Gideon said. "We do need to share the basketball and work together to have any chance of success."

Ross (5-2) out totaled Sandusky (1-7) in the assist column

at 14-8 for the game and jumped out to 15-4 lead in the first quarter with all the scoring coming in the paint, with the exception of two free throws from Jarvis Jones.

"We gave up too many easy baskets in the first half," Blue Streaks coach Bobby Langdon said. "We didn't box out and weren't playing in front of their man like we teach them to do."

The deficit grew for the Blue Streaks in the second quarter to 36-13.

"We were sleep walking in the first half," Langdon said.

"We had (more than a) a 20-point deficit going into the third quarter and I told our kids we are going to cut it to 10 in the third quarter."

With a devastating full court press, Ross contributed six turnovers in the third period and Sandusky trailed 46-36 heading into the fourth quarter.

Streaks guard Michael Delk was the catalyst in the comeback, providing 12 points, two 3-pointers and four rebounds.

"I thought (Delk) played an

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Fremont Ross 60, Sandusky 50

Fremont Ross	N	15	17	15	13	—	60
Sandusky		4	9	23	14	—	50

No player data found for field goals, free throws or total points.

Records: Fremont Ross 4-2; Sandusky 1-7.

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Ross coach Mark Gedeon instructs a player during a game at the Purple Pit against Marion Harding. Gedeon recently won his 200th game as Little Giants coach. NEWS-MESSANGER FILE PHOTO

Gedeon reflects on 200

FREMONT—Not many people have the opportunity to coach in one place for 23 years and become a staple among the community.

Count Mark Gedeon as one of the lucky ones.

After graduating from Bowling Green State University in 1989, Gedeon has worked for 23 years at Fremont City Schools. And during that time, he has had the opportunity to influence countless young people through his coaching and teaching, something he continues to do.

Gedeon, a Bowling Green native, got into coaching at an early age. While a student at BGSU, he coached 7th grade basketball at Bowling Green Junior High for three years and 9th grade basketball for a year. Today, he's married with a daughter and three sons, one of whom, Jack, a junior, plays for the basketball team which currently stands at 5-2 overall and 2-2 in the Three Rivers Athletic Conference.

Through it all, Gedeon is conscious of

Coach has enjoyed his tenure at Ross

By Yaneek Smith
News-Messenger Correspondent

the fact that it has been the work of many men who have helped to build such a fine program at Ross.

"I've been fortunate to coach many wonderful people and coach with some outstanding people. There are too many to list on the players' side. There were great assistants like Chuck Lindsey, Scott McVeigh and Bill Beaston. Those are some of the people that have worked closely with me during my time at Ross and have contributed greatly to our pro-

gram's success."

McVeigh, now in his 11th season as head coach at Perkins, led the Pirates to the Division II regional final last year. Beaston is in his sixth year as head coach at Tiffin Columbian.

Through the years, the Little Giants have been members of several conferences, among them them the the Buckeye Conference (1954-87), the Buckeye Central Conference (1987-93), the Great Lakes League (1993-2003), the Greater Buckeye Conference (2003-11) and now the TRAC. During that span, Gedeon's teams have faced great players such as Ben Roethlisberger, C.J. Bear, Ben Tobias and DeSean Nix.

Gedeon recalls as a first-year coach boarding a charter bus and traveling 3.5 hours to face Zanesville High School, a conference foe, once a year. The Buckeye Central Conference broke up because of travel distances. The league

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Gedeon

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included Zanesville, Lancaster and Newark, as well as Fremont Ross.

"It was like being at a small college — we had a charter bus, it was a unique experience," said Gedeon, who coached the JV team for five seasons before taking over as coach before the 1995-96 campaign. "Going to BGHS, the farthest trip for me (as a kid) was to Sylvania. Traveling was part of the game, that's how it was, being a Div. I school on an island (around smaller schools)."

He speaks highly of many players and teams he's coached over the years, but the '97 district Championship team, which featured Derek Hershey, Kurt Snyder and Edmond Peters, among others, stands out.

"That was my second year as the varsity head coach," Gedeon recalls. "Most of those guys had played JV for me as sophomores, so we already had that respect factor back and forth and it carried over. We substituted on the clock and played 10 guys regularly. Out of those 10 players, nine averaged more than 5.1 points and each player averaged at least 12 minutes per game. We only had one kid average in double digits."

"They very competitive and they bought into what we were doing. They had a 'Refuse To Lose' mentality. Five of them graduated in the top-17 academically. I knew at the time

what a special group that would."

That unit won 16 games and captured the program's first district title since 1930.

The Little Giants defeated Tiffin Columbian in the sectional final and then one of their rivals, Findlay, to advance to the district final at Bowling Green State University, where they faced Mansfield Senior, who was ranked in the top 10 in the state.

"I remember thinking, 'Oh, my gosh, how are we going to compete?' We had an outstanding game, they hit a 3 at the buzzer to send (the game) into overtime, but we won. We had half of Anderson Arena filled with purple and white. The Purple Pit Crew was great.

"At the time, I knew that was unique. That was the first time I ever cut down the net. That helped put Ross on the basketball map."

The 1997 club lost in the regional semifinals to Lakewood St. Edward, a team with 12 Div. I scholarship players that featured Steve Logan and Sam Clancy, Jr. both of whom went on to have stellar careers at Cincinnati and Southern Cal, respectively.

Gedeon also recalls his teams from 2001-03 that won three straight GLL titles. From '97 thru '03, the Little Giants averaged 16 wins per season and also won the GBC title in '06. Gedeon achieved another milestone when Ross defeated Waite in the season opener for his 200th career. His record at Ross is now 204-175 (.540) with four

league titles -- three in the GLL and one in the GBC -- and one district championship.

"We had some outstanding teams through out 3-peat concluding in 2003 and being ranked 11th in Div. I. The '01 team won the first league title in 47 years, that was pretty special because we had finished second a number of times before that. And the '06 team had great chemistry. We had an amazing run, that's probably be the best interval for Ross basketball."

Juan Vela, a 2000 Ross graduate who still holds the single-season, career and single-game records for 3-pointers, is currently the girls head coach.

"There is one comment that sticks out in my mind and that gave me that drive," said Vela, who Gedeon refers to as the greatest shooter he ever coached. "I was a freshman, it was right before an open gym, and he pulled me aside, said, 'If you keep working, you could be out here on Friday nights playing for us.'

"That comment stuck out and I didn't want to let him down. He believed in me and as a kid, that's important. He gave me that drive to learn more and play hard. That's what I try to do with my kids so that they can experience the same thing. That came natural to Coach Gedeon and he brings out the best in (people)."

Vela succinctly summed up just why people respect Gedeon so much.

"He's modest, he's classy. You can't get much better than that."

Unbeaten Irish roll in win over Ross

Little Giants the latest victim for deep, talented Toledo Central Catholic squad

By Chris Gruber
News-Messenger correspondent

FREMONT — On Friday at home, Ross became the latest victim of undefeated Central Catholic, 59-30, in Three Rivers Athletic Conference play.

For the season, the Fighting Irish (6-0, 3-0) are outscoring opponents by more than 25 points per game. After the first quarter on Friday, Central Catholic held a commanding 17-4 lead.

The Fighting Irish "are a very impressive collection of athletes," Little Giants coach Mark Gedeon said. "They can hurt you

in many different ways."

One of those ways is in the paint with the presence of senior forward Keith Towbridge, who signed a letter of intent to play football at Louisville. The 6-5, 230-pound finished the contest with 11 points and 15 of 37 rebounds for Central Catholic.

Also in the lineup for the Fighting Irish was 6-2 senior guard Jayme Thompson, who signed a letter of intent to Ohio State to play defensive back.

"We knew coming in what we were up against," Gedeon said. "DeShone Kizer frustrated us a lot in the game, getting in the

paint and passing it off for easy layups."

Kizer would end the contest with six assists to complement four points.

For Ross, the second quarter was one of the few bright spots for the contest. The Little Giants were only outscored 12-11 in the quarter and built momentum heading into the third quarter with a three-point field from senior guard Alex Metcalf as time expired for a deficit at half-time at 29-13.

"We only turned the ball over three times in the second quarter but we had 19 for the game," Gedeon said. "We did a good job with the dribble-drive in the quarter, attacked more and had better spacing."

In the third quarter, the spacing seemed to collapse as the Fighting Irish were able to force the Little Giants into two turnovers that led to four points in transition by Nate Harris by the 6:28 mark.

Following a Ross timeout, Central Catholic managed to force five more turnovers prior to the fourth quarter with two of them coming from charges.

By the time the fourth period did emerge, the Little Giants were at a 47-20 disadvantage,

"We did a nice job defensively and were taking some things away, especially the easy pass," said Fighting Irish coach Jim Welling. "This is an experienced group of kids.

"This is the way we play all

the time. We weren't focused on taking one kid away from Ross' flow. We just focused on playing good defense."

Despite a rather large crowd, Ross only managed to score 10 more points before the end of regulation and had no player in double figures.

Metcalf and Tyler Wolf were the high scorers for the Little Giants with eight points each, while five others managed to reach the scoring column.

One of the biggest positives for Ross was the defensive effort against Deontae Cole, who totaled 10 points.

"To limit a player like Deontae Cole to 10 points is a good," Gedeon said. "He is one of the best shooters in Ohio."

Central Catholic (Toledo) 59, Fremont Ross 30
Central Catholic (Toledo) 17 12 18 12 — 59
Fremont Ross 4 11 5 10 — 30

Central Catholic (Toledo)

Cliff Bussey II 3 2 8, Deontae Cole 4 1 10, Kyle Frazier 1 2 4, Nathaniel Harris 9 18, DeShone Kizer 1 2 4, Darnell Moody 2 4, Keith Towbridge 5 1 11, Thomas Vetter 1 2. Totals 26 6 59.

Fremont Ross

Jared Ballenger 1 1 3, Jack Gedeon 1 2, Dylan Jagodzinski 1 1 3, Alex Metcalf 3 1 8, Jalen Slick 1 3, Drew Starks 1 3, Tyler Wolf 3 1 8. Totals 11 4 30.

Rebounds - Central Catholic (Toledo) 37 (Keith Towbridge 15), Fremont Ross 26.

BOYS BASKETBALL

Ross runs away with victory

By Chris Graber
News-Messenger correspondent

FREMONT—Of all the components that led Ross to a 56-42 win on Friday at home in Three Rivers Athletic Conference play against St. Francis (0-10, 0-6), Jack Gedeon's performance is near the top.

The Little Giants junior guard provided 12 points to complement a game-high 14 boards to nearly out-rebound the Knights, who totaled 16. Ross ended with 35.

"I felt like the team and I were rebounding like crazy," Gedeon said. "We didn't play that great initially, but we really came together as a team in the fourth quarter on offense and defense."

Heading into the fourth quarter, Ross held a slim 33-30 lead following a Dylan Starks 3-point basket on an assist from Alex Metcalf with 20 "I felt like the seconds team and I remaining in the were third.

"That rebounding three was like crazy."

Coach JACK GEDEON
Mark Gedon said. Fremont Ross junior guard

"Dylan just wants to compete. That's what I love about these kids is they just love to compete."

As big as the shot was, it was his defensive effort that Gedeon really felt was a game changer.

"Dylan is one of the best defensive players I have coached in 27 years," Gedeon said. "Drew Starks is not far behind him and then Alex Metcalf will give you everything he has on every possession."

The Knights opened scoring in the fourth quarter at the 6:32 mark on a routine lay-up from Jay Snell on an assist from Patrick Szenderski, but a meltdown would ensue.

St. Francis would commit eight of 11 of their fourth quarter turnovers in the final three minutes of the contest and Ross would close out the contest with a 23-10 run.

Five of the Knights turnovers in the final three minutes were a result of an inability to get the ball across half court against a full press defense from the Little Giants.

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ROSS

Continued from Page 1B

“This was a winnable ball game,” St. Francis coach Travis Lewis said. “Fremont played very, very hard and when the game was on the line, guys made shots for them.

“They made free throws, we turned the ball over 29 times.”

After one quarter of play, Ross held a 14-9 advantage and the two teams each scored seven in the second period.

“Their eight turnovers

sparked the win,” said Little Giants junior forward Dylan Jagodzinski, who totaled 10 points, five rebounds. “After that, they were done in the game.”

For Ross, Alex Metcalf added eight points, six rebounds and four steals.

“We know we aren’t going to win a state title or anything like that this year, but these guys are going to play hard, win some games and make memories,” Gedeon said.

St. Francis was led by Snell and Szenderski, who totaled seven points each.

BOYS BASKETBALL

Fremont Ross 56, St. Francis De Sales 42

St. Francis De Sales 9 7 14 12 — 42

Fremont Ross 14 7 12 23 — 56

St. Francis De Sales

Mark Beauch 2 6, Alex Calmes 1 2 4, Lamar Carswell 2 2 4, Jon Frankhauser 1 1, Andy Okuley 2 1 5, Curtis Smith 1 3, Jay Snell 2 2 7, Patrick Szenderski 3 7, Evan Wheeler 2 2. Totals 13 11 42.

Fremont Ross

Jared Ballenger 1 2, Jack Gedeon 5 12, Dylan Jagodzinski 3 4 10, Jarvis Jones 2 4, Grant McConnell 1 2, Alex Metcalf 2 3 8, Drew Solander 1 2, Drew Starks 4 4, Dylan Starks 1 3 6, Tyler Wolf 1 3 6. Totals 15 17 56.

3-Point Goals - St. Francis De Sales (Toledo) 4 (Mark Beauch 2, Curtis Smith 1, Jay Snell 1, Patrick Szenderski 1), **Rebounds** - St. Francis De Sales (Toledo) 16 (Alex Calmes 6), Fremont Ross 35 (Jack Gedeon 14, Alex Metcalf 6).

BOYS BASKETBALL » FREMONT ROSS 68, PORT CLINTON 39



Port Clinton's Drew Fodor and Fremont Ross' Drew Solander battle for position under the basket while looking for a rebound during the first half of a basketball game Saturday. JONATHON BIRD/NEWS HERALD

Dunk sparks Ross

Wolf throws one down, Giants race past PC

By Matthew Horn
Sports writer

The student section at Fremont Ross typically remains seated until the Little Giants reach 10 points and doesn't sit down again.

Tyler Wolf got it up on its feet for good a bit earlier Saturday with a thunderous breakaway dunk as Ross topped Port Clinton 68-39 in a non-conference matchup.

"A play like that gets the crowd going," Ross junior Alec Foos said. "You don't always see that in high school sports. We never sit down because we're proud of the team."

Wolf's jam came during a 12-0 run to open the game capped by a three-pointer from Drew Starks. Alex Met-

calf notched a steal and fed Wolf for the emphatic slam put down with enough authority that it somehow ended up in the stands behind the basket.

"I was just trying to make something happen for the team and get the place rocking. Early in the game was the perfect time. We love to get it rocking."

Wolf, who played basketball as a freshman before taking two years off, finished with 13 points. He admits he's still kicking off a little rust.

"I just wanted another chance to compete. I didn't want any regrets. It feels so good to be part of this team. I made the right choice."

"I need to relax more and work on my shot. I want to get better every day. The whole

team does."

Wolf later returned the favor with a touch less flair as he found Metcalf with a pass for an alley-oop layup early in the second quarter.

Metcalf scored a game-high 16 points for the Little Giants (7-3). Drew Solander had 10 points and freshman Tavarious Simms added the first of his varsity career with two free throws in the fourth quarter.

"He's the glue of our team," Ross coach Mark Gedeon said of Metcalf. "He does the little things you don't always see and (Saturday) he showed them. He's just a great kid. It was his best game back off his ACL (injury) from last year."

"He works well with teammates getting steals and assists. It was nice for him to get

accolades as a leader."

The Little Giants' Grant McConnell made a running one-hander for a 20-4 advantage after one quarter.

"Our game plan is to attack defensively and use our athleticism," Gedeon said. "I was pleased with our mindset to execute (Saturday). No field goals in the first quarter (for Port Clinton) and forcing 11 turnovers—I was very pleased."

"One characteristic of this team is it plays hard and plays well together. The defensive rotations are the strength of this team."

The fans, however, will be waiting for the next dunk.

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TRAC BOYS BASKETBALL» WHITMER 69, ROSS 44

Smith leads Panther rout

Standout senior sparks Whitmer

By Kevin Shields
Sports writer

TOLEDO — A year ago, Whitmer's Ricardo Smith was a big-time defensive stopper as the Panthers made a run to the Division I state finals (later vacated because of penalties).

This year, the 6-foot-2-inch senior is turning his game up on offense. Smith, a second-team all-Three Rivers Athletic Conference selection in 2011-12 and University of Findlay commit, tallied a game-high 27 points, including 13 in the second quarter as the third-ranked Panthers broke away from Ross en route to a 69-44 league win Friday at the Whitmer Fieldhouse.

"We just made it way to easy for him to get the shots that he wanted..."

MARK GEDEON

"We're 13 games in and he's had a game like this four or five times," said Panthers coach Bruce Smith, of Ricardo's new offensive prowess.

"He's capable of having nights like this regularly, but asking someone to do that night in and night out is asking a lot."

It's easier when you have a 6-8 star, such as Whitmer's Nigel Hayes, a recruit of the University of Wisconsin. Hayes added 17 points, 13 rebounds, four blocks, four assists and three steals. His presence around the basket allowed the Panthers (11-2, 6-1) to hold the Little Giants (7-4, 3-4) to a 16-of-48 (33 percent) shooting performance, that included a 4-of-23 effort in the opening half.

Ross had come out firing on the defensive side of the ball, holding Hayes to two points and Smith to seven in the opening quarter. A majority of Whitmer's points came either from the outside or at the foul line.

"We generally start slowly in each half, and we were definitely true to form tonight," coach Smith said. "But you can give credit to (Ross). Mark's teams always, always come ready to play. They're always prepared. Even when we were up 18 or 20



Ross' Jared Ballenger and Whitmer's Nick Holley fight for a loose ball during a Three Rivers Athletic Conference game at Whitmer on Friday. LEE WELCH/NEWS-MESSENGER CORRESPONDENT

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ROSS

Continued from Page 1B

points, I wasn't comfortable."

Ricardo Smith's jumper from the corner at the start of the second quarter started a 23-5 run to end the half. When he wasn't getting to the basket, his teammates were getting to the line. Hayes finished 8-of-8 from the charity stripe in the first 16 minutes.

"Obviously, Ricardo is a talented player ... his ability to shoot and get to the rim is well known," Little Giants coach Mark Gedeon said. "I'm just very disappointed in our effort. Especially in the second quarter when it came to containing the basketball and how we rotated to defend. We just made it way to easy for him to get the shots that he wanted to take."

Ross' play of the night

might have come late in the third quarter. Falling out of bounds, Dylan Starks flipped the ball high in the air towards the Panthers' basket. With the ball in the air, Tyler Wolf ran into the paint, out-leaped a defender, set his feet, and laid the ball in for a 46-31 deficit with 1:56 left.

That would be as close as Ross got.

"It's a good win for us. We'll take it," coach Smith said. "We got a very tough schedule this next week."

Whitmer faces St. John's Jesuit Tuesday in a first-place battle. It'll end the week with a Friday game at Findlay.

Jack Gedeon led the Little Giants with 10 points. Dylan Jagodzinski added eight points and five boards.

Ross will host Willard tonight at the Purple Pit.

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Whitmer 69, Fremont Ross 44

Fremont Ross	8	7	16	13	—	44
Whitmer	13	23	16	17	—	69

Fremont Ross

Jared Ballenger 4 4, Jack Gedeon 4 1 10, Dylan Jagodzinski 3 2 8, Jarvis Jones 3 1 7, Alex Metcalf 2 2 7, Drew Starks 1 2, Dylan Starks 1 2, Tyler Wolf 2 4. Totals 16 10 44.

Whitmer

Jonathon Ashe 4 1 9, Jacob Erme 1 1, Nigel Hayes 4 9 17, Luke Hickey 4 4, Sam Hickey 2 6, Nick Holley 2 5, Ricardo Smith 10 6 27. Totals 22 21 69.

3-Point Goals - Fremont Ross 2 (Jack Gedeon 1, Alex Metcalf 1), Whitmer 4 (Sam Hickey 2, Nick Holley 1, Ricardo Smith 1), **Rebounds** - Fremont Ross 28, Whitmer 27.

Next: Ross vs. Willard, today.

BOYS BASKETBALL

Willard runs away with win at Ross

By Chris Gruber

News-Messenger correspondent

FREMONT — Despite breakout performances on Saturday from the Starks twins for Ross, Willard came back from a double-digit deficit to secure a 61-58 overtime win at the Purple Pit.

The Little Giants almost didn't get the opportunity to advance to the overtime period.

With 2.8 seconds remaining in regulation and the score tied at 54, Willard's Hayden Adams missed an uncontested shot near the paint that sailed off the glass and rim as time expired.

"In a game like this, one possession does not determine the game," Ross coach Marc Gedeon said. "The game is determined by an accumulation of possessions and will look those over and figure out what we could have done better to have won this game."

After one quarter of play, it didn't appear the game was headed toward a nail-biting finish, as the Little Giants held a commanding 27-14 lead highlighted by an 85 percent field goal percentage.

Ross "came out absolutely on fire and were scoring in full throttle," Crimson Flashes coach Dave Hirsch said. "With how they came out, I was OK with only being down eight (points) by halftime.

In the quarter, the Little Giants were led in scoring by Alex Metcalf, who contributed seven of his team-high 16 points.

Drew Starks added five points and three of his game-high 10 steals.

Of the 19 turnovers committed in the contest by Willard, Ross' Drew Starks caused 11 of them.

"The Starks are great basketball players," Hirsch said. "I didn't realize (Dylan Starks) was such a good shooter, either."

Drew and Dylan Starks would each end with 10 points, including three three-pointers by Dylan.

Starks' first 3-pointer came at the buzzer to end the opening period and he would add a clutch one with 2:12 remaining in the fourth quarter to give the Little Giants a 54-53 lead.

Hayden Adams converted one-of-two free throw attempts with 1:37 remaining for Willard to tie the contest.

In overtime, Ross fell to a 59-58 deficit at the 1:45 mark following a score by a backdoor cut from Willard's Corey Bahach on an assist from Adams.

With 29 seconds remaining, the Little Giants had two opportunities to relinquish the lead as Metcalf missed a 3-point field and teammate Drew Solander hauled in the rebound and narrowly missed the putback.

With 7.3 seconds remaining, Willard gained possession and Carson Ebert would push the lead to three with a two free-throws.

Metcalf wove through defenders and toss up a

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Giants

Continued from Page 6A

prayer from the volleyball line that went off the backboard and

unanswered.

"That's who I wanted to take that shot and he got a great look at the end," Gedeon said. "I wanted the basketball in his hands and I believed that when he released that shot that it was in.

Moments earlier, "Drew Solander came in with the hustle play that didn't go in either."

For the Crimson Flashes, Matt Cok provided a game-high 18 points complemented with seven rebounds.

Willard 61, Fremont Ross 58

Willard	14	11	11	18	7	—	61
Fremont Ross	27	6	5	16	4	—	58

Willard

Hayden Adams 5 2 12, Corey Bohach 3 2 8, Matt Cok 4 7 18, Nick Davidson 1 1 3, Carson Ebert 4 2 12, Bronson Owens 4 0 8. Totals 21-44 14-21 61.

Fremont Ross

Jared Ballenger 1 0 2, Jack Gedeon 2 2 6, Dylan Jagodzinski 2 1 5, Jarvis Jones 2 0 4, Alex Metcalf 5 6 16, Drew Solander 1 0 2, Drew Starks 3 3 10, Dylan Starks 3 1 10, Tyler Wolf 1 0 3. Totals 20-51 13-19 58.

3-Point Goals - Willard 5-14 (Matt Cok 3, Carson Ebert 2), Fremont Ross 5-18 (Drew Starks 1, Dylan Starks 3, Tyler Wolf 1), **Rebounds** - Willard 34 (Hayden Adams 8, Matt Cok 8), Fremont Ross 21 (Dylan Jagodzinski 6).

Turnovers: Willard 24, Fremont Ross 15

Records: Willard 10-5 (4-2 NOL)

Next: Willard at Bellevue, Friday

JV: Fremont 42-41

BOYS BASKETBALL



Fremont Ross' Drew Starks drives through the Oregon Clay defense during the first half of a basketball game on Tuesday. JONATHON BIRD/NEWS-MESSENDER

Ross' defense keys win over Clay

Little Giants hold Eagles to six points in two quarters

By Kevin Shields
Sports writer

FREMONT — Two six-point quarters on defense underscored why Ross was able to hold off winless Oregon Clay for a 56-48 victory in the Three Rivers Athletic Conference on Tuesday.

Struggling to stop the Eagles (0-12, 0-8) in transition in the opening quarter, Ross, which trailed 17-13 after the eight minutes, applied the clamps on defense. They forced Clay more to the outside as the Eagles shot 3-of-11 from the floor. The Little Giants (8-5, 4-4) used that misfortune to go on an 11-0 run, and taking a 26-23 edge to the half-

time locker room.

Much of the same took place in the fourth quarter. Holding on to a tight 46-42 lead, Ross' play-making on defense again came through. Alex Metcalf's fourth steal of the game and Jack Gedeon's ensuing pass to an open Jarvis Jones under the basket gave the Little Giants a 52-46 lead with 2:04 remaining, after they'd clung to a 48-46 margin for nearly four minutes.

Gedeon finished a team-high 14 points, adding four assists. He and Jones each pulled down seven boards. Metcalf contributed nine points and five steals.

"I thought (Clay) came out and

played outstanding," said Little Giants coach Mark Gedeon, whose team ended its first two-game skid with the win. "I thought (Clay) out-hustled us. They executed against our pressure very well ... made sure they got high-percentage shots. And we didn't adjust our intensity for a very long time.

"But, it was nice to find our anchor there, our defense, and we're very pleased that we held them to six points in each of those quarters," Gedeon added. "With it being game time crunch in the fourth quarter, we were able to hold them to one score in their last 13

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ROSS

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possessions.

Despite seven turnovers in the fourth quarter, the Little Giants iced the game with a series of defensive plays in the final 1:04. Jones' block of Clay's Jack Nagy was the first key play, the second was a steal from Dylan Starks that setup foul shots, with the final being a steal near mid-court by Metcalf.

Nagy, whose averaged around 14 points per game over the last 10 contests, led all game scorers with 19 points for the Eagles. He and Patricc Booth, the second-leading scorer in the league, were a big reason why their team's up and down game had worked so well in the first and third quarters.

"Those two guys are experienced varsity players," coach Gedeon said.

"They want to get up and down the floor and they did a very good job of that in the first quarter."

The key was breaking Ross' front-line press. Nagy weaved through Ross defenders for an easy lay-in to give Clay an 8-2 lead in the first three minutes. Another open-court lay-up forced coach Gedeon to call a timeout as his team trailed 13-6.

"We've been playing like that for probably the last six games," Eagles coach Rob Belegrin said. "The thing is

we play 25 minutes. The game is 32 minutes. That second quarter for whatever reason has killed us the last six games. We've been coming out and winning games in the first quarter, then that second quarter we go back to not rebounding and turning it over."

Clay tied the game five different times in the third quarter. Back-to-back threes by Gedeon and two inside buckets from Drew Solander and Dylan Jagodzinski on four straight trips, finally allowed Ross to pull out to a four-point margin. Metcalf's jumper in the final seconds gave the Little Giants a 46-42 edge going into the final eight minutes.

"Mark does such a great job when it comes to team work, there's never an individual that stands out for them, everyone is just solid," Belegrin said. "It's pretty inspiring to see."

Coming in, Ross had lost back-to-back games for the first time all season, falling at Whitmer on Friday (69-44) and at home to Willard on Saturday in overtime (61-58).

"It was good for our kids to have this quick turnaround into a Tuesday," coach Gedeon said. "Most importantly, it was good for them to be in a single-digit game because we've had 10 double-digit games in our first 11 games."

The Little Giants will play at TRAC front-runner St. John's Jesuit on Friday.

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Fremont Ross 56, Clay (Oregon) 48

Clay (Oregon)	17	6	19	6	—	48
Fremont Ross	13	13	20	10	—	56

Clay (Oregon)

Patricc Booth 7 3 18, James DeMeo 2 5, Jack Nagy 6 7 19, Kyle Row 2 4, Dexter Williams 1 2. Totals 18 10 48.

Fremont Ross

Jared Ballenger 1 2 4, Jack Gedeon 4 3 14, Dylan Jagodzinski 2 4, Jarvis Jones 3 6, Alex Metcalf 3 2 9, Drew Solander 3 6, Drew Starks 2 2, Dylan Starks 1 1, Tyler Wolf 5 10. Totals 21 10 56.

3-Point Goals - Clay (Oregon) 2 (Patricc Booth 1, James DeMeo 1), Fremont Ross 4 (Jack Gedeon 3, Alex Metcalf 1), **Rebounds** - Clay (Oregon) 27 (Patricc Booth 8), Fremont Ross 32 (Jack Gedeon 7, Jarvis Jones 7).

Next: Ross at St. John's Jesuit, Friday.

Records: Clay (Oregon) 0-12; Fremont Ross 8-5.

TRAC BOYS HOOPS

Titans roll past Giants

By Dennis Oehlers
News-Messenger correspondent

TOLEDO — Before Friday night's basketball game between St. John's and Fremont Ross, Titans coach Ed Heintschel was recognized and presented with a framed jersey with the number 600 imprinted on the back -- the number of wins he's achieved during the 33 years of success he's had at St. John's.

Riding the fiery attitude that comes with any achievement, St. John's rolled to an 84-49 victory over Fremont Ross in the Three Rivers Athletic.

The Little Giants (8-6, 4-5) had trouble early and often in creating any lanes inside, forcing them to shoot from the perimeter and taking away from the team ball they have played this season.

"Our offense spacing we thought was poor," said Ross coach Mark Gedeon. "We stood and allowed them to create the vacuums that sucked up the spacing that we need."

After heading into halftime with a 24-point deficit, the Little Giants came out swinging in the third, adding 31 points of their own in the second half.

Alex Metcalf led Fremont Ross with eight points. But many others contributed, as nine players scored for the Little Giants.

"It's important for all five players to work together in order to get to that next level," Gedeon said. "When one or two pieces break down, it makes it very tough for us to be efficient offensively."

Leading the way for the Titans (13-3, 8-1) was Ohio State commit Marc Loving, who went 9-of-15 from the field to finish with 25 points, including a dunk in transition that had most of the arena in awe.

"He's a phenomenal talent," Gedeon said.

The 6-foot-8 star not only has an incredible shot and keen eye for the players around him, Gedeon said, but "his wingspan is ridiculous.

"They have an outstanding defense, outstanding coach, and outstanding players."

BOYS BASKETBALL

Ross knocks off Lima Senior

Little Giants move to 5-5 in TRAC play

By Kevin Shields
Sports writer

FREMONT — Alex Metcalf cut toward the middle of the lane before going behind his back to find Jarvis Jones all alone inside for two of his 10 third-quarter points, during Ross' 68-54 victory over Lima Senior in a Three Rivers Athletic Conference game at the Purple Pit on Friday.

"They (the Spartans) were in a zone, so when I cut, he's always on the block," Metcalf said. "I just assumed he was there. If he wasn't there it would have been bad."

Metcalf, who tied for the game high with 18 points, scored 10 points himself in the fourth quarter. His four foul shots with 2:21 remaining — two as result of a foul and two others as result of a technical foul — was part of a six-point Little Giants' possession that turned a six-point game into a 64-52 advantage.

Ross (9-6, 5-5) held a 29-26 lead at halftime before increasing the margin to as much as 41-28 in the third quarter. But the Spartans (6-10, 4-6) made it interesting in the fourth, outscoring the Little Giants 12-6 in the first five minutes. Most of which was due to Ross' 15 second-half turnovers.

"We had some passes in there that were ill-advised, we'll say," Ross coach Mark Gedeon said.

Lima's Isiah Simpson tallied eight of his 15 points in the quarter. His shot in the lane cut the deficit to 54-50 forcing a Ross timeout.

"It was just a re-group timeout, where he wanted us to get back on track and calm down," Metcalf said. "We were going a little faster than we should have been and got a little sloppy.

"Lima is one of those teams if they feel like they're in the game the whole time, they can take advantage of the fourth quarter. We had to put them down quick."

Tyler Wolf scored six of the game's final eight points. His third-quarter 3-pointer from the wing pushed the Little Giants' lead to 44-32. The senior finished with 15 points.

"It was a very good game for Tyler, I think he likes playing Lima because he had 15 down there, too," Gedeon said. "He came up with some big plays. That three came at a critical time where he had gone empty on four straight possessions, but were able to push it back to double digits."

Lima's ability to crash the boards was a big factor in the opening half. Six-foot, 4-inch post Rico Stafford tied for game-high with 18 points, most of which came on second-

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"Lima is one of those teams if they feel like they're in the game the whole time, they can take advantage of the fourth quarter."

ALEX METCALF

ROSS

Continued from Page 1B

chance buckets. The Spartans led on two separate occasions in the second quarter.

"We knew that was going to be a key point of emphasis for this game," Gedeon said. "I thought Lima did a better job in the first half of getting those offensive rebounds. But in the second half, we did a great job of attacking the paint, whether it was offensive rebounding, whether it was us getting the ball to Jarvis Jones, or whether we attacked pressure and Alex Metcalf and Tyler Wolf were getting layups, I was very pleased to see that execution."

Metcalf, another senior, has been a leader on the floor for the Little Giants this winter, leading the team in scoring at 9.3 points per game.

"His play tonight just showed how important he is to this team," Gedeon said. "He's

got excellent decision-making. He plays good defense, he has the ability to shoot the basketball and finish around the rim. We knew he would have to have a big game for us to be successful."

Metcalf wears a brace on his leg after receiving off-season ACL surgery.

"I worked on a lot of set shots," he said. "I couldn't run well, so I was doing a lot of catching and shooting. Now I'm hitting a lot more jump shots than I did before and I got a lot more confidence shooting it."

Jones tallied 12 points for the Little Giants, who got seven assists from Drew Starks and five more from Dylan Starks. Jack Gedeon added three assists and a game-high 11 rebounds.

The Little Giants will travel to Fostoria tonight for a non-league tilt. The two teams haven't met since their days in the Great Lakes League.

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Fremont Ross 68, Lima 54

Lima	11	15	10	18	—	54
Fremont Ross	10	19	17	22	—	68

Lima

SHAWN DEVON ALLEN 2 6 11, MALIK BINGMON 2 4, RUBEN FLOWERS 1 1 3, ISIAH SIMPSON 6 2 15, RICO ^N STAFFORD 9 18, Ilias Wright 1 3. Totals 21 9 54.

Fremont Ross

Jared Ballenger 1 2, Jack Gedeon 2 3 7, Dylan Jagodzinski 1 1, Jarvis Jones 6 12, Alex Metcalf 7 4 18, Drew Solander 1 2, Drew Starks 2 2 7, Dylan Starks 1 2 4, Tyler Wolf 7 15. Totals 27 12 68.

Rebounds - Lima 24 (RICO STAFFORD 6), Fremont Ross 35 (Jack Gedeon 11).

Next: Ross at Fostoria, Saturday.

Boys Basketball: Ross 88, Fostoria 34

FOSTORIA — Four Little Giants had double-digit scoring performances in an 88-34 rout of the Redmen in non-conference action Saturday.

Tyler Wolf had a team-high 17 points for Ross (10-6), while teammates Alex Metcalf scored 15, Grant McConnell had 12 and Jarvis Jones added 11. Drew Starks had six assists, Jack Gedeon six blocks and Metcalf added four steals.

Fremont Ross 88, Fostoria 34

Fremont Ross	28	27	17	16	—	88
Fostoria	10	9	8	7	—	34

Fremont Ross

Jared Ballenger 1 3 5, Jack Gedeon 3 7, Dylan Jagodzinski 4 8, Jarvis Jones 5 1 11, Grant McConnell 4 2 12, Alex Metcalf 6 2 15, Tervarus Simms 1 1, Jalen Slick 1 2, Drew Solander 4 8, Drew Starks 2 2, Tyler Wolf 6 3 17. Totals 34 14 88.

Fostoria

Kaleb Bemis 1 2, Adonis Cousin 2 2, Dominique Fuller 6 2 18, Bishop Mahan 1 2, Rayshon Martin 2 4, Tony Mauricio 1 2, Garrett Sferro 1 1, Drew Stinnett 1 1 3.

3-Point Goals - Fremont Ross 6 (Jack Gedeon 1, Grant McConnell 2, Alex Metcalf 1, Tyler Wolf 2), Fostoria 4 (Dominique Fuller 4), **Rebounds** - Fremont Ross 49, Fostoria 28.

Next: Ross vs. Findlay, Friday.

BOYS BASKETBALL

Little Giants solve the Findlay riddle

Ross tops
Trojans for first
time in 15 tries

By Kevin Shields
Sports writer

FREMONT — Winless in its last 14 meetings against Findlay, including a 37-point loss in December, Ross decided to try something a little different coming into Friday night's second meeting this year with their old rivals.

Instead of playing the game

their way, up-tempo and using their athleticism to get around the Trojan's big bodies, the Little Giants adopted a lot of the characteristics Findlay has used over the years against them. They slowed up the offense, used some patience and made sure they got the right looks. And it worked.

Findlay's Michael Clark missed the mark on a 3-pointer with two seconds remaining as the Little Giants held on for a 37-35 Three Rivers Athletic Conference win in front of a big crowd at the Purple Pit.

Ross (11-6, 6-5) hadn't beat the Trojans (9-8, 5-5) since a 57-46 win in Findlay on Feb. 24,

2006. That was also the last year the Little Giants had a winning league record as they won the Greater Buckeye Conference title with a 9-1 record. Ross has three TRAC games remaining.

"It feels good to finally beat them" Little Giants senior guard Drew Starks said. "It's a good win for us. We played hard and stayed focused throughout."

Starks, who led all Ross scorers with 13 points, canned a big three from the left corner with 5:08 remaining to give the Little Giants a 36-28 advantage. But Findlay fought back. A trey from Clark, along with a pair of inside buckets from Austin Gut-

ting and Adam Twining cut the Trojans' deficit to 36-35 with 2:59 left.

Twining came back on defense and got a steal on Ross' next possession. However, the Trojans couldn't take advantage. Gutting missed a shot in the paint with 1:15 to go, just before Jack Gedeon was fouled and split a pair at the line for the final 37-35 margin. Findlay turned the ball over with 42.8 seconds showing, but Alex Metcalf missed a one-and-one with 27.8 left that could have put the game out of reach.

The Trojans took a timeout with 20.7 seconds remaining, and again with 4.4 seconds

showing after they couldn't get a shot off.

"We had a primary option on that play, but if they thought they weren't guarding the ball out of bounds, that we might be able to throw it in and get it back to Michael," Findlay coach Jim Rucki said. "He didn't get a great look, but we wanted it to come down to one shot."

Findlay ended the game 11-of-37 from the field, which accounted for most of its offensive troubles. Ross held the Trojans to six third-quarter points, winning the quarter by a 13-6 count to take a 29-24 lead to the

See ROSS, Page 2B

ROSS

Continued from Page 1B

final eight minutes.

“(Ross) made a couple of nice plays and we were just stagnant on offense, couldn’t get anything going,” Rucki said. “Their help was good. We’d get the ball inside, but they’d get people around there.”

Gutting, who had a big game in the team’s first meeting, paced the Trojans with 14 points. He had eight of those points in the first half as Findlay led 18-16 at halftime.

“We knew we had to keep (Gutting) to minimum points and keep him out of the paint,” Starks said. “So we started double-teammimg him in the second half.”

Metcalf finished with nine points for the Little Giants, while Gedeon had nine boards and five assists. Ross

went 14-of-38 from the floor, but was just 2-of-13 beyond the arc.

“I thought our kids were mentally tough all the way through,” Little Giants coach Mark Gedeon said. “We didn’t get beat on several of their special plays. The kids competed well and that had a lot to do with the four good days of practice we had this week.”

As for the game plan?

“We thought we’d switch it up and try something a little different,” coach Gedeon said. “The last couple years Findlay was very much an inside team, while we had some quickness. And tonight, we were a lot more patient than we were when we got blitzed down there by 37 (71-34 on Dec. 21).”

Ross returns to TRAC action Tuesday at Central Catholic.

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Fremont Ross 37, Findlay 35

Findlay 6 12 6 11 — 35

Fremont Ross 6 10 13 8 — 37

Findlay

Michael Clark 2 6, Joseph Davidson 2 4, Austin Gutting 3 8 14, Nick Kairys 1 2, Brayden Miller 1 3, Adam Twinning 2 2 6. Totals 11 10 35.

Fremont Ross

Jared Ballenger 1 1 3, Jack Gedeon 1 2 4, Dylan Jagodzinski 1 2, Jarvis Jones 2 4, Alex Metcalf 3 2 9, Drew Solander 2 2, Drew Starks 6 13. Totals 14 7 37.

3-Point Goals - Findlay 3 (Michael Clark 2, Brayden Miller 1), Fremont Ross 2 (Alex Metcalf 1, Drew Starks 1), **Rebounds** - Findlay 29, Fremont Ross 23 (Jack Gedeon 9).

Next: Ross at Toledo CC, Tuesday.

Size dooms Ross against TCC

Ross falls to Central Catholic in TRAC

By Denny Oehlers

News-Messenger correspondent

Outsized and outmatched, Fremont Ross knew it would have to be at its best Tuesday at the Sullivan Center.

The Little Giants struggled early in turning the ball over eight times in the first few minutes and fell to Toledo Central Catholic 64-40 in the Three Rivers Athletic Conference.

Central Catholic (14-2, 9-2) has six players who are at least 6-foot, 5-inch-

es tall.

"For us to be successful in this game, we had to compete as best as we could in the paint," Ross coach Mark Gedeon said.

Unfortunately for the Little Giants, Central Catholic dominated under the basket for much of the game. Gedeon let his team know it was underachieving.

"We've got to play our game," Gedeon said during a timeout in the third quarter.

There were spurts in the middle of the second quarter and opening of the second half that exemplified Gedeon's message about spreading the floor.

"Our game involves all our players.

We need all five players to create the spacing that allows us to have success at the offensive end."

In the second quarter, Jack Gedeon stole a pass around midcourt and drove to the basket before spinning around a defender to drop in a bucket. Gedeon had 13 points, including three three-pointers for Ross (11-7, 6-6).

Ross then had a rebound the following possession and created the spacing it needed on the offensive end to find Gedeon for a three. Alex Metcalf, who finished with 10 points, added two more threes for the Little Giants.

Nate Harris paced four Central Catholic players in double digits with 17 points.

BOYS BASKETBALL

Central Catholic 64, Fremont Ross 40

Fremont Ross	7	11	11	11	—	40
Central Catholic	16	17	16	15	—	64

Fremont Ross

Jared Ballenger 1 2, Jack Gedeon 5 13, Dylan Jagodzinski 3 1 7, Jarvis Jones 1 2, Alex Metcalf 3 2 10, Drew Starks 3 6. Totals 16 3 40.

Central Catholic

Cliff Bussey 11 6 12, Deontae Cole 11 3, Nathaniel Harris 7 3 17, DeShone Kizer 4 1 11, Darnell Moody 1 2, Zachary Pacer 2 5, Keith Towbridge 4 4 12, Marcus Winters 1 2. Totals 26 9 64.

3-Point Goals - Fremont Ross 5 (Jack Gedeon 3, Alex Metcalf 2), Central Catholic (Toledo) 3 (DeShone Kizer 2, Zachary Pacer 1).

Foul line success sparks Ross to victory

By Denny Oehlers
News-Messenger correspondent

TOLEDO — Many coaches preach to their players continually on the subject of basics, sometimes to the point of exhaustion. The Fremont Ross boys basketball team showed coach Mark Gedeon on Friday night that it was listening, making 17-of-24 free throws en route to a 56-42 Three Rivers Athletic Conference win.

With under a minute to play

and St. Francis (1-17, 0-11) trailing by three, Ross senior Dylan Starks was fouled and sent to the line for a one-and-one attempt, making both.

Just a quarter before, Starks, who finished with seven points, had leaped at an attempt to steal the ball during a St. Francis pass before falling hard and splitting his chin open on the court. After team officials checked him out, he walked off the court on his own will.

"He'll do whatever it takes to

make a big play," Ross Coach Mark Gedeon said. "He doesn't care about the situation. He just cares about the now."

The two free throws put Ross (12-7, 7-6) up 38-33 before St. Francis senior Patrick Szenderski made a pair of his own from the charity line, placing his team back within three.

As Ross came back down the court with 30 seconds to play, Ross senior Alex Metcalf, who was lights out in the fourth quarter, was fouled and sent to the

line for a one-and-one.

Making it look routine, Metcalf, who scored all eight of his points in the final period, nailed both free throws to put Ross back up by five.

"They were no nerves," Metcalf said. "They become second nature."

At the end of the last practice, Alex was told to shoot free throws until he made one nothing-but-net.

"We always emphasize free-throws," Gedeon said. "It's just

you [the player] and the basket."

Gedeon pointed out that Metcalf had surgery on his anterior cruciate ligament a little more than a year ago.

"For him to be playing at this level at this time of year is a tribute to his work ethic and his character," said coach Gedeon.

In addition to Dylan Starks and Alex Metcalf's offensive damage, seven other Little Giants scored at least two points, making it a total team effort.

Fremont Ross 56, St. Francis De Sales (Toledo) 42

Fremont Ross	14	7	12	23	—	56
St. Francis De Sales (Toledo)	9	7	14	12	—	42

Fremont Ross

Jared Ballenger 1 2, Jack Gedeon 5 12, Dylan Jagodzinski 4 4 12, Jarvis Jones 1 2, Alex Metcalf 2 3 8, Drew Solander 1 2, Drew Starks 1 3 5, Dylan Starks 1 4 7, Tyler Wolf 1 3 6. Totals 17 17 56.

St. Francis De Sales (Toledo)

Mark Beauch 2 6, Alex Calmes 2 2 7, Lamar Carswell 1 3 5, Jon Frankhauser 2 1 5, Andy Okuley 1 1, Jay Snell 4 2 12, Patrick Szenderski 2 4, Evan Wheeler 2 2. Totals 13 11 42.

3-Point Goals - Fremont Ross 5 (Jack Gedeon 2, Alex Metcalf 1, Dylan Starks 1), St. Francis De Sales (Toledo) 5 (Mark Beauch 2, Jay Snell 2).

ROUNDUP

Ross boys drub rival Blue Streaks

News-Messenger staff reports

FREMONT — Tyler Wolf's 11 points paced the Little Giants in a 69-49 rout of the arch-rival Sandusky.

Alex Metcalf contributed 10 points for Ross (13-7). The Little Giants outscored Sandusky (2-17), 19-9, in the third quarter to take a commanding 49-30 lead.

D'Maja Jordan led the Blue Streaks with 19 points.

Fremont Ross 69, Sandusky 49

Sandusky	8	13	9	19	—	49
Fremont Ross	14	16	19	20	—	69

Sandusky

Jaleele Brown 1 1 3, Michael Delk 4 2 11, Davion Fisher 2 4, D'Maja Jordan 7 1 9, Martell Moore 2 4, Deontre Palma 1 2, Bryan Williams 3 6. Totals 20 3 49.

Fremont Ross

Jared Ballenger 4 8, Jack Gedeon 2 2 7, Dylan Jagodzinski 2 1 5, Jarvis Jones 4 8, Grant McConnell 1 3, Alex Metcalf 3 2 10, Drew Solander 2 2 6, Drew Starks 2 5, Dylan Starks 3 6, Tyler Wolf 4 2 11. Totals 27 9 69.

3-Point Goals - Sandusky 6 (Michael Delk 1, D'Maja Jordan 5), Fremont Ross 6 (Jack Gedeon 1, Grant McConnell 1, Alex Metcalf 2, Drew Starks 1, Tyler Wolf 1).

Boys Basketball: Woodmore 48, Hopewell-Loudon 38

BASCOM — The Wildcats held the Chieftains to 15 points in the first 15 minutes of the third and fourth quarters Saturday, earning a non-league road victory.

Brad Flick paced Woodmore (9-12) with 19 points, and teammate Matt Harr added 10. The Wildcats used a 13-2 fourth-quarter run to build a double-

NORTHWOOD — Sara scored 11 points but the Raiders fell 42-38 to the Raiders in TAAC play Saturday.

Old Fort also got eight from Sammy Miller, while Hartsel and Shelby Bilge six points apiece and Mac Gillett grabbed 10 rebounds.

Megan Roach led North with 14 points.

Rowling, SICC's Harn

Little Giants hold off a stingy Tiffin squad

By Kevin Shields
Sports writer

FREMONT — If its season relied solely on how it played in non-league games, Ross would be one of the top teams around.

The Little Giants won their seventh of eight total games out of the Three Rivers Athletic Conference on Tuesday, shaking a stubborn Tiffin Columbian squad in posting a 51-43 victory inside the Purple Pit. Alex Metcalf scored 14 points for Ross (14-7), which overcame some early struggles for the field, by

creating offense with its defense. Trailing 15-13 with 2:25 remaining in the opening half, the Little Giants seized control, going on a 13-1 run, generated by their press and their ability to hit some timely shots.

"Yeah, I think that was the key for us," said coach Mark Gedeon, of the run that carried over to the first two minutes of the third quarter. "We were able to get a couple turnovers. Tyler Wolf hits a three, then Jack Gedeon gets the bucket and one, before Alex Metcalf hits another three right at the end of the

quarter. It was a key run, it got the lead to four possessions and gave us some momentum going into the locker room."

Ross had started the game 6-of-23 from the field. Luckily for the Little Giants, the Tornadoes (7-14) weren't much better, shooting 7-of-16 for the half, which included a slew of inside misses. Ross led 9-4 after one.

However, an inside basket from Derek Dryfuse and a 3-pointer from Lonsway the next trip down, had the game tied at 9-9.

Josh Flint's reverse layup tied the game again at 11 before

his spot-up three from the corner gave Columbian a 14-13 advantage with 4:10 left in the half. Flint tallied a game-high 15 points. Lonsway added 10 for the Tornadoes.

"That was a big momentum change, and it was all in the last 50 seconds, too," said Columbian coach Bill Beaston, of the Ross run to end the half. "We just got out of whack. We couldn't get our press-break setup the way we wanted to and we didn't execute our screen and roll back the way we needed to. When you play Fremont,

whose really aggressive with its pressure, you have to be exact. In that spurt we weren't."

Metcalf's steal and lay-in got the second half started much the same way for Ross. He swiped another ball on the ensuing possession that finished with a layup by Dylan Jagodzinski. Jagodzinski gave the Little Giants five points, four boards and two steals off the bench.

Jared Ballenger was another spark plug off the pine, contributing six points and four

See LITTLE GIANTS, Page 7A

Little Giants

Continued from Page 6A

rebounds. He knocked down two mid-range jumpers in the third quarter as the Little Giants maintained a 37-27 lead heading to the final quarter.

“He’s a high energy type of player,” said Gedeon, of the 6-foot junior playing his first year of varsity basketball. “He got that big loose ball for us that one time where he corralled it and got the foul. That’s three straight games now that’s he made us that good hustle play, which I think has given our whole team a lift.”

Just as they have all season, Columbian battled back in the fourth quarter. A layup by Flint with four minutes to play, started an 8-2 spurt that saw the Tornadoes cut their deficit to 44-39 with 2:30 to play. Lonsway had a chance to make it three with 2:04 left, but his lay-

up attempt missed the mark.

Ross ended the game going 5-of-8 at the foul line, while on defense it limited the Tornadoes to one shot each time down.

“Our kids know the value of defense,” coach Gedeon said. “We hang our hat on defense and trying to get those rebounds at the end was very, very critical for us. One of the things on our board in the locker room was second-chance points. We knew we had to do a good job of keeping their players off the boards.

“Their kids are strong and they’re aggressive.”

Gedeon finished with 10 points, eight boards, five assists, four steals and added a pair of blocks for the Little Giants who host Whitmer Friday in their season finale. The Panthers, one game back of St. John’s Jesuit, still have a shot at the TRAC title if the Titans lose Friday to Toledo Central Catholic.

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Fremont Ross 51, Columbian 43

Columbian	4	12	11	16	—	43
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Fremont Ross	9	15	13	14	—	51
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Columbian

Cody Daniel 3 3, Alec Denith 1 1 3, Ryan Dryfuse 2 1 5, Josh Flint 7 1 5, Bryce Lonsway 3 2 10, Ryan Lynch 2 1 5, Donovan Walker 1 2. Totals 16 8 43.

Fremont Ross

Jared Ballenger 3 6, Jack Gedeon 2 6 10, Dylan Jagodzinski 2 4, Jarvis Jones 1 2 4, Alex Metcalf 6 1 14, Drew Solander 1 2, Drew Starks 2 1 5, Tyler Wolf 2 6. Totals 19 10 51.

3-Point Goals - Columbian 3 (Josh Flint 1, Bryce Lonsway 2), Fremont Ross 3 (Alex Metcalf 1, Tyler Wolf 2),

Rebounds - Columbian 30 (Ryan Dryfuse 7), Fremont Ross 36 (Jack Gedeon 8).

Records: Columbian 6-13; Fremont Ross 12-7.

HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL

Clyde's Cahill District 6 top player

News-Messenger staff reports

Hunter Perry and Dalton Perry were first-team in Division IV averaging 15.90 and 17.10 points, respectively, while Eric Hoover was coach of the year for Old Fort. Cole David-son was second team.

Jordan Sessler was first-team for St. Joseph Central Catholic averaging 13.20 points. Connor Dudley was second team.

Clyde's Derek Gray was first-team in Division II as he averages 19.60 points. Paul Cullen was honorable mention.

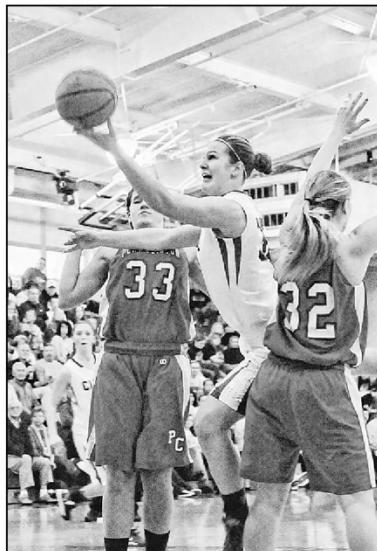
Bellevue's Jalen Santoro was also a first-team pick averaging 18 points. Charles Dendinger and Trent Stamm were honorable mention.

Margaretta's Austin Moore was first-team in Division III averaging 13.10 points. Dylan Bailey was honorable mention.

Jack Gedeon and Alex Metcalf were second team in Division I for Fremont Ross. Tyler Wolf was honorable mention.

Norwalk's Jake Fetheroff was player of the year while Steve Gray was coach of the year in Division I.

Perkins' Nic Williams was player of the year while Willard's Dave Hir-schy was coach of the year in Divi-



Clyde's Amanda Cahill drives to the hoop during a basketball game against Port Clinton on Feb 2. JONATHON BIRD/NEWS-MESSENGER

sion II.

New London's Dane Held was player of the year while Tom Howell was coach of the year in Division III.

New Riegel's Brandyn Reinhart was player of the year in Division IV.

Girls District 6

Clyde's Amanda Cahill is player of the year in Division II averaging 22.20 points while John Cahill was coach of the year. Breanne Michaels was first-team averaging 12.50 points and Lexi Weber was second-team.

Carly Santoro was first-team for the Lady Red averaging 25.50 points. Whitney Schalk and Janelle Watson were honorable mention.

Abbi Hasselbach was first-team in Division I averaging 11 points. Kiera Hall and Ariana Spencer were second-team.

Margaretta's Kelsey Kromer was first-team in Division III.

Cassidy Frank was second-team in Division IV for the Crimson Streaks. Brianna Reardon was honorable mention.

Ashland's Alexis Stoops was player of the year while Mansfield Senior's Todd Krill was coach of the year in Division I.

Western Reserve's Theresa Jackson was player of the year while Brenda Friend was coach of the year in Division III.

Colonel Crawford's Nickyla Gar-verick was player of the year while Carey's Phil Vaughn was coach of the year in Division IV.

TRAC BOYS BASKETBALL

Panthers pull away from Little Giants

By Yaneek Smith

News-Messenger correspondent

FREMONT — For a while it looked like Ross was going able to hang with Whitmer.

But, like great teams often do, they find a way to slowly build a lead before pulling away for the win, which is just what the Panthers did in their 69-44 Three Rivers Athletic Conference victory over the Little Giants on Senior Night at the Purple Pit.

With the score tied at 30 early in the third quarter, the Panthers (17-5, 12-2) proceeded to go on a 20-3 to take control of the contest, outscoring Ross, 18-5, in the third quarter, and, 21-11, in the final period.

Ricardo Smith helped key the run for Whitmer, scoring five straight points to put the Panthers ahead, 35-30, as they began to pull away.

In the first half, however, the Little Giants (14-8, 7-7 TRAC) put up a good fight and hung with Whitmer, taking a 15-14 lead after the first quarter before going into the break trailing, 30-28.

"They came out with every single thing they had in the first half and just punched and punched and punched," Whitmer coach Bruce Smith said, of Ross' first-half performance. "We knew that was going to be the case and we survived it, I think. We got a chance to regroup ourselves at halftime. We made some shots and they missed some shots and one thing led to another. We had to withstand that first-half explosion by them and that was impressive. We had to hang on for dear life."

Ricardo Smith had 21 points to lead all scorers, including three 3-pointers, Chris Boykins finished with 10 points and center Nigel Hayes, who will be playing at the University of Wisconsin next year, chipped in with eight points and was a force in the paint.

"Ricardo can do that," coach Smith said. "He's had some big games this year. They were just trying to match basket for basket with Metcalf. Metcalf was unbelievable. I looked up (at the scoreboard) and saw that he had 11 and (Ross) had 11. Then he had 18 and (Ross) had 20. I don't know what degree of health his knee his, but I think he might have worn down a little in the second half. He was lights out before the half."

See ROSS, Page 2B

ROSS

Continued from Page 1B

Because St. John's beat Central Catholic, 48-34, the Panthers have to settle for a second-place finish in the Three Rivers Athletic Conference. The Titans finish the year with a 13-1 league record, just had of Whitmer's 12-2 mark.

"My mindset was to help my team out and get us started in the second half," said Ricardo Smith, who will be playing basketball next year at the University of Findlay. "They played us pretty good in the first half and we knew we had to do something in the second half."

Ross head coach Mark Gedeon spoke about the run Whitmer made to take control of the game.

"It started off with four straight turnovers by us," Gedeon said, "We know, based on our first experience, that if we had turnovers, they'd turn them into points. Whitmer does well in transition. It's very, very frustrating to play so well in the first half, executing our game plan so well. (But) we had seven turnovers in the third quarter. You can't give away freebies and (the turnovers) led to some freebies (for Whitmer)."

The Little Giants got a game-high 21 points from senior Alex Metcalf, while Jarvis Jones fin-

ished with seven.

"Alex was dynamite," Gedeon said of Metcalf. "He's the glue to our team. He worked hard to come back from the knee injury. It's the kind of performance that we're not surprised with."

It was the final home game for four seniors, Metcalf, Drew and Dylan Starks and Tyler Wolf, players who have meant a lot to the program.

"Just look at our record to start off with, 14-8 right now, I don't think too many people thought we could do something like that without having a dominant player. (The kids) don't care who gets the credit — they work their butts off, they're responsible, they're outstanding students."

The Little Giants return to action on Mar. 1 when they play the winner of the Perrysburg-Lima Senior game at 6:15 p.m. at Liberty-Benton High School in Findlay in the Division I sectional tournament.

"We'll put it behind us, but it's going to hurt for a while, there's no question about that," Gedeon said. "But that's what is great about these kids, they want to go out and compete. The coaches will have a gameplan and we'll teach it for four days. We might not make every shot, we might not get every rebound, we might have a mistake here and there, but I know (the kids) are going to give me a good effort."

Whitmer 69, Fremont Ross 44

Whitmer	14	16	18	21	—	69
Fremont Ross	15	13	5	11	—	44

Whitmer

Jonathon Ashe 3 6, Christopher Boykin 4 2 10, Nigel Hayes 1 6 8, Luke Hickey 3 7, Sam Hickey 1 2 5, Nathan Holley 2 2, Christopher Parker 1 3, Ricardo Smith 8 2 21. Totals 24 14 69.

Fremont Ross

Jack Gedeon 11 3, Dylan Jagodzinski 2 4, Jarvis Jones 3 1 7, Alex Metcalf 7 5 21, Drew Solander 1 2, Drew Starks 1 3 5, Tyler Wolf 2 2. Totals 15 12 44.

3-Point Goals - Whitmer 6 (Luke Hickey 1, Sam Hickey 1, Christopher Parker 1, Ricardo Smith 3), Fremont Ross 2 (Alex Metcalf 2).

Ross' Metcalf is on track

Senior is TRAC
second-team

News-Messenger staff report

Ross senior Alex Metcalf was recognized second-team All-Three Rivers Athletic Conference, as the All-TRAC teams were recently announced following the loss of Toledo Notre Dame Academy in the Division I state semifinals. Metcalf led the Little Giants (14-9, 7-7) in scoring at 11 points per game.

Junior Jack Gedeon was honorable mention for Ross' boys. Junior Abby Hasselbach was honorable mention for the girls.

Senior Marc Loving of Toledo St. John's is player of the year, while Ed Heintschel is coach of the year.

Junior Keshya McCarver of Whitmer is player of the year for the girls, while Notre Dame's Travis Galloway is coach of the year.



Alex Metcalf was recently
recognized second-team
All-TRAC. LEE WELCH/

NEWS-MESSENGER CORRESPONDENT

2013 AP NORTHWEST ALL-DISTRICT TEAMS

The 2012-13 Associated Press Northwest All-District boys and girls basketball teams, as selected by a media panel from the district, with height, year and regular-season scoring average:

BOYS

DIVISION I

FIRST TEAM: Marc Loving, Tol. St. John's Jesuit, 6-8, sr., 21.3; Nigel Hayes, Tol. Whitmer, 6-7, sr., 16.2; Mark Donald, Whitehouse Anthony Wayne, 6-9, sr., 18.5; Keon Johnson, Mansfield Senior, 5-7, sr., 16.3; Jeff Thomas, Norwalk, 6-4, jr., 13.8.

Player of the year: Marc Loving, Tol. St. John's Jesuit.

Coach of the year: Ed Heintschel, Tol. St. John's Jesuit.

SECOND TEAM: Austin Gardner, Tol. St. John's Jesuit, 6-1, sr., 16.0; Ricardo Smith, Tol. Whitmer, 6-2, sr., 16.2; Clemmye Owens, Tol. Rogers, 6-0, sr., 16.3; Keith Towbridge, Tol. Central Cath., 6-5, sr., 11.5; Devon Allen, Lima Senior, 6-0, sr., 19.7; Ben Haraway, Norwalk, 6-0, jr., 11.5.

THIRD TEAM: Nate Allen, Tol. Bowsher, 6-3, jr., 18.5; Tony Kynard, Tol. Rogers, 6-1, sr., 15.6; Connor Hartnett, Sylvania Northview, 6-0, sr., 20.0; Dion Ivery, Tol. Start, 5-8, sr., 17.2; Austin Gutting, Findlay, 6-3, jr., 16.1; Donovyn Benson, Mansfield Senior, 6-7, jr., 15.5.

Special Mention

Shane Edwards, Perrysburg; Trey Kinney, Marion Harding; Drew Delaney, Ashland; Alex Metcalf, Fremont Ross; Jake Fetherolf, Norwalk; Marquan Hodges, Holland Springfield; Jason Wanamaker, Maumee; Dominique King, Maumee; Pat Booth, Oregon Clay; Nick Moschetti, Perrysburg; Jeff Czerniakowski, Sylvania Northview; Matt Morrison, Sylvania Southview; DeShone Kizer, Tol. Central Cath.; Deontae Cole, Tol. Central Cath.; Aundre Kizer, Tol. Bowsher; Cameron White, Tol. Bowsher; Dajuan King, Tol. Bowsher; Scott Hicks, Tol. Start; Anthony Glover, Tol. St. John's Jesuit; Taywyn Mason, Tol. Waite; Matt Fox, Whitehouse Anthony Wayne; Ose Omofoma, Whitehouse Anthony Wayne; Michael Clark, Findlay; Joseph Davidson, Findlay; C.J. Simmons, Mansfield Senior; Robert Jones, Mansfield Senior; Isaac White, Ashland; D'Maja Jordan, Sandusky; Jack Gedeon, Fremont Ross.