

## 2010-2011 Season Review

# Youth movement is on

## Sophomore class will need to step up for Little Giants

BY KEVIN SHIELDS  
Sports writer

FREMONT — With the exception of a few familiar faces, 16-year head coach Mark Gedeon has a youth movement in the Fremont Ross basketball program.

The Little Giants have just two seniors and three juniors on the varsity roster. The rest are sophomores.

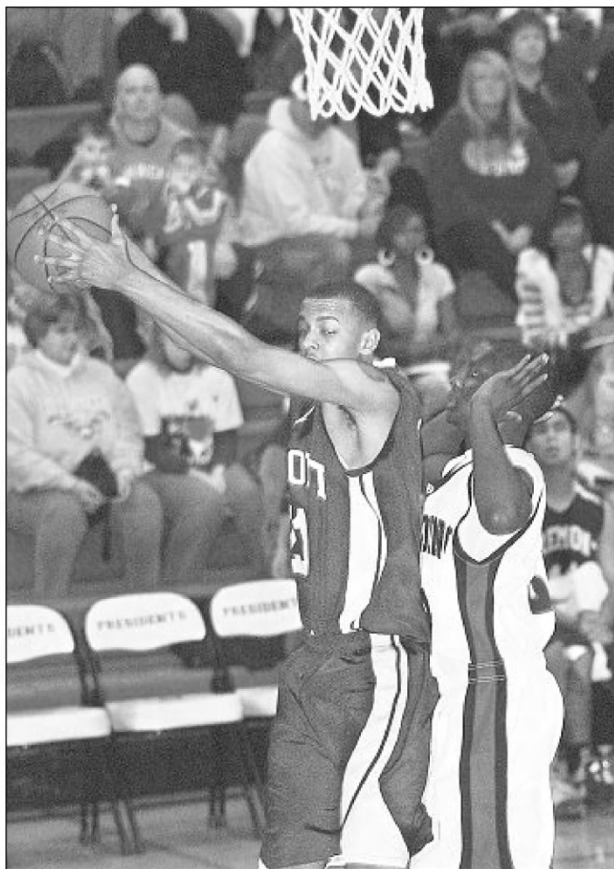
"We're young, but we do have seven returning letter-winners that experienced what varsity basketball is," Gedeon said, who guided Ross to a 4-17 overall record and 2-8 Greater Buckeye Conference mark a year ago. "We started a little rough in the summer, but the kids want to learn. They want to do things right and by the end of the summer we were playing some outstanding basketball."

Included in the seven players back for the Little Giants are seniors Shunnar Gamble (6-3 forward/guard) and Jake Hiestand (5-9 guard). Skylar Reffner (6-2 post), Jay Carnicom (6-1 forward/guard) and Diante Pettiford (5-10 guard) are all returning juniors.

Headlining a group of talented returnees in the sophomore class are Nick Streacker (6-3 post) and Drew Starks (5-9 guard). Another sophomore expected to make a big contribution is Dylan Starks (5-9 guard). Jordan Kidd (5-11 guard) is a sophomore who should also be in the mix for time.

"There's still a lot of teaching that needs done," Gedeon said. "We'll have to do a lot of things to overcome our lack of size."

Ross's size will come from Streacker, Reffner and Gamble inside. Streacker, who joined the team near the mid-point of the season, played in 13 games as a



N-M file photo

Shunnar Gamble pulls down a rebound during last season's game at Marion Harding.

freshman and averaged 5.4 points and 3.3 rebounds per game. He was second on the team to Gamble (20 blocks) with 17 blocked shots.

"For him, the sky is the limit for how good he

wants to be," Gedeon said. Streacker has the ability to stretch the floor and sink 15 to 17-foot jump shots.

Another player who can stretch the defense is Gamble, the Little Giants' lead-

ing returning scorer. The three-year letterman averaged 12 points and a team-best 6.3 rebounds a game as a junior. But he also had to the ability to pass, leading Ross in assists with 37.

### AT A GLANCE

■ **Coach:** Mark Gedeon, 16th season (179-150, .544)  
■ **2009-10:** 4-17 overall, 2-8 GBC

■ **Key Losses:** Darien Spann, guard; Greg Smith, post; Marcus Dayringer, guard.

■ **Key Returnees:** Seniors Shunnar Gamble, forward/guard; Jake Hiestand, guard; juniors Skylar Reffner, forward/guard; Jay Carnicom, guard/forward; Diante Pettiford, guard; sophomores Drew Starks, guard; Dylan Starks, guard; Nick Streacker, forward.

■ **Key Newcomers:** Sophomore Jordan Kidd.

### SCHEDULE

Dec. 4 at Toledo Waite  
Dec. 10 Lima Sr.  
Dec. 17 at Findlay  
Dec. 18 at Toledo Start  
Dec. 23 Whitmer, 4:30 p.m.  
Dec. 30 Woodward, 12:30 p.m.  
Jan. 6 at Sandusky  
Jan. 8 at St. Francis, 4:30 p.m.  
Jan. 14 Marion Harding  
Jan. 18 at Oregon Clay, 4:30 p.m.  
Jan. 20 at Napoleon  
Jan. 28 at Lima  
Jan. 29 Willard  
Feb. 1 Rogers  
Feb. 4 Findlay  
Feb. 10 Sandusky  
Feb. 12 Port Clinton  
Feb. 18 at Marion Harding  
Feb. 19 Tiffin, 4:30 p.m.  
Feb. 25 Napoleon

"He's a guy who can play any position on the floor," Gedeon said. "We definitely expect him to be a focal point of what we do both offensively and defensively."

Gamble was all-GBC and all-District 6 first teamer, taking over the role as Ross's go-to guy with the departure of Kenny Penn during the midpoint of the year.

"I think people have seen some of the things he can bring to the table," Gedeon said. "We want to see it on a consistent basis. He can affect the game in a number of different ways, whether it's with defense, whether it's scoring, his rebounding, blocking shots or passing the ball."

Gedeon is hoping for a big season from Reffner too. Last season he earned honorable mention district and league honors scoring 8 points a game and pulling down 3.7 boards.

"Skylar is a very versatile athlete and very competitive," Gedeon said. "He can play inside or outside. He defends. He rebounds. We have a lot of expectations for him and he of himself."

Gedeon said Carnicom and Pettiford had the team's best summers.

Hiestand also worked on

his game and showed new abilities to create offense other than from the three-point line.

"He's easily our smartest player," Gedeon said of his second returning senior. "And he's definitely one of our hardest workers. This summer we saw how he's able to put the ball on the floor better and attack the paint, whether it's for an assist or his own layup."

Smarts is what Gedeon thinks will fuel his team.

"We're going to expect a lot from our players mentally," Gedeon said. "They'll have to do a lot of quick changes offensively and defensively. Not just in transition, but having the ability to adjust to a new set or to be able to read and react to a defense."

"If we get five players executing all of that at the same speed and who handle their responsibilities correctly, I think we can cause havoc for the other teams."

Protecting the ball, executing on offense and playing great defense were a formula that equaled a lot of success in off-season scrimmages. It was key in wins for Ross over Lima Senior

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## ROSS BOYS FROM 4

(67-63 overtime) and at Napoleon (55-38) late in the season.

All that's slowed down the Little Giants in practice thus far has been football, but it was nice distraction according to Gedeon, who hadn't been affected by it in four years.

"The football playoffs always puts any basketball

program back," Gedeon said. "But the neat thing for us was a lot of our kids were out there on the football field, so we wanted them to continue to win too.

"Now that they're here, it's time to get focused on the next season and try to make use of what we did this summer."

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# Little Giants drop season opener at Waite

BY KYLE SCHIMMING

News-Messenger sports correspondent

TOLEDO — The up-tempo defense of Toledo Waite, coupled with the play of Ke-Sean Harris was too much for Fremont Ross, as it dropped its season opener 71-51 on Saturday.

The Little Giants (0-1) jumped out to an 11-7 lead after the first quarter, but their 17 turnovers and Harris' 26 points ultimately did them in.

"They took advantage of our turnovers, which allowed them to be much more aggressive," Ross coach Mark Gedeon said. "We had 13 turnovers in the first half and that's what we want for the game. So we just gave away too many opportunities."

Fremont Ross's Skylar Reffner scored the game's first four points on layups set up by Shunnar Gamble. The Little Giants played from in front the entire quarter.

That's when Harris began to heat up, as he would hit ten consecutive shots after missing his first three. The Indians (1-0)

## BOYS BASKETBALL

<b>TOLEDO WAITE</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>FREMONT ROSS</b>	<b>51</b>

began the second quarter on an 11-3 run and turned the deficit into a 26-21 lead.

Jay Carnicom's and Jake Hiestand's six points, kept the Little Giants within striking distance going into the second half. But Harris took over the game, scoring the first eight points of the half for the Indians to push their lead to double digits.

"We have to do a better job at recognizing their special players on the floor," Gedeon said. "Harris is a four-year varsity player for them, and we allowed him to score the first eight points — all on defensive breakdowns and lack of recognition from our players."

The Little Giants trailed 43-28 entering the fourth quarter and never could pull within ten points. Waite had ten players

score, including Henry Newson's 12 points to go with his 11 rebounds.

"We've been working on that in preseason, trying to work guys in because we want to play up-tempo," Indians coach Dave Pitsenberger said. "We were a little sloppy but we executed when we needed to."

"Coach Gedeon does a great job with his guys so we told them we had to step up and put pressure on the ball and create turnovers."

Jordan Kidd's ten points led the Little Giants, while Gamble pulled in six rebounds. Ross shot just 15-of-45 (33 percent) from the field and 16-of-34 (47 percent) from the free throw line.

The Little Giants next game will be at home Friday when they take on Lima.

"One thing we have to improve on is taking care of the basketball, that's our number one thing every time" Gedeon said. "Second thing is we have to play much better defense and be much better with our execution both offensively and defensively."

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## Boys Basketball

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**Waite 71,**

**Fremont Ross 51**

Fremont Ross	11	10	7	23	—	51
Waite	7	19	17	28	—	71

### **ROSS (51)**

Diante Pettiford 1-3-5, Skylar Reffner 3-6, Shunnar Gamble 1-1-3, Jake Hiestand 2-6, Nick Streacker 2-2-6, Dylan Starks 1-1-4, Jay Carnicom 2-1-7, Shaquise Mills 0-4-4, Jordan Kidd 2-6-10. Totals 15-16-51.

### **WAITE (71)**

Tim Morehead 1-3, Ke-Sean Harris 8-3-26, Kenneth Walker 2-1-5, Henry Newson 3-6-12, Antoine Jackson 1-3-5, Dishon Harris 2-2-6, Dominique Roundtree 2-4, Travon Howard 1-2-4, Cody Vanderhorst 2-4, Ozias Pearson 0-2-2. Totals 22-19-71.

### **TEAM STATISTICS**

3-pointers — Waite 4 (Harris 3, Morehead); Ross 3 (Hiestand 2, Starks). Rebounds — Waite 30 (Newson 11); Ross 28 (Gamble 6). Turnovers — Waite 13; Ross 17. Records — Waite 1-0, Ross 0-1. Next — Ross at Lima Sr., Friday.

## BOYS BASKETBALL ■ LIMA SENIOR 87, FREMONT ROSS 73



Doug Hise | News-Messenger correspondent

Fremont's Nick Streacker works against Lima Senior's Kendall Jackson during Friday's game at Ross. Both teams had big offensive nights, but the Spartans won 87-73.

# Lima forces tempo, tops Ross

BY SEAN SHAPIRO

News-Messenger correspondent

FREMONT — A fast start to the second half powered Lima Senior to a 87-73 victory against Fremont Ross at the Purple Pit Friday on opening night of the Greater Buckeye Conference.

Leading 44-38 at halftime, the Spartans (2-0, 1-0) went on a 14-2 run to start the third quarter — highlighted by an alley-oop dunk by Kendal Jackson on a pass from Tyler White.

Spartan coach Shawn Allen used an up-tempo offense and defense, a strategy he believed led to the third-quarter outburst.

"If you look before the half, I think they were making subs quicker than they wanted to and we controlled the tempo from the beginning of the game," said Allen. "While we took control in the third, I felt it started in that late stretch of the second half."

In addition to the Spartans forcing the tempo, Ross (0-2, 0-1) coach Mark Gedeon was disappointed in the fact that

*"We've got to do a better job in that second half and make sure we execute."*

MARK GEDEON

Fremont Ross coach

his team turned the ball over 17 times in the second half — many of which were unforced.

"We've got to do a better job in that second half and make sure we execute," said Gedeon. "I mean we can't have 17 turnovers in the second half alone and expect to win a basketball game."

"Most of those turnovers were us being very tentative. They're looking for us to make mistakes whether it's our players being out of place, our players not coming back for the basketball, or if it's our players throwing 25-foot passes — those things don't work against a Lima Senior basketball team."

Turning the ball over proved to be even more detrimental, as trading baskets with the Spartans multi-faceted and

dangerous offense.

Allen said after the game he hopes his team averages 80 points a game this season.

White had a game-high 30 points, while Jackson added 16 points and Shawn Devon Allen — the coaches' son — added 13 points including two key 3-pointers during the third quarter run.

"With a team that has multiple options offensive, you can't just focus on one guy," Gedeon said. "But we want to limit how much that one guy can hurt us. Lima's always going to have five guys on the floor who can score."

Losing by 14-points overshadowed an impressive effort from Ross center Nick Streacker. The 6-foot-5 sophomore recorded a double-double with 21 points and 14 rebounds.

Skylar Reffner also had a strong night under the basket, scoring 20 points and grabbing five boards for the Little Giants.

"We thought we had an advantage with those two getting the ball inside, and hopefully they'd have some opportunities to convert," Gedeon said. "Them both having 20 points says a lot about their effort."

The first quarter was a back-and-forth opening to the contest. It was a tempo that would carry throughout the rest of the night, as the Spartans outscored the Little Giants 23-19 in the opening quarter.

Lima Senior would out-score Ross 21-19 in the second quarter, setting up the eight-point deficit that the Spartans would balloon to 17 points at the end of the third.

With both teams emptying their benches, Ross outscored Lima Senior 23-20 in the final stanza to reach the final margin.

The Spartans will play tomorrow at Mansfield Senior, while the Little Giants will have a week to prepare for Findlay.

## **BOYS BASKETBALL**

### **Toledo Start 66, Fremont Ross 63**

Diante Pettiford had a career-night with 30 points, but Fremont Ross was unable to complete its comeback, falling Saturday in a non-league tilt at Start.

The Little Giants fell behind 40-26 at halftime and got the Spartans edge down to 10 after three quarters, but couldn't get key stops down the stretch.

"Our kids really battled hard," said Ross coach Mark Gedeon. "We closed it to two late in the game several times, then we had a 50-footer go off the backboard at the buzzer."

Jake Hiestand added nine points and Skylar Reffner tallied eight for Ross (0-4), which was still playing without the services of the injured Shunnar Gamble.

Maurice Taylor led Start (3-1) with 19 points, while Demond Crisp chipped in 13.

"The beginning part of the second quarter was key," Gedeon said. "They scored on the first five possessions to turn a two-possession game into a sizable lead."

Pettiford, a junior, kept the Little Giants going, though, as he was active on both ends of the floor.

"Diante was spectacular," Gedeon said. "He attacked the basket, and was active offensively and defensively. We need him to be aggressive all the time for us and this was something we knew he was capable of doing. It was nice to see his efforts pay off."





Doug Hise | News-Messenger

Skylar Reffner, of Fremont Ross, is fouled by Whitmer's Nigel Hayes on Thursday.

**HIGH SCHOOL BOYS BASKETBALL ■ WHITMER 75, FREMONT ROSS 48**

## Little Giants come up short in non-league game

**BY KEVIN SHIELDS**  
Sports writer

FREMONT — Fremont Ross may have done a good job containing Whitmer's Chris Wormley and company on the gridiron this year.

But it went a little differently on the hardwood

Thursday night.

Wormley and Nigel Hayes each had 16 apiece for Toledo Whitmer, which walked out of the Purple Pit with a 75-48 non-conference win.

The 6-foot-6-inch defensive end also chipped

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in 10 rebounds and four steals for the Panthers.

"We were very disappointed with our effort in the first half," said Panthers coach Bruce Smith. "If you play man-to-man defense and don't put forth great effort, you're going to struggle and we did.

"We played harder in the second half, and I think our size wore them down in the third and fourth quarter."

"I'm extremely pleased with the effort my kids put on the floor here," Ross coach Mark Gedeon said. "They played hard and showed great passion.

"But there was a point in time where the offensive glass, the physical-ness and the talent they had got to us."

Whitmer got the upper-hand early, starting the game with an 8-2 run. Pettiford keyed a 12-8 run that closed the gap to two late in the first quarter and early in the second. Ross trailed 25-22 at halftime

Two Hunter Amrhein-Barnes' 3-pointers however and pair of foul shots from Nigel Hayes and the Panther lead was 24-15. It grew to 35-22 at halftime as Whitmer closed on a 19-8 run. In the jayvee game the Panthers held off a late surge by Ross to win 48-47. Jon Ashe led Whitmer with 17 points. Leading the way for the Little Giants with 15 points was Alex Metcalf.

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## Toledo Whitmer 75, Fremont Ross 48

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Whitmer 16	19	24	16	—	75
Ross	12	10	17	9	— 48

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### WHITMER (75)

Luke Hickey 3-5-14, Mike Szymanski 2-5, Ben Syroka 2-2-6, Franklin Lindsay 1-2, Nigel Hayes 5-5-16, Hunter Amrhein 6-4-16, Ken Hayes 2-4. Totals 25-18-75.

### ROSS (48)

Diante Pettiford 7-5-20, Skylar Reffner 0-2-2, Jay Carnicom 3-2-8, Jake Hiestand 2-6, Shanquise Mills 3-1-7, Jordan Kidd 1-3, Drew Starks 1-2. Totals 17-10-48.

### TEAM STATISTICS

3-pointers — Whitmer 7 (Hickey 3, Amrhein-Barnes 2, Szymanski, Hayes); Ross 4 (Hiestand 2, Kidd, Pettiford). Rebounds — Whitmer 49 (Wormley 10); Ross 27 (Kidd 4, Reffner 4). Turnovers — Whitmer 17; Ross 17. Records — Whitmer 4-0; Ross 0-5. Next — Ross vs. Toledo Woodward (Thursday 12/30). JV — Whitmer 48-47.



HIGH SCHOOL BOYS BASKETBALL ■ FREMONT ROSS 53, TOLEDO WOODWARD 44

# Carnicom keys Little Giants in first win

BY KEVIN SHIELDS  
Sports writer

TOLEDO — Not too many basketball coaches can say they have a post player with the skills of a point guard.

Fremont Ross coach Mark Gedeon can.

That's because Jay Carnicom, his backup point guard from a year ago, has been forced to play inside because of some key early-season injuries. And the 6-foot-2 junior is making the most of it.

Carnicom tallied a team and career-best 16 points for the Little Giants, who closed 2010 with their

first victory of the season, topping Toledo Woodward 53-44 in a Thursday afternoon non-conference tilt.

"Jay is very multi-skilled and we have expectations for him," said Gedeon. "He's still trying to come off the gates stronger for us. Once he gets that first basket, that first rebound or first assist, he relaxes a bit and comes out and plays."

Carnicom scored 10 of his points in the second and third quarters, helping Ross (1-5) in what turned out to be the key stretch of the game.

After the teams ended the first quarter in a 10-10 tie, the Polar Bears (1-5) jumped out to a three-point lead twice — once on a

3-pointer from Breontay Smith and again on a second-chance bucket inside by Brandon Wyatt.

Diante Pettiford cut the lead to 15-14 on a drive-in layup and then Carnicom gave Ross the lead on the next possession. He pulled down a defensive rebound and took the ball coast-to-coast for lay-in and three-point play.

"My handles have definitely been one of more stronger points," said Carnicom. "I try to do a nice crossover and then take it to the basket hard."

Carnicom and the Little Giants ended the half on a 9-4 run to take a 23-19 lead to the break. Their momentum quickly shifted Wood-

ward's way however, to start the second half.

A Jalen Wells basket started a 10-1 run for the Polar Bears, giving them a 29-24 advantage.

Ross changed its defense during a timeout and got back to work. Pettiford sunk the front-end of two fouls shot, before finding Drew Starks for a 3-pointer the next time down the floor.

Jordan Kidd sank two from the charity stripe to put the Little Giants ahead 30-29. Two possessions later, with Ross up 32-31, Carnicom had in a hand in six straight points that gave the Little Giants a 38-34 lead entering the final period.

"We got some hustle plays that we

needed and it allowed us to run the floor," Gedeon said. "That was a key stretch for us, especially with the way we got down five. We had unforced turnovers and missed some bunnies where we got a little sloppy."

First, Carnicom sank two foul shots. Then he drove in for a chance to get three points and finished the run with a nice backdoor pass to Jake Hiestand who laid in to give Ross a seven-point edge.

He scored four of the Little Giants' first six points in the final quarter as Ross pulled out to a comfortable lead. Carnicom and Pettiford then helped Ross go

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## GIANTS FROM 7

7-of-8 at the foul line in the final two minutes to preserve the win.

As for his new duties, Carnicom, who usually plays the wing, said the positions differ only a little.

"With our offense we just go open," Carnicom said. "So it's really the same position I'm normally at. Just on defense, now I've got to guard the big guy and be a little tougher."

Carnicom pulled down six boards and added a pair of steals and assists. Ross forced the Polar Bears into 24 turnovers.

"Rebounding is the big thing," Carnicom said. "Coach wants me to get about 10 boards a game. I haven't been doing that, but I'm trying to get more."

One player who did pull down rebounds was Kidd, who finished with a game-high eight rebounds. He also chipped in eight points.

"He's really stepped it up," Car-

nicom said. "He's a 5-foot-10-inch post player and he's been getting all the boards for us."

Pettiford was the only other Ross player in double figures, with 14 points. Skylar Reffner chipped in seven rebounds.

The win was a welcome site for a team decimated by injuries to two of its top post players, Shun-nar Gamble and Nick Streacker. Gamble dressed for the first time this season, but didn't play. Gedeon is hopeful the senior can return next week at Sandusky.

"Coach keeps telling us that January is going to be our month," Carnicom said. "December was a tough month. We just needed to get this first win and now hopefully we'll start rolling."

Wells' 18 points paced Woodward which shot just 34 percent (20-of-58) from the field.

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## Fremont Ross 53, Toledo Woodward 44

Ross	10	13	15	15	—	53
Woodward	10	9	15	10	—	44

### ROSS (53)

Diante Pettiford 4-6-14, Skylar Reffner 2-0-4, Jay Carnicom 4-8-16, Drew Starks 2-1-6, Jordan Kidd 3-2-8, Jake Hiestand 2-0-4, Jarrett Koonce 1-0-2. Totals 18-49 FG 17-25 FT 53 pts.

### WOODWARD (44)

Chris Bourn 1-0-2, Franco Levey 3-0-7, Jalen Wells 8-2-18, Breontay Smith 1-0-3, Derek Ramsey 1-0-2, DeMarcus Smith 1-0-2, LaJordan Carter 1-0-2, Cordell Miller 1-0-2, Mike Gary 1-0-2, Brandon Wyatt 2-0-4. Totals 20-58 FG 2-6 FT 44 pts.

### TEAM STATISTICS

3-pointers — Ross 1 (Drew Starks); Woodward 2 (Levey 1, B. Smith 1). Rebounds — Ross 34; Woodward 43. Turnovers — Ross 15; Woodward 24. Records — Ross 1-5, Woodward 1-5. Next — Ross at Sandusky, Thursday. JV — Ross, 30-22.

# Ross can't keep up with Sandusky in 70-43 loss

BY MATTHEW HORN  
Sports writer

SANDUSKY — Fremont Ross coach Mark Gedeon implored his kids to make plays and be aggressive in the huddle before the second half Thursday.

The Little Giants had six steals in the third quarter and cut a deficit to five points, but Sandusky surged from there and defeated Ross 70-43 in the Greater Buckeye Conference.

Jordan Kidd canned a three-pointer for a 37-32 margin before the Little Giants failed to convert a layup in transition. Xavier Turner, who scored a game-high 24 points, then sandwiched two buckets around seven points from Cordney Strickland as the Blue Streaks scored 11 straight.

"We didn't score off turnovers," Gedeon said.

"We need our defense to create offense. We didn't get anything easy."

"We tried to get them on their heels, but the running game started and they got confident."

Turner (four) and Tristen Jeffries combined for seven field goals as Sandusky (3-4, 2-1) led 21-10 after one quarter.

"Xavier and Tristen set the tone early on," Blue Streaks coach Steve Keller said. "Xavier was there in key stretches with a putback or score. I was pleased with the team effort."

Ross (1-6, 0-3) went to man-to-man defense in the second quarter and outscored

Sandusky 8-6 to trail 27-18 at the half.

"It's like a roller coaster," Gedeon said. "At times we play with the passion we need to be successful and other times we hang our heads and one mistake turns into three. Nobody will give you anything."

The Blue Streaks outscored Ross 33-11 following Kidd's three. Kidd and Skylar Refner each scored nine points for the Little Giants.

"We left too many opportunities on the floor that you have to convert," Gedeon said. "We gave up second-chance points and we didn't execute. We have to execute and be in the right spots and communicate. We didn't do those things well."

Turner scored 16 points in the second half.

"He's playing really well," Gedeon said. "He's the main person we were concerned with. He knows where to be on the floor to get conversions on the glass and in the paint. He played a great game."

Sandusky played at a frenetic pace much of the game. It consistently hurt the Little Giants in transition, but Sandusky did commit 17 turnovers in the middle two quarters.

Ross, however, was unable to take advantage.

"With a young team — the psychological part — we have to learn to overcome," Gedeon said.

"It's about now. You can't dwell on the past and the last possession."

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JONATHAN BIRD / NEWS-MESSENGER

Shunnar Gamble, of Fremont Ross, takes a shot over the Sandusky defense Thursday in a Greater Buckeye Conference game in Sandusky.

BOYS BASKETBALL  
**ST. FRANCIS 60**  
**FREMONT ROSS 54**

# Ross loses lead late, falls in OT

**BY KYLE SCHIMMING**  
News-Messenger correspondent

TOLEDO — The Fremont Ross basketball team allowed St Francis to rally back from a ten point halftime deficit late in the fourth quarter, and fell in overtime 60-54 on Saturday night.

After a solid first half of play that gave the Little Giants (1-7) a 30-20 advantage, the Knights (3-6) stormed back into the game and took control.

"At times we played some very good basketball, unfortunately we came out on the short end of this one," said Ross coach Mark Gedeon. "I thought the first three minutes of the third quarter were critical.

"They outscored us by seven during that time and that gave them the belief that they could win."

The Knights opened the half on a 9-2 run to cut the lead to three, as were red-hot from the field. But the Little Giants' Jordan Kidd poured in three 3-pointers to temporarily hold off the rally.

Fremont Ross would lead 41-36 going into the fourth quarter, but St. Francis again would go on a run, outscoring the Little Giants 6-1 to cut the lead down to two points.

Trent Morrissey's two foul shots with just over two minutes left gave the Knight a 51-50 lead. They would go up two points on another free throw with a minute left to play.

After both teams exchanged missed shots, Jay Carnicom dropped in a contested runner in the lane with 1.8 seconds remaining to knot the score at 52 apiece and send the game to overtime.

The momentum would not carry over to the extra period, though, as St. Francis quickly went up four points on a pair of driving layups from Morrissey and Dan Yodiz.

Jake Hiestand would score the Little Giants' only points of the overtime when he stole a Knights pass and drew a pair of free throws to pull within 56-54.

While Fremont Ross continued its cold spell offensively, St. Francis closed the game out with four free throws to complete the comeback.

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"We've got to make sure we're in better position defensively," Gedeon said. "They scored 25 out of their 60 points from the free throw line; we've got to do a much better job getting into our positioning."

Morrissey and Yodiz did most of the Knights damage from the charity stripe, where they both sank nine apiece to help end a

six game losing streak.

"We don't have a lot of experience back, especially out front with our ball handlers," said Knights coach Brad Britton. "We've just got to keep getting better and more confident."

"We've played a tremendously hard schedule, and if we're going to beat anybody we have to play good defensively, and I thought we did that in the second half."

Carnicom led Fremont Ross

offensively with 15 points while Kidd added 11.

Carnicom added a spinning lay-up at the buzzer to end the first half, and the good offensive performance showed only flashes of what he is capable of.

"He has the potential," Gedeon said of Carnicom. "We know he's got the potential, he's just got to be consistent all the way through."

Yodiz led the Knights with 21 points and Morrissey chipped in 15.

## Boys Basketball

### St. Francis 60, Fremont Ross 54 (OT)

Ross	11	19	11	11	2	—	54
St. Francis	11	9	16	16	8	—	60

#### ROSS (54)

Diante Pettiford 3-1-8, Skylar Reffner 2-1-5, Jay Carnicom 6-3-15, Drew Starks 1-3, Jake Hiestand 1-2-5, Jordan Kidd 4-11, Jarett Koonce 1-3, Dylan Starks 2-4. Totals 20-7-54.

#### ST. FRANCIS (60)

Brock Chamberlain 1-2, Trent Morrissey 3-9-15, Dan Yodiz 5-9-21, Nathan White 1-4-6, Kris Grilliot 2-5, Brendan Manahan 2-4, Jameson Sheely 2-3-7. Totals 16-25-60.

#### TEAM STATISTICS

3-pointers — St. Francis 3 (Yodiz 2, Grilliot); Ross 7 (Kidd 3, Pettiford, Hiestand, Starks). Rebounds — St. Francis 22 (Yodiz 6); Ross 23 (Pettiford 7). Turnovers — St. Francis 15; Ross 16. Records — St. Francis 3-6; Ross 1-7. Next — Ross vs. Marion Harding, Friday.



# Reffner sees the future

## Ross junior predicts good outing, team tops Marion

BY KEVIN SHIELDS  
Sports writer

FREMONT — Ross's Skylar Reffner let his coach know early that he was going to be a difference-maker on the court Friday.

"As soon as I walked in the gym, Skylar told me, 'Coach, we're going to play well tonight,'" Mark Gedeon said. "He just had that look of confidence in his eye and had that assertiveness."

Reffner scored the Little Giants' first seven points on his way to a team-high 19 as Ross topped Marion Harding 58-48 to earn their first Greater Buckeye Conference win this year, as well as their first victory this season inside the Purple Pit.

"I scored 21 points against them last year, so I knew coming in that I could do something down low on them," said Reffner. "I just went out there and tried to make my presence felt."

Reffner gave Ross (2-7, 1-3) a 3-0 lead after converting a three-point play just 24 seconds in. Then after a Marvin Owens 3-pointer tied the game for the Presidents (2-7, 0-3) the next trip down the floor, the junior sank two foul shots before Diante Pettiford found him inside for two more.

"After that first play my confidence got up," Reffner said. "I knew it was going to be a good night after that."

The Little Giants led 12-8 after one quarter. They went on to lead 26-18 at the break with Reffner recording 11 of their first-half points.

On defense, Ross held Harding to 6-of-24 shooting (25 percent). Ross was 9-of-20 on the opposite end.

"We did a nice job of keeping them out of the paint, which was something Coach Gedeon preached all week," Reffner said. "We were making them shoot a lot of outside shots and deep threes."

Coming into the game, Owens, Shaquille Smith and Dewey Smith had accounted for 85 percent of the Presidents' scoring. On Friday, they would account for all of it. Owens led the way with a game-high 22 points, chipping in four rebounds and four steals. Shaquille Smith had nine points and eight boards, while Dewey Smith added 15 points.

Two shots at the charity stripe from Shaquille Smith gave the Presidents their lone lead of the game at 15-14 with 5:08 left in the second quarter.

From there on Ross outscored Harding 12-3. It took a three-possession lead to the break on a last second 3-pointer from Jake Hiestand.



JONATHAN BIRD/NEWS-MESSENGER

Fremont Ross' Jay Carnicom drives past Marion Harding's Dennis Butler during the second half of Friday's game at The Purple Pit. Ross won the Greater Buckeye Conference matchup 58-48.

"That start definitely wasn't very good for us," said Harding coach Roger Jury. "Some of the shots we got were pretty good shots, but we were missing some point-blank layups too. That got our kids starting to question their shot. Then we missed some jump shots we usually make."

The third quarter belonged to

Harding however, as the Presidents cut the Little Giants' lead to three points on four occasions.

"Our defensive intensity was pretty good, but the fouls started to catch up with us in a couple important spots," Jury said. "We sat there for awhile with two or three kids with four fouls, which

pushed our intensity back a bit."

For what would've been a bad quarter for the Little Giants, Shunnar Gamble saved it in the final two minutes. He would tally six points inside using his height on isolation plays, keeping Ross from losing the lead.

See ROSS, page B2

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## ROSS FROM B1

"He's slowing starting to get healthier, but he gave us a presence tonight for sure," Gedeon said, whose team had the height edge for the first time this season. "We knew he was that go-to player for us in that situation."

Gamble finished with 11 points, chipping in a game-high 11 boards and adding three assists. It was just his third game back after missing much of the early season with a back injury.

"That was great to see Shunnar come out and score points for us like that," Reffner said. "It was big for this team. We need him to score for us."

A steal and layin at the other end from Dewey Smith cut Ross's



Reffner

lead to 34-33 just 1:04 into the final quarter.

But it was a short-lived rally, as the Little Giants scored 10 of the next 13 points to lead 45-37 with 3 minutes, 33 seconds remaining.

The Little Giants went on to close it out going 13-of-24 from the line in that final stanza.

"We did a nice job of executing there in the fourth," Gedeon said. "We got some inside buckets, then got the ball in our free throw shooter's hands."

"It was nice to see Skylar get to the line 14 times tonight."

Ross finished 19-of-31 at the line on the night, with Reffner going 9-of-14. Harding finished just 9-of-19, with all the makes from the two Smiths and Owens.

"We've got a young team that has some injuries," Jury said. "Those aren't excuses. But aside from our main guys, we've had very few of our kids play varsity. So we do a lot through them."

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## Fremont Ross 58, Marion Harding 48

Harding	8	10	14	16	—	48
Ross	12	14	9	23	—	58

### HARDING (48)

Shaquille Smith 3 3 9, Dewey Smith 6 3 15, Marvin Owens 7 4 22. Totals 16 10 48.

### ROSS (58)

Diante Pettiford 2 2 7, Skylar Reffner 5 9 19, Jay Carnicom 3 5 11, Shunnar Gamble 5 1 11, Drew Starks 1 0 3, Jake Hiestand 2 2 7. Totals 18 19 58.

### TEAM STATISTICS

3-pointers — Ross 3 (Hiestand, Drew Starks, Pettiford); Harding 4 (Owens 4).  
Rebounds — Ross 31; Harding 26.  
Turnovers — Ross 14; Harding 13. Records — Ross 2-7 (1-3), Harding 2-7 (0-3). Next — Ross at Clay, Tuesday. JV — Ross, 50-34.



# Fremont Ross 54, Oregon Clay 49

Ross	13	4	14	23	—	54
Clay	13	14	11	11	—	49

## ROSS (54)

Diante Pettiford 1-5-7, Skylar Reffner 5-8, Jay Carnicom 7-1-16, Shunnar Gamble 3-2 8, Drew Starks 1-1-4, Jake Hiestand 4-11. Totals 19-11-54.

## CLAY (49)

Delkoser 4-9, S. Gaskins 1-3, Achter 3-2-9 Kevin Gaskins 5-10, Pennington 1-3, Doug Waldmannstetter 6-3-15. Totals 20-6-49.

## TEAM STATISTICS

3-pointers — Ross 5 (Hiestand 3, Starks, Carnicom); Clay 3 (S. Gaskins, Achter, Pennington). Rebounds — Clay 19, Ross 1 Turnovers — Ross 16, Clay 25. Records — Ross 3-7 (1-3 GBC); Clay 1-8 (1-2 TCL). Next — Ross at Napoleon, Thursday. JV — Clay 58-53.

# Sophomore leads Napoleon past struggling Ross

BY SEAN SHAPIRO

News-Messenger correspondent

**NAPOLEON** — Napoleon's Jordan Lauf nearly outscored Fremont Ross himself, leading his team to a 59-28 Greater Buckeye Conference victory Thursday night.

Lauf — the GBC's leading scorer — scored 21 of his game-high 25 points in the first half. In doing so, he erased any positive feelings Ross developed during an opening three minutes that were fast paced.

"We were going against a tal-

## GIRLS BASKETBALL

**NAPOLEON 59**  
**FREMONT ROSS 28**

ented Napoleon team, but I thought for the first three minutes we did pretty well," said Ross coach Mark Gedeon. "But you have to play for 32 minutes. They didn't do anything that didn't surprise us. We have to get the answer from our players as to why they let them do what we knew they were going to do."

One constant for Napoleon (8-5, 2-3) was working the ball inside to Lauf, who constantly found open space in the paint, and had an easy time beating his defender in one-on-one situations.

"We ran a man-to-man offense to get Jordan some looks, and the guys have recognized Jordan does a good job of getting the ball on the block and he can score," said Napoleon coach Tim Badenhop.

By the time the 6-foot-4 sophomore was taken out of the game — to a standing ovation with 3:26 remaining — he had outscored Ross (3-8, 1-4) by himself, 25-4.

However, while Lauf led Napoleon in scoring and was the go-to guy when the Wildcats blew the game open in the second quarter, his teammates pitched in and lead the way in the second half.

Three of his teammates had at least five points in the second half, allowing the lead to hover around 30 points for most of the fourth quarter. It was such a dominant performance, much of the crowd had already made their way to the exits before the Wildcat starters made their final trip to the bench.

Napoleon's offensive execution wasn't the only issue for

Ross, as its offense struggled to establish any rhythm and had 28 turnovers.

"Most of them were unforced, I think maybe 10 of them were traveling calls, especially when they made their run in the second quarter," Gedeon said. "We had a stretch from the end of the first quarter into the second where we only scored on one of 13 possessions, and I bet you half of those were traveling calls."

"Last I knew, you have to shoot to score, and if you don't get the opportunity to shoot, you're not going to win to many ball games."

## Boys Basketball

### Napoleon 59, Fremont Ross 28

Ross	9	6	5	8	—	28
Napoleon	14	15	11	13	—	59

#### ROSS (28)

Diante Pettiford 5-10, Skylar Reffner 2-1-5, Shunnar Gamble 2-2-6, Jordan Kidd 1-1-3, Jake Hiestand 2-4. Totals 12-4-28.

#### NAPOLEON (59)

Tommy Brown 1-1-4, Fulton Lankenau 2-5, Andy Durham 2-2-6, Drew Gerken 2-4, Jordan Myles 1-2, Jordan Lauf 11-3-25, Kaleb Middleton 2-4, Ross Huber 4-9. Totals 25-6-59.

#### TEAM STATISTICS

3-pointers — Napoleon 3 (Brown, Lankenau, Huber). Rebounds — Napoleon 25; Ross 18. Turnovers — Napoleon 21; Ross 28. Records — Napoleon 8-5, 2-3 GBC; Ross 3-8, 1-4 GBC. Next — Ross at Lima Senior, Friday 12/28. JV — Napoleon 56-48.

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## ROUNDUP

# Ross boys drop GBC game in Lima

News-Messenger reports

LIMA — Shunnar Gamble scored 16 points for Ross, but the Little Giants dropped a Greater Buckeye Conference matchup 62-57 to Lima Senior on Friday night.

The Little Giants (3-9, 1-5 GBC) held a one-point lead going into the fourth, 40-39, but the Spartans (8-4, 4-1) started to pull away.

“Lima just made plays,” said Ross coach Mark Gedeon. “They wound up with a couple threes early in the fourth quarter, and we hit a couple threes to make it a two-point ball-game. They made three out of their last four free throws.

“They just did a little bit better down the stretch than we did.”

Jay Carnicom had 11 points for the Little Giants, while Jake Hiestand had 12.

Lima Senior’s Tyler White led all scorers with 19.

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## Lima Senior 62, Fremont Ross 57

Ross	14	13	13	17	—	57
Lima	17	6	16	23	—	62

### Fremont Ross (57)

Diante Pettiford 3-2-9; Skylar Reffner 8-16;  
Jay Carnicom 4-2-11; Shunnar Gamble 3-0-  
6; Drew Starks 0-1-1; Jordan Kidd 1-0-2;  
Jake Hiestand 4-0-12. Totals: 23-5-57.

### Lima Senior (62)

Tyler White 7-1-19; Shawn Allen 1-0-3; Dre  
Martin 1-1-3; Dashon Bates 3-0-7; Kendall  
Jackson 5-1-11; Zach Rumbaugh 1-0-3;  
Adrian Hutchins 6-4-16. Totals: 24-7-62.

### TEAM STATISTICS

3-pointers — Lima (White 4, Allen, Bates);  
Ross 2 (Pettiford, Carnicom). Rebounds —  
Lima Senior 20, Ross 21. Turnovers — Lima  
Senior 13, Ross 16. Records — Lima 8-4  
(4-1 GBC) Ross 3-9 (1-5 GBC). JV — Lima  
Senior 50, Fremont Ross 48.

## **BOYS BASKETBALL**

### **Ross 48, Willard 35**

Diante Pettiford's 23 points helped the Little Giants pick up a non-league victory over Willard inside the Purple Pit Saturday.

Shunnar Gamble chipped in 17 points for Ross (4-9), which matched its win total from a season ago with the win.

"We just played dynamite defense all night," Little Giants coach Mark Gedeon said. "And Diante scored 10 points alone in the first quarter. That was key early."

Ross jumped out to an 18-6 lead after one quarter and needed just four players to contribute in the win.

"Willard missed their first 10 two-point attempts, because our effort defensively was so good," Gedeon said. "Then we got that cushion and went with it the rest of the way."

Nate Shorts' eight points paced the Crimson Flashes (8-6).

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## Boys Basketball

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**Fremont Ross 48,  
Willard 35**

Willard	6	8	7	14	—	35
Ross	18	10	10	10	—	48

### **WILLARD (35)**

Devlin 1-0-2, Storts 2-2-8, Loar 2-1-5, Temple 2-1-6, Douglass 2-0-4, Worcester 1-0-2, Adams 1-1-3, Hahler 2-1-5. Totals 13-6-35.

### **ROSS (48)**

Diante Pettiford 9-4-23, Skylar Reffner 2-0-4, Jay Carnicom 2-0-4, Shunnar Gamble 7-3-17. Totals 20-7-48.

### **TEAM STATISTICS**

3-pointers — Ross 1 (Pettiford 1); Willard 3 (Storts 2, Temple 1). Rebounds — Ross 29 (Gamble 12); Willard 22. Turnovers — Ross 11; Willard 11. Records — Ross 4-9; Willard 7-5. Next — Ross vs. Toledo Rogers, Tuesday. JV — Ross, 55-54.



# Big men carry Findlay

## Large front line helps Trojans overwhelm Little Giants

BY KEVIN SHIELDS  
Sports writer

FREMONT — In basketball you just can't teach height, and Findlay brought lots of it to Fremont Ross on Friday.

Trojans center C.J. Gettys stands at 6-feet, 10-inches. Brock Ammons is 6-6, and together they nearly outscored the entire Ross team.

Gettys tallied a game-high 19 points and Ammons added 10, helping Findlay to a comfortable 54-33 Greater Buckeye Conference victory.

It was the Trojans' (13-1, 7-0) 12th win in a row after falling to Bowling Green the second game of the season.

"We knew we had that advantage and we tried to get it inside," said Findlay coach Jim Rucki. "Obviously, they tried to collapse on us and have five guys in there, but we did a nice job of kicking it out and making them play honest."

Ross (4-10, 1-6) started strong on early, forcing five turnovers in Findlay's first eight possessions. During that stretch, Skylar Reffner found some room inside around Findlay's big men to get the Little Giants a 4-2 advantage halfway through the opening quarter.

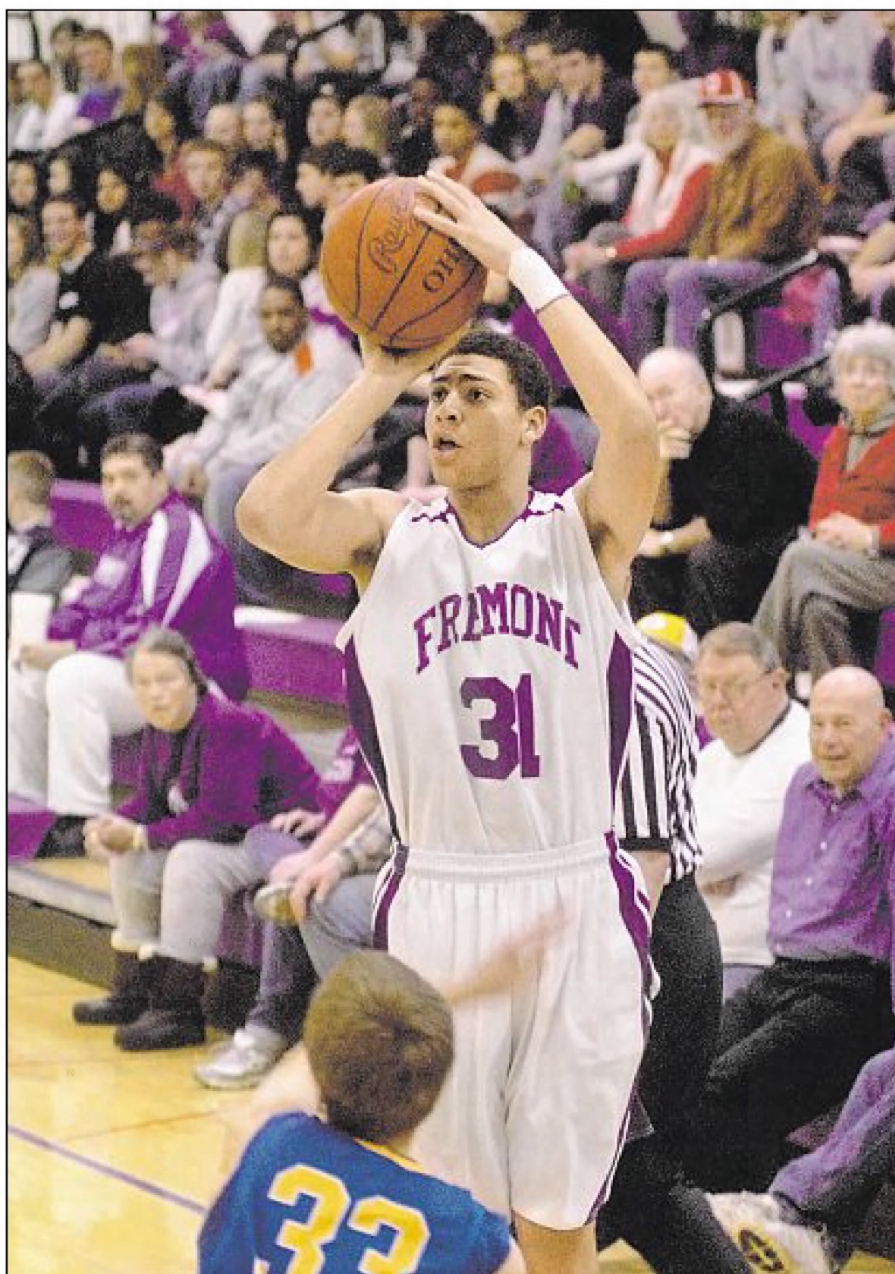
That's when the wheels fell off.

Findlay's guards began to penetrate, finding Gettys open near the basket. He hit three straight shots in or near the paint on the left side of the basket to give the Trojans an 8-4 edge.

Grant Birchmeier's 35-foot three at the buzzer then capped what ended up being 14-0 Findlay run to close out the quarter.

"That made it a long night," said Little Giants coach Mark Gedeon. "When you're going against a Findlay team the one thing you don't want to do is get behind them."

Two Diante Pettiford hoops inside got Ross back within single digits to start the second quarter. However, the Trojans kept finding ways to score even



JONATHAN BIRD/NEWS-MESSENGER

Fremont's Jordan Kidd fires up a jumper during Friday's Greater Buckeye Conference game with Findlay at the Purple Pit. The league-leading Trojans cruised to a 54-33 win.

See LITTLE GIANTS, page B2



## LITTLE GIANTS FROM B1

when the Little Giants managed to keep the ball out of the paint.

Birchmeier hit the second of his three treys and Boston Ballmer hit one during the final minute of the half to give Findlay a 27-12 edge at halftime.

Meanwhile Ross went cold from the floor shooting just 5-of-18 in the opening 16 minutes.

"We didn't shoot the ball like we'd have liked to," Gedeon said. "We'd been shooting the ball pretty well lately. But we've got to do a better job of moving without the basketball and being ready to

shoot when we are open.

"A couple times I thought our kids were real tentative about whether they were going to pull the trigger or whether they were going to drive."

The Little Giants finished 11-of-41 (26 percent) from the field. Findlay shot the ball at a 45 percent (20-of-44) clip. It also outrebounded Ross 36-24, with Gettys finishing with a game-high 13 boards.

"He ran the floor nice tonight," Rucki said. "We had a couple tips where he hustled down the floor and got us some points."

Ammons took charge in the third quarter, tallying six of his points — most which came from

him getting the foul line. He and Gettys saw limited action in the fourth as the Trojans opened up a 43-22 edge heading into the final period.

"We actually did better on them this time around," Gedeon said. "The first time we played, Gettys scored 27 points and had 15 rebounds. So if you told me going into this game that we'd have held them to 54 points I'd have taken it."

Pettiford led the Little Giants with seven points. Jake Hiestand had six and Reffner had five points five boards.

"I thought Skylar was very active early," Gedeon said. "He's been playing very well for us late-

ly. And I thought Shunnar did a great job defensively considering he was giving up not only six inches, but probably 70 pounds there inside."

Gamble in charge of handling Gettys, was held to two points offensively, but had three steals on the defensive end.

"Our kids played hard," Gedeon said. "They're still understanding what it takes to be at the level of a team like Findlay right now. But we're definitely getting better."

"The kids are still working hard, have great attitudes and they're starting to see some of the successes here — just not tonight."

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# Findlay 54, Fremont Ross 33

Findlay	16	11	16	11	—	54
Ross	4	8	10	11	—	33

## FINDLAY (54)

Grant Birchmeier 3-0-9, Michael Clark 1-0-3, Joseph Davidson 1-2-4, Daniel Peak 1-0-3, Boston Ballmer 2-0-6, Brock Ammons 3-4-10, C.J. Gettys 9-1-19. Totals 20-44 FG 7-10 FT 54 PTS.

## ROSS (33)

Diante Pettiford 3-0-7, Cameron Smith 1-2-5, Skylar Reffner 2-1-5, Jay Carnicom 0-1-1, Shunnar Gamble 1-0-2, Jordan Kidd 1-2-5, Jake Hiestand 2-0-6, Alex Metcalf 1-0-2. Totals 11-41 FG 6-11 FT 33 PTS.

## TEAM STATISTICS

3-pointers — Findlay 7 (Birchmeier 3, Ballmer 2, Clark 1, Peak 1); Ross 5 (Hiestand 2, Kidd 1, Pettiford 1, Smith 1).  
Rebounds — Findlay 36; Ross 24.  
Turnovers — Findlay 13; Ross 12. Records — Findlay 13-1 (7-0 GBC), Ross 4-10 (1-6 GBC). Next — Ross vs. Sandusky, Thursday. JV — Findlay, 42-41.

# Ross boys struggle with slow start in loss to Sandusky

BY KEVIN SHIELDS  
Sports writer

FREMONT — If Fremont Ross coach Mark Gedeon could just get some consistency from his players, the Little Giants might not be at the bottom of the Greater Buckeye Conference looking up.

Unfortunately for the Lit-

tle Giants' 16th-year bench boss, finding that steady play has been a battle.

Ross allowed Sandusky the first 15 points of Thursday's game, scoring a single first quarter point en route to a 63-47 GBC loss.

"Competition has to come within the player's hearts," Gedeon said. "That's something we can't make a switch

for and just flip it on and off when we want to do it. That's something we just have to be much more consistent with."

The Blue Streaks (8-8, 5-3) tallied seven points off Little Giant turnovers in the first quarter alone and out-rebounded Ross 10-3. When the Little Giants (4-11, 1-7) did get shots they couldn't get them to fall,

going 0-of-7 from the field in the first quarter.

Diante Pettiford's 1-of-2 effort from the foul line with 1:12 remaining in the quarter was Ross's lone point.

"Our whole mindset was we got to come in here and defend," Sandusky coach Steve Keller Jr. said. "And I thought our guys did an excellent job defensively as a

group. I was real pleased with how we took that physical-toughness mentality into that first quarter."

Jay Page was the biggest thorn in the Little Giants' side in the first half. Page had 10 of his game-high 16 points in the first 16 minutes, including six in the

See ROSS, page 9

## ROSS FROM 6

first quarter.

His exclamation point of the first quarter came on a breakaway dunk with three minutes left after he stole the ball at midcourt. That gave Sandusky an 11-0 edge at the time.

Page finished with a double-double also adding a game-high 14 rebounds.

"We just reverted back to some of our old ways in that opening quarter," Gedeon said. "We'd been doing a much better job, really since the last Sandusky game, of executing offensively ... reversing the ball and having some poise.

"But tonight we didn't get the ball inside," Gedeon continued. "We didn't have good balance on the floor. We took quick, off-balance shots and didn't execute our patterns. As a result, we gave (San-

dusky) some times to run out and do what they do well, which is attack the rim."

But Ross wouldn't pack in, even though it trailed 15-1 entering the second quarter. Two 3-pointers from Jordan Kidd and Pettiford got the Little Giants sparked. They closed the quarter on an 11-6 run to trail just 29-21 heading to the dressing room.

"This is a team that plays on confidence," Gedeon said. "In that first quarter, we didn't have any confidence after a few of our shots missed. Then once we hit some shots in the second quarter, it gave us some positive energy for the remainder of the quarter."

Ross also picked it up on the defensive end, forcing Sandusky into some turnovers and poor shots.

"We didn't handle their 1-3-1 defense real well in the second," Keller said. "We turned it over some and it

created better opportunities for them in transition."

Seven different players tallied points in the second quarter for Ross, including Cameron Smith, Shanquise Mills and Alex Metcalf, who have juggled back and forth all season between the varsity and JV teams.

"That's what we expect from any kid that puts on that Ross uniform," Gedeon said.

A Skylar Reffner basket off a Pettiford steal cut the Sandusky lead to 34-28 with 5:57 remaining in the third quarter. It forced the Blue Streaks to call a timeout.

They regrouped and went on a 16-4 run to close out the third quarter. Once again it was points off turnovers that aided them. Sandusky tallied 20 points off Ross mistakes.

Xavier Turner's 3-pointer in the last remaining seconds off a full-court inbound pass gave the Blue Streaks a

healthy 50-32 lead entering the final quarter.

"That just sealed the deal for us," Gedeon said. "And a couple of those plays were missed assignments by our players defensively, including that 3 at the end of the quarter."

Donald Williams chipped in 13 points and eight rebounds for Sandusky, which won the rebound war 34-26. Tristen Jefferies had four steals.

"We did a nice job of making runs, and when we made runs, certain guys were on the floor," Keller said. "But I was just real pleased at us as a team. I thought we did a good job sharing it, and I thought we always answered their runs with runs of our own."

Reffner's 11 points paced Ross. Pettiford finished with eight points. Shunnar Gamble led the team in boards with six.

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## BOYS BASKETBALL

### Sandusky 63, Fremont Ross 47

Sandusky	15	14	21	13	—	63
Ross	1	20	11	15	—	47

#### **SANDUSKY (63)**

Jay Page 6-4-16, Delon Roldan-Johnson 3-8, Xavier Turner 6-13, Tristen Jeffries 3-6, Donald Williams 6-1-13, DeJour Stovall 1-2, Dominic Will 1-3, Dameyion Smith 1-2. Totals 27-5-63.

#### **ROSS (47)**

Diante Pettiford 3-1-8, Skylar Reffner 5-11, Shunnar Gamble 2-3-7, Jordan Kidd 1-3, Shanquise Mills 2-4, Alex Metcalf 1-2, Cameron Smith 2-5, Jake Hiestand 1-3, Jarrett Koonce 1-2, Drew Starks 0-2-2. Totals 18-6-47.

#### **TEAM STATISTICS**

3-pointers — Sandusky 4 (Roldan-Johnson 2, Will, Turner); Ross 4 (Pettiford, Kidd, Smith, Hiestand). Rebounds — Sandusky 34 (Page 14); Ross 27 (Gamble 6). Turnovers — Sandusky 12; Ross 16. Records — Sandusky 8-8 (5-3 GBC); Ross 4-11 (1-7 GBC). Next — Ross vs. Port Clinton, Saturday. JV — Ross 60-45.

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# Ross overwhelms Port Clinton in victory

BY MATTHEW HORN  
Sports writer

FREMONT — Fremont Ross coach Mark Gedeon talks about it often and his team works on it at practice every day.

The Little Giants kept the ball moving on offense and challenged every shot at the defensive end in a 51-37 non-conference victory over Port Clinton on Saturday.

"Swing the ball to the open

## BOYS BASKETBALL

<b>FREMONT ROSS</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>PORT CLINTON</b>	<b>37</b>

man," Ross's Diante Pettiford said of Gedeon's recurring plea.

Drew Starks took a pass from a teammate who had a decent look and made a baseline jumper before the Little Giants (5-11) moved the ball from one corner to the other around the

perimeter for a 3-pointer from Pettiford during a 17-3 run to close the first half.

The spurt was ignited when an emphatic block from Shunnar Gamble led to a 3-point play for Skylar Reffner. Ross fed off the crowd's excitement for a 28-12 lead entering the third quarter.

"That gave us some momentum," Pettiford said.

Port Clinton (5-11) made only one shot its final 12 possessions of the first half.

"We took away the passing lanes and rotated well," Gedeon said. "Our position defense was good. We wanted to increase the tempo a little, and disrupt them using traps and our quickness."

Pettiford canned a 3-pointer, and Starks made a floater in the lane while drifting to his left, as Ross scored on its final four possessions of the second quarter and the Redskins trailed by at least 11 from then on.

See **LITTLE GIANTS**, page 7

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## LITTLE GIANTS FROM 6

"We were moving the basketball, we found the open man and hit a few outside shots," Gedeon said. "That was the key point in the game."

Pettiford finished with a game-high 15 points, Reffner had 13, and Gamble 11. Pettiford made three 3-pointers and scored on a nimble baseline drive in the fourth quarter.

"He's our leading scorer," Gedeon said. "He has the ability to shoot from the outside, drib-

ble penetrate, take contact and finish and go to the line. He's turning into a well-rounded offensive player."

Ross watched film of Thursday's loss to Sandusky and Gedeon implored his team to treat each opportunity as essential.

"It showed how important it is to compete every possession," Gedeon said. "They saw that in the video and we had a good practice, and the kids competed much better."

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## ROUNDUP

# Fremont Ross rallies to beat Marion Harding

Staff Report

**MARION** — The Ross boys basketball team was down six points with 45 seconds left to play, but rallied for a 49-47 Greater Buckeye Conference win at Marion Harding on Friday.

The Little Giants (6-11, 2-7) scored 25 points in the fourth quarter, one more than they scored in each of the previous three periods.

"The fourth quarter was very exciting to say the least," said Ross coach Mark Gedeon. Jake Hiestand was phenomenal in the fourth quarter. He just sort of willed us to win."

Hiestand finished with 14 points — all but two coming in the final period. Diante Pettiford added 10 for Ross.

Dewey Smith led Harding (4-13, 1-7 GBC) with 11 points. Shaquille Smith chipped in 10.

### **EDISON 46, CLYDE 44**

**CLYDE** — The Flier boys let a five-point halftime lead slip away as they dropped a Sandusky Bay Conference game 46-44 to Edison on Friday.

Ryan Meyer and Zack Warner each had nine points to lead the Fliers (11-7, 7-6), who led 22-17 at intermission before being outscored 29-22 in the second half.

Ryan Reber led the Chargers (16-2, 12-1) with 11 points. Collyn Grant added 10.

### **SLL ELMWOOD 62, WOODMORE 45**

**ELMORE** — Grant Weirich scored 15 points to lead Woodmore in a 62-45 Suburban Lakes League loss to Elmwood on Friday.

Cody Croll added 10 points for the Wildcats.

League game Friday to New Riegel.

Conner Kohlenberg added 10 points for Old Fort (6-11, 4-6 MAL).

Brooks Hall led the Yellow Jackets (13-5, 9-1 MAL) with 12 points.

### **TIFFIN CALVERT 70, LAKOTA 35**

**KANSAS** — Lakota's Nick McDole scored 11 points, but Tiffin Calvert doubled up the Raiders 70-35 in Midland Athletic League action Friday.

Brandon Ritzler had 16 points for the Senecas, and Derek Fry added 12.

### **NOL BELLEVUE 55, TIFFIN COLUMBIAN 44**

**BELLEVUE** — The Redmen's Jalen Santoro led all scorers with 13 points as Bellevue rolled over Tiffin Columbian 55-44 in a Northern Ohio

# Fremont Ross 49, Marion Harding 47

Ross	7	8	9	25	—	49
Harding	7	11	8	21	—	47

## ROSS (49)

Diante Pettiford 2-5-10; Cameron Smith 1-3; Skylar Reffner 2-1-5; Shunnar Gamble 3-6; Drew Starks 2-4-8; Jordan Kidd 1-1-3; Jake Hiestand 5-1-14. Totals: 16-12-49

## HARDING (47)

Shaquille Smith 4-2-10; Dewey Smith 3-4-11; Alex Bailey 1-2; Marvin Owens 3-2-8; Garrett Braddy 0-2-2; Clifton Ross 2-4; Shawn Tyler 2-4; Delayce Smith 2-1-6. Totals: 17-11-47

## TEAM STATISTICS

3-pointers — Ross 5 (Pettiford, Smith, Hiestand 3); Harding 2 (Dewey Smith, Delayce Smith). Rebounds — Ross 20 (Gamble 10), Harding 20 (S. Smith 9). Turnovers — Ross 20, Harding 14. Records — Ross 6-11 (2-7 GBC), Harding 4-13 (1-7 GBC). Next — Tiffin Columbian at Ross, today. JV — Ross 60, Harding 56.



HIGH SCHOOL  
BOYS BASKETBALL

# Gamble pays off for Ross

BY MATTHEW HORN  
Sports writer

The tattoo on the back of Shunmar Gamble's left hand says: One life to live.

For Fremont Ross's Gamble, the message is a reminder that we get one chance at life and we should make the most of it.

Gamble had game-highs of 20 points, nine rebounds and two blocks as the Little Giants defeated Tiffin Columbian 52-34 in a non-conference matchup Saturday. Ross coach Mark Gedeon hopes he can maximize Gamble's opportunities to close his career.

Gamble, who has a handful of tattoos that represent his belief in Jesus Christ and his love for basketball, has battled inconsistency and health concerns. He still isn't at 100 percent healthily. A chronic back injury cost Gamble two games last season, a portion of his summer preparation, and six complete games and parts of two others as a senior.

"It took a long time for him to get fluid again," Gedeon said.

Gamble scored the first five points Saturday off two offensive rebounds. A difficult jumper to give his team 21-12 advantage early in the second quarter.

"He gave us that initial spark," Gedeon said. "He showed his versatility on the glass. In the fourth quarter we spread the floor and got him some isolations. He scored in transition."

Gamble, who picked up his third foul just over a minute into the second half but stayed on the court, scored eight points in the fourth quarter, including six straight to give his team a 47-32 lead. He drove baseline from the right side, but dropped the ball in with his left hand as he ducked to sail under the backboard early in the quarter.

"Shunmar had an outstanding game," Gedeon said. "So many different people contributed for us. Four guys who played in the JV game played within the first three quarters."

"We improved throughout the game to get stops and then got the transition game going early in the fourth."

Gamble had confidence he would finish strong.

"I go up against some tough kids in practice," he said. "I'm used to contact and playing physical. I try to carry that over and just think everything is going in."

Gamble scored in transition off a steal and added a bucket after a block by Skylar Retherford to a 27-20 advantage at the half. He blocked a shot on Columbian's final two possessions of the half.

"Being up seven gave us a little buffer considering we let a lot of first-half possessions go with turnovers and missed layups."

Ross (7-11) turned the ball over on 14 of 29 possessions in the first half compared to five turnovers in 28 possessions in the second half.

"We were going too fast," Gedeon said. "Taking care of the ball gave us more opportunities."

The Little Giants allowed only four points in the fourth quarter.

"Just picking it up more aggressively on defense," Gamble said. "Early in the game they got some open threes. We had to put more pressure on them and contest shots."

Columbian (5-13) made four 3-pointers and two 2-point field goals in the first half.

Dante Pettiford scored all nine of his points in the third quarter to help his team to a 38-30 lead entering the fourth quarter.

"That's the great thing about Dante — he just wants to win," Gedeon said. "He can handle the ball, defend and score."

Jake Hiestand started Saturday where he left off Friday for Ross when he scored 12 points in the final 6 minutes to beat Marion Harding.

Hiestand made two threes in the first quarter Saturday and Jordan Kidd added two more. Gedeon encouraged Hiestand to play be aggressive, and not rest on Friday's laurels.

"He's such a competitor,"

See GAMBLE, page 7

## GAMBLE FROM 6

Gedeon said of Hiestand. "He works hard at what he does. He and Jordan's outside shooting really helped us out."

Kidd had 10 points and Jarett Koonce added three steals.

The Little Giants will try for a fourth consecutive win when Toledo Waite visits Wednesday. Waite replaces Toledo Rogers after the original game was postponed because of weather.

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# Fremont Ross 42, Tiffin Columbian 34

Columbian	12	8	10	4 —	34
Ross	17	10	11	4 —	52

## ROSS (52)

Diante Pettiford 3-3-9, Skylar Reffner 2-1-5, Shunnar Gamble 8-4-20, Drew Starks 0-1-1, Jake Hiestand 2-0-6, Jordan Kidd 3-2-10, Shanquise Mills 0-1-1. Totals 18-12-52.

## Columbian (34)

Jonah Boyer 3-3-10, Jesse Hernandez 1-0-2, Nick Loura 4-1-12, Kyle Heminger 2-1-5, Deker Kneeskern 1-0-3, Cody Scott 1-0-2. Totals 12-5-34.

## TEAM STATISTICS

3-pointers — Ross 4 (Hiestand 2, Kidd 2), Columbian 5 (Loura 3, Boyer, Kneeskern); Rebounds — Ross 21 (Gamble 9), Columbian 17 (Kneeskern 8); Turnovers — Ross 19, Columbian 24; Records — Ross 7-11; Columbian 5-13.

## BOYS BASKETBALL

FREMONT ROSS 44

WAITE 40

# Pettiford scores 20 in Ross win

BY MATT MILLS

News-Messenger correspondent

FREMONT — Fremont Ross defeated Waite 44-40 Wednesday evening in the Purple Pit, winning their fourth game in a row.

The Little Giants (8-11) were led by junior guard Diante Pettiford with 20 points, including 13 in the first half.

"I was just seeing a lot of openings out there," Pettiford said. "When we play defense, we're a pretty good team, and I think that showed out there tonight."



Pettiford

"Diante was big for us throughout the game," Ross coach Mark Gedeon said. "He was strong with the ball, hit his free throws (8-of-8 from the stripe), and he's been rebounding a lot better for us lately."

"We already know he's a very good defender, we're glad we have him coming back next season."

Jake Hiestand (six points) and Pettiford hit back-to-back 3-pointers to open the game and Ross went on a 10-0 run before Waite responded with a 6-0 run of their own.

The Little Giants led 12-6 at the end of the first quarter.

Pettiford converted a four-point play after Shunnar Gamble found him in the corner. On Ross's next possession, Hiestand hit a 3 to put Ross up 11 points, 26-15, and the Little Giants led by 12 at the half, 30-18.

"I thought we had great ball movement in the first half," Gedeon said. "We found the open man well, and when we found them we made shots. That was definitely one of our better halves of the season."

The Indians turned up the defensive pressure and cut into the Little Giants' lead in the third quarter, outscoring Ross 14-2 and forcing four turnovers.

Dishon Harris had a big quarter, scoring seven points, including the game-tying basket at the end of the period to square things up at 32 entering the final quarter.

Pettiford converted an and-one to open the final period before Waite's Henry Newson (11 points, 9 rebounds) scored back-to-back baskets.

Both teams exchanged defensive stops before Waite's Tim Morehead hit two free throws to pull within one at 41-40. Ross's Skylar Refner (seven points, four rebounds) split a pair of free throws to put Ross up 42-40, before they forced a stop on the defensive end.

Pettiford then sank two free throws to secure the game.

"We're doing a lot of good things," Gedeon said. "We're definitely coming together as a team."

## High School Sports

### BOYS BASKETBALL

## Fremont Ross 44, Toledo Waite 40

Waite	6	12	14	8	—	40
Ross	12	18	2	12	—	44

### WAITE (40)

Dishon Harris 4-2-11, Henry Newson 5-0-11, Tim Morehead 2-2-6, Antoine Jackson 3-0-6, Dominique Roundtree 2-0-4, Chandler Hill 1-0-2. Totals 17-4-40.

### ROSS (44)

Diante Pettiford 5-8-20, Skylar Refner 3-1-2, Jake Hiestand 2-0-6, Drew Starks 2-0-4, Shunnar Gamble 1-0-3, Jay Carnicom 1-0-2, Alex Metcalf 1-0-2. Totals 15-9-44.

### TEAM STATISTICS

Rebounds — Ross 21; Waite 17. Turnovers — Ross 13; Waite 10. Records — Ross 8-11. Next — Ross vs. Napoleon, Friday.

# Roundup: Ross boys win fifth straight

News-Messenger reports

It's been another season filled with plenty of ups and downs for Fremont Ross and coach Mark Gedeon.

But with Saturday's 63-45 Greater Buckeye Conference win over Napoleon, the Little Giants have a lot to hang their hats on entering the postseason.

The win gave Ross its fifth straight victory to close out the season. The Little Giants have come away with a victory in six of their last eight games.

Jay Carnicom's 17 points paced Ross (9-11, 3-7), which also got 14 from Skylar Reffner and 13 from Shunnar Gamble.

Elmwood just its second loss in the Suburban Lakes League.

Gage Beaber chipped in 11 points and five assists for the Golden Bears (10-10, 7-5).

## **New Riegel 69, Lakota 38**

Lakota was led by Nick McDole's 13 points, but the Raiders (0-18, 0-11) fell to New Riegel Saturday in the MAL.

## **Tiffin Calvert 96, Bettsville 51**

Tiffin Calvert had five different players finish in double figures as the Senecas (16-4, 10-1) topped Bettsville Saturday in the MAL.

Dakota Wright had 18 points to lead the Bobcats (7-12, 4-7).

## **Perkins 63, Oak Harbor 37**

Jake Scott's 18 points accounted for nearly half of Oak Harbor's points Saturday in a Sandusky Bay Conference loss to Perkins.

Oak Harbor (3-17, 0-14) will play Rossford (3-17) at 8 p.m. Tuesday in a sectional semifinal at Swanton.

Zak Dees's 19 points paced the Pirates (17-3, 11-3), while Brandon Smith chipped in 17.

## **DIVISION IV GIRLS SECTIONALS**

## **Norwalk St. Paul 48, St. Joseph Central Catholic 45**

Tori Smith dropped in 18 points for St. Joseph Central

## Boys Boxes

### Fremont Ross 63, Napoleon 45

Napoleon	5	15	17	8	—	45
Ross	13	19	21	10	—	63

#### **NAPOLEON (45)**

Brown 1-0-2, Lankenau 3-3-9, Durham 1-1-3, Sonnenberg 0-1-1, Badenhop 1-2-4, Myles 2-3-7, Lauf 4-6-14, Huber 2-0-5.  
Totals 14 16 45.

#### **ROSS (63)**

Diante Pettiford 3-0-7, Skylar Reffner 5-4-14, Jay Carnicom 4-9-17, Shunnar Gamble 3-5-13, Drew Starks 1-0-3, Dylan Starks 1-0-2, Jordan Kidd 1-1-3, Jake Hiestand 1-0-2, Alex Metcalf 0-2-2. Totals 19 21 63.

#### **TEAM STATISTICS**

3-pointers — Ross (Gamble 2, Drew Starks, Pettiford); Napoleon (Huber). Rebounds — Ross 30 (Pettiford, Reffner, Carnicom, Gamble each with 5); Napoleon 15. Turnovers — Ross 22; Napoleon 17. Records — Ross 9-11 (3-7 GBC), Napoleon 11-9 (4-6 GBC). Next — Ross vs. Sandusky, Friday 8 p.m. at Willard. JV — Napoleon won.



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## ALL-DISTRICT 6 BOYS BASKETBALL

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### Division I

■ Players of the Year: Keon Johnson, Mansfield Senior; Marvin Owens, Marion Harding.

■ First Team: Keon Johnson, Mansfield Senior; Marvin Owens, Marion Harding; Xavier Turner, Sandusky; **Diante Pettiford, Fremont Ross**; Shaquille Smith, Marion Harding; Brandon Nardo, Ashland; Jalevion Page, Sandusky.

■ Second Team: Jon Bessick, Mansfield Senior; **Shunnar Gamble, Fremont Ross**; Devyn Benson, Mansfield Senior; Greg Gallaway, Ashland; Donald Williams, Sandusky; **Skylar Reffner, Fremont Ross**.

■ Honorable Mention: Tristen Jefferies, Sandusky; Dewey Smith, Sandusky; Terrence Deener, Mansfield Senior; Marquise Jones, Ashland; Montez Norris, Mansfield Senior; Tyrell Smith, Mansfield Senior.

In Division I, Ross's Diante Pettiford was given special mention.

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## Local players on all-GBC team

News-Messenger reports

FREMONT — Little Giant Diante Pettiford was named to the all-Greater Buckeye Conference boys basketball second team.

Shunnar Gamble and Jake Hiestand were given honorable mention.