

Girls basketball season starts Friday

Crimson Streaks, Little Giants open play on the road

By BRIAN SPIESS
Sports editor

Bargains and belly aches aren't the only signs Thanksgiving weekend has arrived.

Girls basketball is here.

Ten of the 11 schools in Sandusky County open the season either Friday or Saturday.

St. Joseph Central Catholic travels more than an hour to Mansfield St. Peter's Friday for a non-league game. Fremont Ross opens its season a day later

at Huron.

"I'm always nervous before any game," Ross coach Sue Wolf said. "You just hope the team you've been working with all week shows up."

"We didn't go real hard (Wednesday) night," said St. Joe coach Gary Geller, who showed his team a video and a pair of trophies to remind them of the school's tradition.

The Crimson Streaks, having graduated post players Ann Foos and Shana Young, will field a quicker team in 1997-98 which will rely primarily on the shooting of Angie Reineck, Jenny Gabel, Holly Wagner and Melissa Geller.

St. Peter's has a 6-foot-1 play-

er back from the team St. Joe beat last season.

"She did a nice job for them last year later in the year," Geller said. "We've got to be conscience of her scoring ability and rebounding ability."

The Little Giants play a Huron team comprised of one senior, six juniors, three sophomores and two freshmen.

"It's kind of a rebuilding year," Huron coach Bob Bowers said. "We've had four scrimmages and we make a lot of mistakes because it's the first year playing together for most of our girls."

Sophomore point guard Catherine Taylor and junior forward Monica Asher are the top return-

ing players Bowers has available. Sophomore guard Nikki Dauch is recovering from an injury.

Ross, led by returning starters Amy Smith and Emily Dowell, will need to be ready for a variety of defenses, Wolf said.

In addition to St. Joe at St. Peter's, there are four games involving six area teams. Margaretta at Bellevue, Old Fort at Gibsonburg, Otsego at Woodmore and Oak Harbor at Rossford.

Saturday Ross is at Huron, Bettsville at Maumee Valley and Clyde is at Fostoria.

Lakota opens its season Tuesday when it hosts Hopewell-Loudon.

Ross boys preview

Fremont Ross's boys basketball team won't open the season until Dec. 5 at Bowling Green, but fans can watch the Little Giants in a four-team preview scrimmage Saturday at the Purple Pit.

Play begins at 6 p.m. with the junior varsity teams from Eastwood and Port Clinton playing for one half. Next is a JV half between Ross and Oak Harbor, followed by varsity play between Eastwood and Port Clinton.

The final half will be between the varsity squads of Ross and Oak Harbor.

Admission is \$4 for adults and \$3 for students.

Ross girls roll to win in opener

News-Messenger reports

HURON — Fremont Ross's girls basketball team started the 1997 season by pounding Huron 63-35 Saturday night.

The non-league road victory was keyed by a strong first quarter in which freshman Sashay Price scored six points to help the team take a 12-2 lead. The 5-foot-8 Price finished with a team-high 14 points.

In other games, buried Fostoria 64-28, Old Fort topped Gibsonburg 61-46 and Maumee Valley Contry Day stopped Bettsville 74-30.

"Price stepped up quickly for us. She had her game face on," said Ross head coach Sue Wolf. "The kids definitely came through. The bench did a good job."

"We have a lot of things to work on, but we came out strong and opened the season with a strong victory," senior guard Amy Smith said.

Ross junior Jodi Fick added 13 points, including eight in the third quarter as the Little Giants outscored the Tigers 18-5.

Emily Dowell finished with nine points and Natasha Watson had eight.

"Watson came through for us. She adds size to our team," Wolf said. "She spent a lot of time working this summer. She's really improved."

Huron's Monica Asher led all scorers with 17.

"Huron usually is stronger. But they had a player out with a knee injury and they graduated some players," Wolf said.

Ross opens Great Lakes League competition Thursday at Oregon Clay, considered a contender in the GLL race. The game is the second straight road game for Ross, which will not play in the Purple Pit until Dec. 11 against Fostoria.

"We get tested early," Wolf said. "Whitmer and Clay were picked at the top of the league."

Clyde 64, Fostoria 28

FOSTORIA — Clyde's girls basketball team jumped out to a 40-3 lead against Fostoria and cruised to a 64-28 win.

"We played probably with as

See CLYDE, B3

Little Giants search for depth

Wolf's team has won back-to-back GLL titles

By BRIAN SPIESS
Sports editor

Fremont Ross's nickname, Little Giants, is a contradiction in terms.

Here's another: A veteran team which lacks depth.

But that's an accurate description of the school's girls basketball team, which does not have an abundance of potential starters despite having seven seniors on the roster.

"We have a lot of seniors so we have a lot of (basketball) experience, but they haven't played a lot of games on varsity," senior Amy Smith said.

"We need to develop a bench," said coach Sue Wolf, who has 259 coaching wins in 23 years.

The Little Giants finished 15-7 in 1996-97, but said goodbye to Michele Smith (averaged 11 points, 11.5 rebounds), defensive specialist Marcy Reinbolt and Tonya Elder.

Top returning players are Emily Dowell (10.5 ppg, 6.8 rpg), Smith (11.9 ppg, 2.6 apg) and Natasha Watson (4.3 rpg).

"I think coach wants Emily and I to be the leaders," Smith said. "We've played on the team the longest so we need to share some of our experience."

"I think since I've been there for four years, I know what's going on I can stay calmer than the younger kids and help everyone else out," said Dowell, elected co-captain along with Smith by their teammates.

Prior to the season, Wolf did not know what to make of the Giants.

"We're up and down. Very inconsistent," Wolf said after watching her team scrimmage against St. Joseph Central Catholic and Edison last week. "It depends on which quarter and which day you see us."

When opponents play man-to-man defense, Ross plans to use a

continuity offense in which players keep moving and go to specific spots.

In addition to leadership roles, Smith (5-foot-6) and Dowell (5-9) will be asked to put the ball in the basket. Another starter will be Watson, a 5-11 junior post player. "Natasha Watson has improved a lot from last year," Wolf said.

A fourth starter is 5-8 Sashay Price, the third freshman to start for Wolf in recent years. The first was Dawn Zerman, followed by Dowell.

"Sashay Price is struggling with her game because she is pressing too much," Wolf said, days before Price scored 14 points in the season-opening win against Huron. "If I think (freshmen) are ready to go I play them. But I expect them to play that way too."

In addition to Watson, the Little Giants have only one player — 6-0 senior Dusty Ruffing — who stands taller than 5-9.

"We don't have a lot of size but every player on our team is very quick," Smith said.

Other seniors are Rachael Damschroder, Jenni Knoke, Dawn McElfresh and Mysti Reeny. The team also has three juniors: Watson, Erin Tuckerman and Jodi Fick. There are no sophomores on the team.

Ross will be tested early with games at Clay (Thursday) and at home against Whitmer (Dec. 18). Both are picked to finish atop the Great Lakes League race.

"Needless to say we have to be ready in a hurry," said Wolf, who believes Findlay could challenge for the league title.

And with back-to-back championships entering this season, Ross should not be dismissed.

"The players want to win another GLL, that would be the third in a row," Wolf said of team goals. "We also want to be more consistent as a team. Improve after every practice and every game."



"I think coach wants Emily and I to be the leaders. We've played on the team the longest so we need to share some of our experience."

— Amy Smith, Sr.

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1997-98 schedule

Nov. 29	at Huron
Dec. 4	at Clay
Dec. 11	Fostoria
Dec. 13	Waite
Dec. 18	Whitmer
Dec. 20	at St. Ursula
Dec. 26-27	at Maumee Invite
Jan. 3	Notre Dame
Jan. 6	at Columbian
Jan. 8	Sandusky
Jan. 15	at Findlay
Jan. 22	Clay
Jan. 29	at Fostoria
Feb. 5	at Whitmer
Feb. 7	at Magnificat
Feb. 10	Clyde

Feb. 12 at Sandusky

Feb. 19 Findlay

1997-98 roster

No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Gr.
10	Sashay Price	W/G	5-8	Fr.
12	Amy Smith	G/W	5-6	Sr.
20	R. Damschroder	W/G	5-8	Sr.
21	Erin Tuckerman	G/W	5-5	Jr.
22	Jenni Knoke	G	5-5	Sr.
23	Emily Dowell	G/W	5-9	Sr.
33	Dawn McElfresh	W	5-8	Sr.
34	Jodi Fick	W	5-8	Jr.
40	Natasha Watson	C/W	5-11	Jr.
42	Mysti Reeny	C	5-9	Sr.
45	Dusty Ruffing	W/C	6-0	Sr.

Eagles hold off ice-cold Ross

News-Messenger reports

OREGON — Thursday night was not a good night for Fremont Ross's shooters.

The Little Giants shot just 32 percent (21-of-65) yet still managed to stay within striking distance against Oregon Clay before eventually suffering a 60-52 Great Lakes League loss.

"We had some good shots," Ross coach Sue Wolf said, "we Clay 60 just didn't Ross 52 put it in the basket." Next Thursday Fostoria at Ross

The loss dropped the Little Giants to 1-1 and 0-1 in the GLL. The Eagles, picked by the league coaches to win the GLL crown this year, improved to 2-0 and 1-0.

Emily Dowell, a 5-foot-9 senior guard/wing, led Ross in scoring (21 points) and rebounds (8) while Amy Smith chipped in 15 points. Dowell and Sashay Price dished out four assists each.

The Little Giants outrebounded Clay 29-28 as Natasha Watson and Jodi Fick contributed seven and six rebounds, respectively.

"One thing we need to do is rebound better," Wolf said. "If we shot that many times (65) and missed and finished that close in rebounding, we need to get to the boards more.

"Also, there were some shots we had that we had to convert on."

Ross trailed 15-13 after one quarter and 30-29 at the half. A 13-10 advantage in the third period gave the Little Giants a 42-40 lead, but Ross was unable to hold on in the final eight minutes.

The Eagles won the fourth quarter by a 20-10 margin.

"We started off poorly in the fourth quarter," Wolf said. "We gave up a basket off an inbounds play to start the quarter and that's a no-no. They just kept going after that and we didn't."

Both teams finished with 16 turnovers but the Eagles converted 56 percent (27-of-48) of their shots.

Megan Beshalsle scored 20 points, Jodi Harrington had 15 and Jenny St. John added 12 for Clay.

Ross hosts Fostoria next Thursday

Little Giants limit Redmen to 17 points

News-Messenger reports

Fremont Ross did not allow Fostoria to score until midway through the second quarter Thursday and rolled to a 44-17 win at the Purple Pit.

"I can't remember a time that we've done that," Ross coach Sue Wolf said of the first quarter, when Ross's defense did not allow a point.

The Little Giants (2-1) led the Great Lakes League contest 14-0 after the first quarter and 18-4 at the half. The Redmen scored their first points with 3:49 to play in the second quarter.

"In the second quarter we had a little bit of a let down," Wolf said. "We took nine shots and made one."

Natasha Watson, a 5-foot-11 junior, scored a game-high 11 points and grabbed 11 rebounds. She held Fostoria's Lyndsay Robinson, a physical post player, without a point.

"She did a nice job, she had a nice game," Wolf said of Watson.

Two freshman, Sashay Price and Sammantha Schneider, started for the Little Giants. And nine Ross players made the scoring column.

"We got everybody in and that's good because we're trying to develop a bench," Wolf said.

Seniors Emily Dowell and Amy Smith did a good job of getting the ball to other players, Wolf said.

Kristen Davis-Clark scored three points to lead Fostoria, which dropped to 0-3 this season.

The Little Giants host Toledo Waite Saturday and return to GLL action with a home game against Toledo Whitmer on Thursday.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

shots to preserve the win.

"We ran out of time," Geller said.

Reineck led St. Joe with 16 points and also had the assignment to guard Reynolds. Melissa Geller handed out six assists while connecting on two 3-point shots for St. Joe.

The Crimson Streaks play at Carey on Thursday.

Woodmore 74, Gibsonburg 34

ELMORE — Alicia Gerwin scored 25 points and pulled down 11 rebounds to lead Woodmore to a Suburban Lakes League win against Gibsonburg.

"Gerwin had a great game," Woodmore coach Mike DeStazio said of his 6-foot-1 junior.

The Wildcats (2-1) led 23-4 after the first quarter and 36-15 at the half.

"We came out and played well, we played intense defense and the kids came out and played hard," DeStazio said. "(Allison) Aspacher did a great job on point guard, and (Amy) Perkins had a tremendous night."

Gibsonburg sophomore Emily Walter led the Golden Bears with eight points.

Lakota 34, Otsego 30

KANSAS — Lakota won a Suburban Lakes League game without placing a single player in double-figure scoring.

Regan Youngs and Crystal Miller each scored six points to lead the Raiders to the 34-30 win against Otsego. Lakota survived a 13-10 Otsego run in the fourth quarter to improve to 2-1.

"We had a very tough game

Ross girls run away with win

News-Messenger reports

Three Fremont Ross starters scored in double figures and seven other Little Giants scored in a 69-21 rout of Toledo Waite Saturday at the Purple Pit.

Amy Smith scored 16 points to lead Ross, followed by Emily Dowell's 14 points and 12 from

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Natasha Watson.

But it was the other scorers that caught the attention of Wolf, who has been looking to boost her bench.

"I thought our bench played really well," Wolf said. "Jodi Fick scored eight big points off the bench."

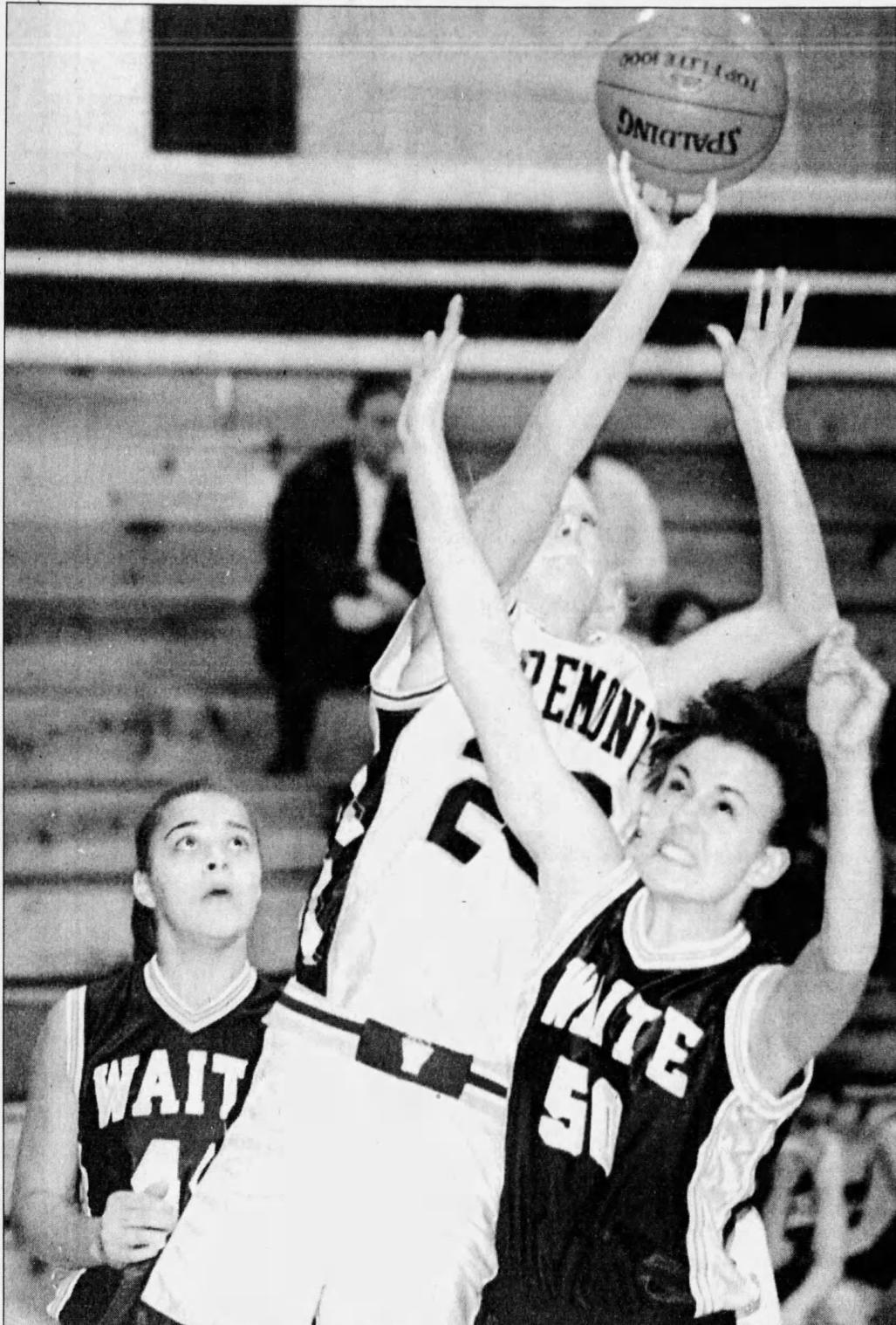
The Indians scored no more than eight points in any of the four quarters.

"Defensively, we played well. We caused 27 turnovers and we only had 13," Wolf said. "I hope this carries over Thursday."

That's when the Little Giants host Whitmer in a key Great Lakes League game.

"Whitmer along with Clay has been picked to win the league. Clay knocked them off by two points the other night, so they'll be ready," said Wolf.

Splitting the difference



News-Messenger/Steven Garner

EMILY DOWELL of Fremont Ross shoots between Toledo Waite's Kristy Michalski (50) and Jessica McCandless during the Little Giants's 69-21 win Saturday at the Purple Pit. **Story, B1**

GIRLS BASKETBALL

League power stops Ross

Whitmer defeats Ross by 16 points

By JEFF KRAUS
For The News-Messenger

The best way to measure yourself is to take on the best.

Fremont Ross's girls basketball team did that Thursday, but the result was not favorable. Ross lost 67-51 to Great Lakes League favorite Toledo Whitmer in a game played at the Purple Pit.

Whitmer improved to 4-2 (2-1 GLL) while Ross dropped to 3-2 (1-2).

"We knew Whitmer was going to be near the top in the league this year," Ross coach Sue Wolf said. "We had to come out and prove that we belonged there and we didn't."

The teams played nearly even in the first quarter, with Whitmer leading 17-15. In the second quarter the Panthers, led by Elizabeth Edinger, went ahead by as much as 17 points in the second quarter.

Edinger, a 5-foot-7 senior, scored six of her 21 points in the second quarter and made the shot which gave her team a 34-17 lead.

But Ross came back.

Cold Whitmer shooting in the third brought Ross back within four at 43-39 with 3:07 left in the quarter. The Panthers scored just one point in more than three minutes of the period.

The 1-for-6 cold spell ended when Kyle Gibson scored on a layup to make it 45-39 with 2:23 showing.

Then Whitmer regained control of the game. The Panthers closed out the third strong and outscored Ross 18-12 in the fourth period to win.

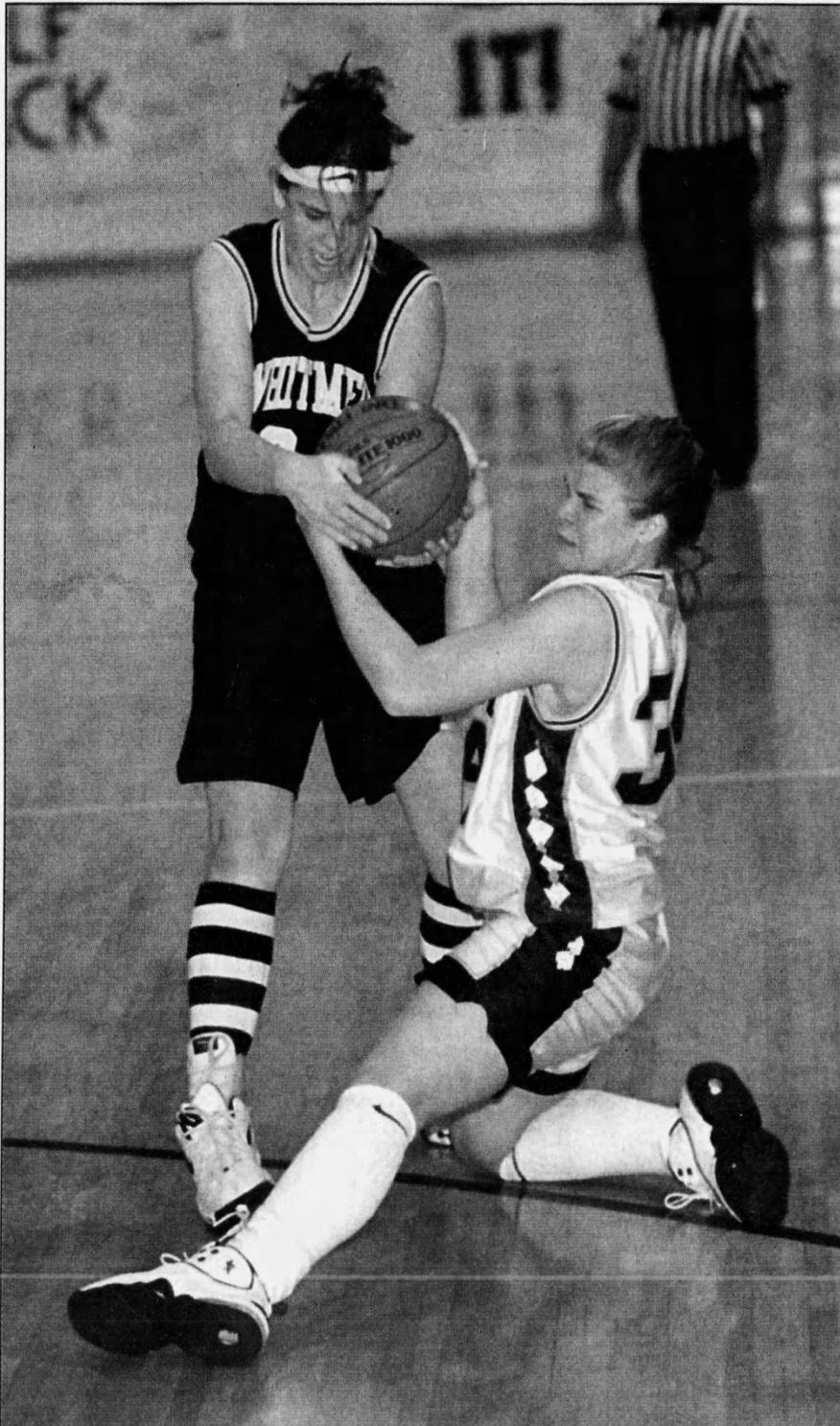
"We got back into the game and then we missed some one and ones and that cost us big time. We needed those shots and we missed too many shots tonight," said Wolf.

Ross was paced by Emily Dowell with 20 points while Amy Smith had 11 and Jodi Fick 10.

In addition to Edinger, Whitmer also got 19 points from Melissa Marlow.

The Little Giants will play at Toledo St. Ursula Saturday.

"(St. Ursula) defeated Toledo Scott the other night," Wolf said. "They are a big and quick team. We have our work cut out for us."



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

JODI FICK of Fremont Ross, right, fights for the ball with Whitmer's Jessica Baumhower Thursday at the Purple Pit.

St. Ursula hands Ross third loss

News-Messenger reports

TOLEDO — Fremont Ross lost its third game of the season Saturday despite a 15-point, 14-rebounding effort by Natasha Watson.

The Little Giants (3-3) lost 57-48 to St. Ursula.

Ross coach Sue Wolf was pleased with her team's play despite coming up short in the non-league game.

"I think we're starting to improve some," said Wolf, who starts two freshmen.

"We played better than we did Thursday, much better defense," Wolf said, referring to the home loss to Great Lakes League foe Whitmer. "(Saturday) We just

GIRLS BASKETBALL

couldn't keep it going."

Freshman Sashay Price scored 12 to join Watson in double figures.

Ross senior Emily Dowell got in foul trouble early and scored six points in limited action.

Ross is in the Maumee Tournament, which runs through Friday and Saturday.

In other games Saturday:

Oak Harbor 64, Port Clinton 26

OAK HARBOR — Oak Harbor won its first game at the expense of Port Clinton, which is still in search of a win.

The Rockets got 17 points from

Jamie Beier and an 11-point, four-rebound effort from Ashley Orshoski to beat the Redskins in a Sandusky Bay Conference game.

Oak Harbor (1-5, 1-2 SBC) will play at Edison Saturday. Port Clinton (0-5, 0-3) hosts Margaretta Saturday.

The Rockets connected on 23 of 60 field goal attempts while limiting the Redskins to nine field goals.

Lakota 68, Elmwood 60

BLOOMDALE — Lakota defeated Elmwood 68-60. The Raiders (5-1, 5-0) shot 49 percent from the floor in the Suburban Lakes League game. Renee Brickner had 16 points and 14

Little Giants use big third quarter to down Maumee

News-Messenger reports

MAUMEE — Ross broke open a tight game with a 20-2 scoring advantage over Maumee in the third quarter Friday night and coasted to a 48-26 victory over the Panthers in the Maumee Invitational.

Ross (4-3) will meet Toledo Central

Catholic at Friday

8 p.m. Ross 48

tonight in Maumee 26

the champion-
ship Tonight

Fremont Ross vs.
Tol. Central Catholic
game.

The Little 8 p.m.

Giants'

junior varsity team, which beat Maumee 29-17 Friday, also plays Central Catholic for the tournament title, beginning at 4 p.m.

Ross' varsity team led 14-9 after one quarter and 20-16 at halftime before running away with it in the third quarter.

"We played a little sluggish in the first half," Ross coach Sue Wolf said. "We played much better in the second half. We held Maumee to two points in the third quarter and caused a lot of turnovers.

"People came off the bench and did a nice job for us."

Ross, which got 16 points from Natasha Watson and 12 from Emily Dowell, forced the Panthers into 26 turnovers. The Little Giants had just 12 turnovers and outrebounded Maumee 21-17 behind nine boards by Watson.

Lisa Lorenz and Megan McKenzie scored six points apiece to pace the host Panthers.

Toledo Central runs past Ross

News-Messenger reports

Relentless pressure defense from Toledo Central Catholic led to the downfall of Ross Saturday 81-38 in the Holiday Classic at Maumee.

"They outplayed us in every phase of the game and they were more athletic. We didn't respond to their pressure and we had a lot of turnovers," said Ross coach Sue Wolf.

Ross (4-4) trailed 50-15 at the half and never could climb into the game. Sashay Price led the Little Giants with 8 points.

"Sashay played a good game. She handled the pressure the best. Mysti Recny had a good game off the bench," said Wolf. "They are a very good team and we did not handle their pressure."

On a positive note for the Little Giants, the Ross junior varsity team defeated Central 52-46 for the JV championship.

**GIRLS
BASKETBALL**

**Notre Dame 69,
Fremont Ross 38**

Fremont Ross senior Amy Smith responded to a position switch with 20 points, but it was not enough as the Little Giants lost at home against Notre Dame.

Ross (4-5) lost its second straight game to a team with only one loss.

"So far I don't think we've lost to a bad team," said Sue Wolf, whose team lost to St. Ursula last weekend.

Wolf moved Smith, who played wing last season, back to that position after allowing her to start eight games at point guard.

"She wanted to play point guard, and I went along with it for about eight games," Wolf said. "She really takes the ball to the basket well."

Sashay Price and Emily Dowell

See SMITH, B2

Smith scores 20 in Ross loss

Continued from B1

shared point guard duties for Ross.

The Eagles (7-1) led 30-22 at the half and 48-34 after three quarters before blowing out Ross 21-4 in the final period.

Bridget Donovan and Rachael Poland scored 19 points apiece for Notre Dame and Donovan connected on six 3-point shots.

"She's a streak shooter ... when's she's on it's awfully tough to defend," Wolf said.

Ross plays at Tiffin Columbian Tuesday and at home against Sandusky Thursday.

Tornadoes stop Ross

Old Fort wins MAL game

News-Messenger reports

TIFFIN — Fremont Ross freshman Sashay Price scored 18 points, but the Little Giants suffered a 61-42 non-league loss at Tiffin Columbian.

Ross (4-6) was tied with Columbian at 53-all at the half, but the Tornadoes outscored the Little Giants 33-14 to win easily.

Price made eight field goals and two free throws for the Little Giants, which also got 12 points from Natasha Watson.

Columbians's
Tami Gernert
scored 19 points to lead all scorers.

Ross hosts Sandusky in a Great Lakes League game Thursday:

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Giants stop rival Streaks

Improved bench helps Ross defeat Sandusky 55-39

By JEFF KRAUS
For The News-Messenger

It wasn't a work of art.

The Fremont Ross Little Giants didn't win any beauty contests Thursday night, but they did earn a 55-39 victory over rival Sandusky.

Indeed, the play was ragged at times. And both clubs experienced periods of cold shooting and excess turnovers.

The Little Giants improved to 5-6, while Sandusky fell to 1-7.

"Our center got in foul trouble and our backup center is out with a back injury," Ross coach Sue Wolf said. "That hurt us. Sandusky takes the ball strong to the basket and they're physical."

Center Natasha Watson picked up two fouls in the first quarter, and backup Mysti Recny is day-to-day with a back injury. That allowed Sandusky to lead 10-8 after one quarter.

In the opening quarter Sandusky's Amanda James, a 6-foot forward, took advantage of the situation and scored six points inside.

But things fell apart after that. The Little Giants outscored Sandusky 15-12 in the second quarter to take a 24-22 lead at the half. Not to be outdone, Ross poured it on in the third, leading 41-29 after three.

A key was the Little Giants bench. Ross received solid efforts from Jodi Fick (11 points), Erin Tuckerman (8 points) and Rachel Damschroder (2 points).

"I thought Eric Tuckerman off the bench did well. Jodi Fick played hard and Rachel Damschroder did some good things," said Wolf. "I also thought Emily Dowell and Amy Smith got together versus their zone and hit some shots."

Dowell led the Ross effort with 13 points while Smith added nine points. Both scored key baskets in the third period when Ross began pulling away. The



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

EMILY DOWELL of Fremont Ross (23) defends Sandusky's Dymon Terrell Thursday night at the Purple Pit.

Little Giants maintained a 12-point lead throughout the third quarter and the Blue Streaks could pull no closer.

The Little Giants have an

important game coming up next Thursday on the road at Findlay.

"We're not out of the league yet," Wolf said. "Hopefully, someone else beats Clay and

then we beat them and then you've also got Whitmer. We do need some help."

■ Girls box scores, B2

Ross wins at Findlay; Perkins is 3-point threat

News-Messenger reports

FINDLAY — Three Fremont Ross players scored in double figures and seven others added points Thursday in a 61-51 Great Lakes League win against Findlay.

The Little Giants improved to 6-6 overall and 3-2 in the GLL, while Findlay dropped to 4-8 (2-3).

"Amy (Smith) and Emily (Dowell) both played on the same day. They both played with a lot of confidence," said Ross coach Sue Wolf, who got 15 and 10 points, respectively, from her two senior leaders.

Natasha Watson added 12 points and 11 rebounds for Ross.

Ross's balanced effort offset the 21-point performance by Findlay's Samantha Williams.

Ross hosts Clay Thursday in a game Wolf said they must win to keep their GLL title hopes alive. The Eagles have not lost in league play so Ross would need a win and some help.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Woodmore 58, Otsego 38

TONTOGANY — Amy Perkins nailed six 3-point baskets en route to 20 points and Woodmore teammate Alicia Gerwin scored a game-high 25 points and hauled in 16 rebounds Thursday night, leading the Wildcats to a 58-38 victory over Otsego.

The Knights pulled within three points in the third period before Perkins hit a pair of 3-pointers to halt Otsego's threat. Perkins, who finished 6-of-17 from beyond the 3-point line, made four of her six 3-pointers in the second half as the 'Cats outscored the Knights 28-13.

"The key tonight was Alicia and Amy," Woodmore coach Mike DeStazio said. "Amy's 3-pointers kept breaking their back."

The Wildcats ran their record to 7-5 and 6-3 in the Suburban Lakes

Ross rally falls short

Eagles soar to GLL win over Giants

By JEFF KRAUSS
Special to The News-Messenger

A lack of offense and foul shooting was the undoing for the Fremont Ross Little Giants Thursday in a 46-37 loss to Clay.

Ross, 6-7 and 3-3 in the Great Lakes League, came out strong in the first quarter. Five different Little Giants scored in the quarter as Ross raced to a 11-6 lead after one.

Then came a Thursday forgettable second quarter for those who like offense. Clay, behind a solid man-to-man defense, held Ross to only three points in the quarter.

The Little Giants, however, held the Eagles to only seven points in the period and led 14-13 at the half.

"Our bench didn't run our offense. We should have had a five- or six-point lead at the half," Ross coach Sue Wolf said.

But Ross didn't, and the Eagles club (12-2) didn't let the Little Giants off the hook in the second half. Clay went inside and used physical play to gain a lead it never lost.

Betsy Revenaugh, a 5-foot-8 sophomore center, used her size inside to spark Clay. Two consecutive baskets by Revenaugh gave the Eagles a five-point lead, 27-22, with 1:03 left in the third.

Clay closed out the final 63 seconds with two more inside baskets following offensive rebounds.

When the third quarter ended, the Eagles had a 31-22 advantage and momentum was on their side.

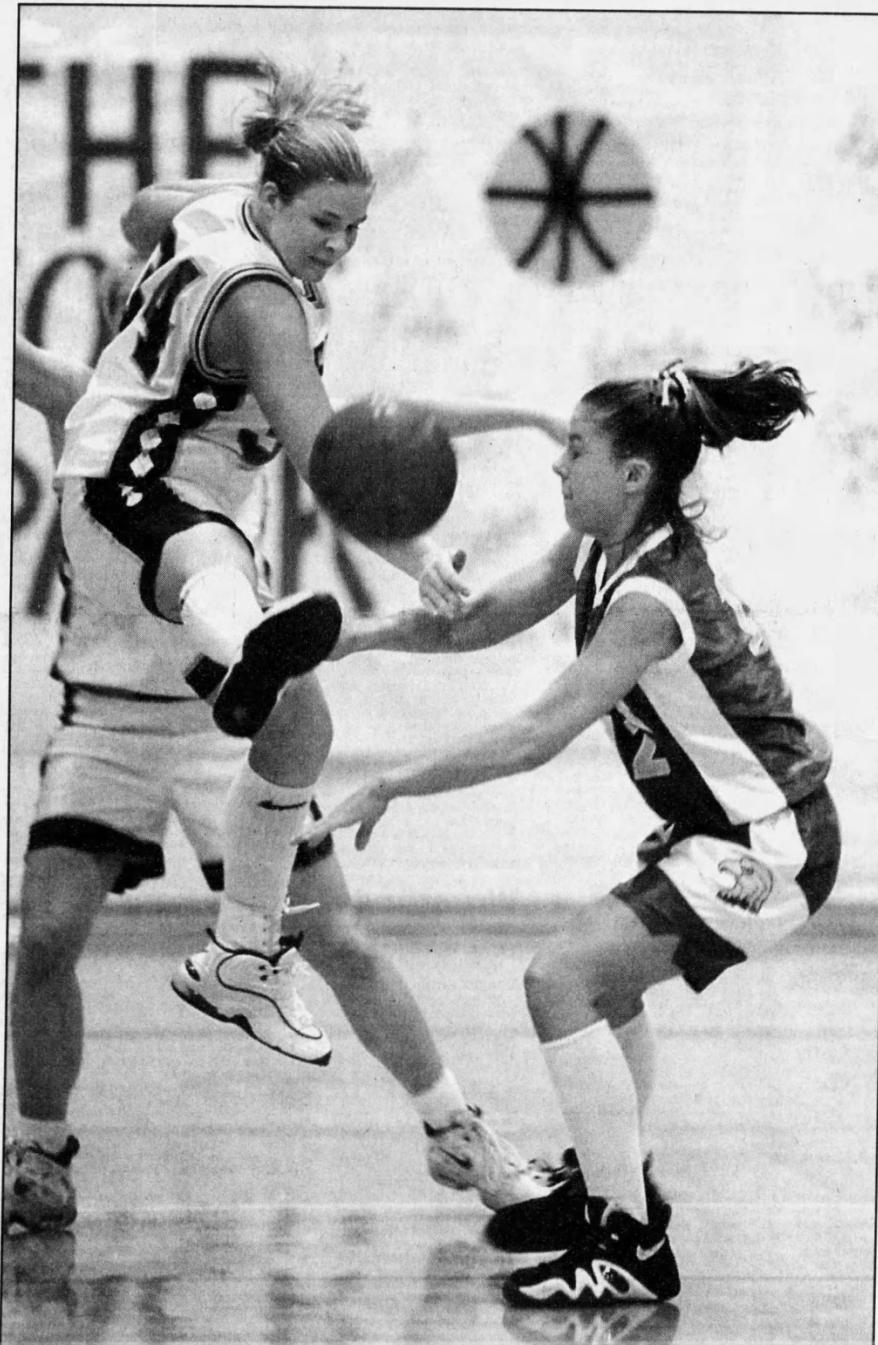
Ross could pull no closer in the final quarter. Clay built a 16-point lead at 45-29 with 2:19 left after a Shelli Habegger jump shot.

But the Little Giants didn't fold.

Ross outscored Clay 8-1 in the

Clay 46
Ross 37

Next Thursday
Ross at Fostoria
6 p.m. (JV)



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

JODI FICK of Ross kicks away a pass by a Clay opponent during Thursday night's GLL game at the Purple Pit.

final 2:19 to make the final score close.

"We didn't quit and we worked our rear ends off," Wolf said.

"Our foul shooting killed us."

Ross shot just 6-of-14 from the foul line.

The Giants return to league

play Thursday at Fostoria.

"We should match up well with them. They're a pretty quick team," Wolf said.

Fostoria upsets Fremont Ross

News-Messenger reports

FOSTORIA — Fremont Ross coach Sue Wolf cannot remember the last time her team lost to Fostoria — if ever.

But that's what happened Thursday, when the Redmen capitalized on Ross's 24 percent shooting and beat the Little Giants 42-41 in a Great Lakes League game.

Ross dropped to 6-8 overall and

GIRLS BASKETBALL

3-4 in the GLL, while Fostoria improved to 5-8 and 2-5.

"When you make 17-of-72 shots from the field and you are 2-of-14 from the foul line," Wolf said, "you're not going to win many ball games."

Does she have an explanation for the shooting woes?

"No, I don't. We practiced bad all week and we played like it today," Wolf said. "I think our kids were thinking 'It's only Fostoria.' "

The loss comes less than two months after Ross beat Fostoria 44-17 at the Purple Pit.

"I give credit to their program," Wolf said. "They played hard and they wanted the game."

The game was tied at 21-all at the half before the Redmen outscored Ross 11-8 in the third quarter.

Emily Dowell led Ross with 17 points and Amy Smith added 13.

The Little Giants host Mansfield Senior Monday at the Purple Pit.

Ross rebounds with win over Mansfield Sr.

News-Messenger reports

When Fremont Ross scrimmages its junior varsity team in practice, coach Sue Wolf spots the JV team 10 baskets and threatens to make the varsity run if it does not catch up in one quarter.

Monday night, Wolf asked her players to summon that same intensity as they entered the fourth quarter tied at 46 against Mansfield Senior.

It worked, and the Little Giants defeated the Tygers 64-59 at the Purple Pit. The win improved Ross's record to 7-8 and allowed the Little Giants to put Thursday's loss to Fostoria behind them.

"We shot the ball a lot better," said Wolf, whose team shot 40 percent from the field and 80 percent from the free throw line. "We still had some break downs, but we did a lot more things right."

Emily Dowell scored 16 points, Jodi Fick added 14 and Amy Smith 13 for Ross, which survived a 27-point performance by Mansfield Senior's Dionne Goodwin.

The Tygers dropped to 10-6. "This was a good win for us,"

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Wolf said.

Did the Fostoria loss wake up the sleeping Giants?

"That's what I'm hoping it did," Wolf said. "Their eyes are open. They know now that anybody can beat you on any given day."

Ross plays at Toledo Whitmer Thursday and at Rocky River Magnificat Saturday.

In one other game Monday:

North Baltimore 45,
Bettsville 23

BETTSVILLE — North Baltimore's Keely Perry scored 16 points to help keep Bettsville winless in the Midland Athletic League.

The Tigers won on the road to improve to 3-12 overall and 2-7 in the MAL. Bettsville fell to 2-12 and 0-7.

Alicia Valentine scored 13 points to lead all Bettsville scorers.

North Baltimore, which also got 12 points from Bev Barringer, held a 26-7 edge at the half.

■ Box scores, B2

Whitmer defeats Fremont Ross

News-Messenger reports

WHITMER- A nightmarish third quarter spelled doom for Fremont Ross, as Whitmer outscored the Little Giants 25-6 in the period, and took a 71-58 victory.

Ross held a 36-35 lead at half-time, but Whitmer came out smoking and took control of the contest.

Tiffany Bennett led the Panthers with 20 points and Kyle Gibson added 10 for the winners. Emily Dowell scored 16, Natasha Watson added 14 and Samantha Snyder scored 10 for Ross.

Whitmer improved to 11-6 overall and 5-2 in the Great Lakes League, while Ross fell to 7-9, 3-5.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

overall and 11-3 in the SLL. Mandy Balduf scored 11 to lead Genoa, who dropped to 8-10 and 6-8.

Allison Aspacher handed out six assists, Dawn Karchner pulled down nine rebounds and Laura Runion had four assists and three steals for Woodmore.

Lakota 61, Northwood 41

NORTHWOOD- Lakota stormed out to a 29-4 first quarter lead and never looked back, cruising to a 61-41 Suburban Lakes League victory.

"We came out and really shot well in the first quarter, said

and feisty."

Otsego 75, Gibsonburg 63

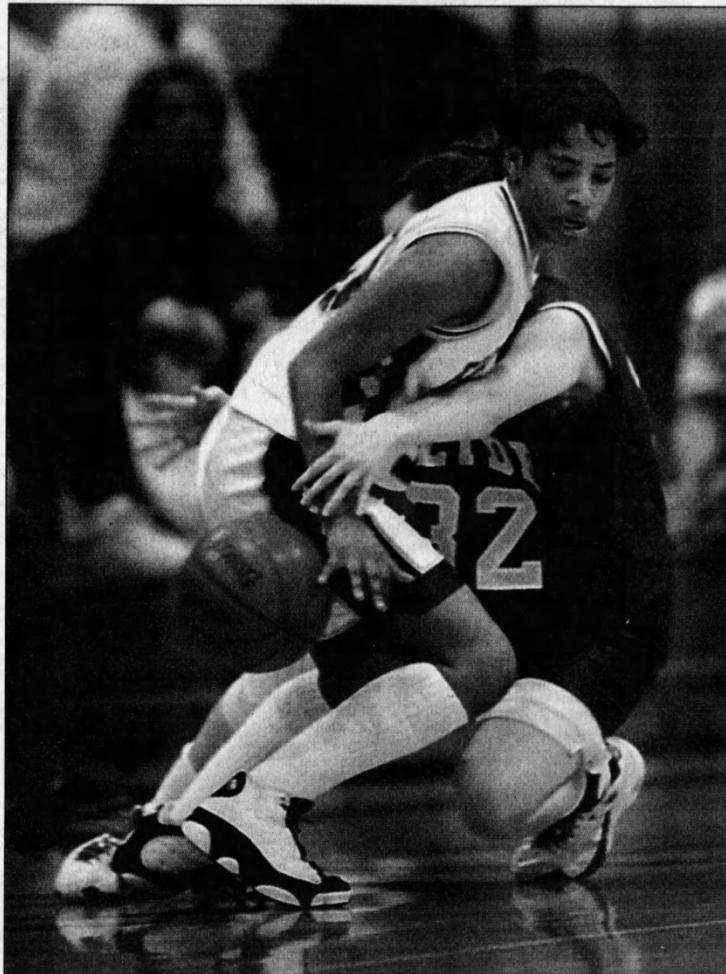
GIBSONBURG- A disastrous first quarter was too much for Gibsonburg to overcome, as it fell 75-63 to SLL-rival Otsego.

Otsego took a 29-14 lead after the first eight minutes to take command of the game. The Golden Bears chipped away throughout the game, and closed to within five after three quarters. But Otsego was just too tough.

Heather Hill led Gibsonburg with 14, Megan Wassil added 13 and Krista Reiter tossed in 12 in a losing effort.

Gibsonburg fell to 3-13, while Otsego improved to 2-12.

Honeywell Loudon 80



SASHAY PRICE of Fremont Ross, left, has the ball knocked away by Clyde's Angie Beier Tuesday at the Purple Pit.

News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

Little Giants rally to beat Clyde in OT

By BRIAN SPIESS
Sports editor

Emily Dowell lost the handle but won the game.

With her Fremont Ross team trailing Clyde 60-58 with five seconds remaining Tuesday night at the Purple Pit, Dowell drove the lane and fumbled the basketball twice before tossing in a layup at the buzzer to send the game into overtime.

The Little Giants, who had trailed by as many as 10 points in the fourth quarter, beat the Fliers 71-64 in overtime.

The loss snapped Clyde's 10-game winning streak and dropped the Fliers to 15-3.

Ross, which lost at Clyde last year, improved to 8-10.

"I bobbed the ball a couple of times," Dowell said of the final play in regulation. "The ball kept getting knocked away and it kept coming back to me."

Clyde coach John Cahill watched in frustration as Dowell tied the game.

"Two loose balls and we don't come up with either one of them," Cahill said. "If we grab one of them the game is over."

Those points were part of a 21-point effort for Dowell. Senior teammate Amy Smith scored a game-high 24 points, including 11

free throws.

Amanda Hoffman scored 13 points for Clyde, which dominated the middle part of the game with a relentless press and aggressive rebounding.

"Clyde's very physical and aggressive," Ross coach Sue Wolf said. "They are really, really aggressive. We needed to play that aggressive, and it took us until the last quarter to figure that out."

The Fliers missed several shots and fell behind 4-0 early before going on a 11-5 run to take an early lead. The game was tied late in the first quarter when Dowell stole a pass and converted a layup to give her team a 13-11 lead.

The Fliers opened the second quarter with an 8-0 run and led 22-16. But Ross's Dusty Ruffing, continuing her team's game-long trend of buzzer beaters, stole a Clyde pass and scored at the buzzer to narrow Clyde's lead to 24-22.

Clyde increased its lead to 44-37 in the third quarter before Ross's Jodi Fick hit a jump shot on the final possession to narrow the lead to five points.

Eight different Fliers scored in the fourth quarter, and the 3-point shot by Kristi Mounts with 4:16 to play gave her team a 54-44 lead. The lead was 56-49 when Ross made its final charge with 2:30 to play.



SMITH

See ROSS, B2

Ross beats Clyde in OT

Continued from B1

“We decided we had to pick up our game,” Smith said. “We didn’t want to lose to them on our own court.”

Dowell made a layup, Sashay Price hit the back end of two free throws and Dowell drilled a 3-pointer to cut the lead to 56-55 with 1:04 to play.

Following a Clyde timeout, Mindy Cook made two free throws for a 58-55 advantage.

After Ross misfired on its next possession, Clyde was called for a carry with 43.1 seconds left. Smith then hit her only 3-point shot of the game to tie the score at 58-all.

Rachel Crooks appeared to give her team the win with 14 seconds left when she made a jump shot in the lane. But Dowell’s buzzer-beater at the other end sent the game into overtime.

“Instead of being timid, we were looking to score,” Smith said.

Smith’s layup began the overtime scoring, and a charging foul on Clyde’s Jacki Swaisgood gave the ball back the Little Giants. Dowell took advantage with a layup and Ross was on its way to the seven-point win.

“It feels great. I feel great and the kids should too,” Wolf said of the win.

The loss was a carbon copy of the Fliers 69-65 overtime loss to St. Joseph Central Catholic Dec. 2. In that game Clyde led for most of the game before St. Joe’s Holly Wagner made three fourth-quarter 3-pointers — including one at the buzzer — to tie the game.

“It was exactly the same as the St. Joe game,” Cahill said. “We just didn’t make the plays.”

High School Girls

District 6 Coaches All-Stars

DIVISION I

First team

Dionne Goodwin, Mansfield Senior, 5-11, so.; Tomi Gemert, Tiffin Columbian, 5-8, sr.; **Emily Dowell, Fremont Ross, 5-9, sr.**; Megan Pease, Mansfield Madison, 6-2, jr.; Erin Bowers, Tiffin Columbian, 5-8, sr.

Second team

Bethany Brafford, Mansfield Madison, 6-2, so.; Leslie Koehl, Tiffin Columbian, 5-6, sr.; Megan Franta, Mansfield Senior, 5-9, sr., **Amy Smith, Fremont Ross, 5-6, sr.**; Dyman Terrell, Sandusky, 5-8, sr.

Honorable Mention

Katie Fazekas, Tiffin Columbian; Erin Moore, Tiffin Columbian; Hope VanTilburg, Mansfield Madison; Niesha Lindsay, Mansfield; Ebony Hister, Mansfield Madison; **Sashay Price, Fremont Ross; Natasha Watson, Fremont Ross.**

Player of the Year: Dionne Goodwin, Mansfield Senior.

Coach of the Year: Larry Kisabeth, Tiffin Columbian.

Findlay beats Ross for 3rd

By MICHAEL PIDANICK
Staff writer

Prior to Thursday's game, Fremont Ross honored its senior girls basketball players in a brief ceremony.

Unfortunately for the Little Giants, that ceremony was about their only bright spot.

Findlay dominated the game from start to finish, beating Ross 62-46 in the regular season finale for both teams.

"We were not ready to play," Ross coach Sue Wolf said. "We never got started and we're not a team that can come back."

Findlay ended the season in third place in the Great Lakes League at 8-12 overall and 5-5 in league play. The Trojans finished one game ahead of the fourth-place Little Giants, who are 8-10 overall and 4-6 in the GLL.

"We played extremely well," Findlay coach Bill Lobb said. "We got off to a good jump and we shot the ball well all night."

Lobb feels Findlay is peaking at the right time.

"We're starting to play well," Lobb said. "If you're going to play well, I guess you should do it at the end of the year."

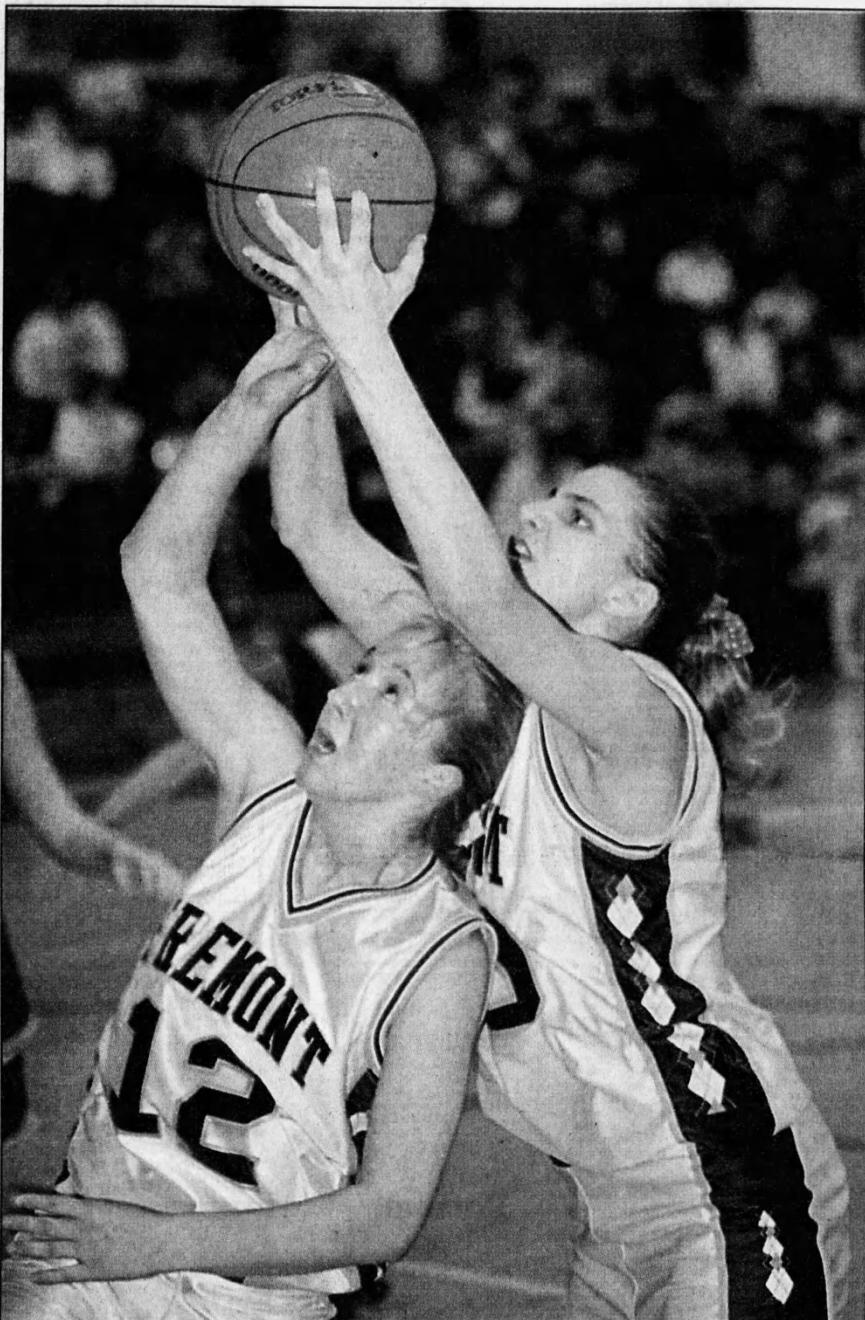
Katie Wendt scored 13 points to lead the Trojans. Sam Williams added 12 and Sara Swearingen and Julie Buck tossed in 10 apiece for the winners.

"We came out strong and played well for four quarters," Wendt said. "We wanted to win because this is our last game of the regular season. We all put our hearts into it."

Emily Dowell scored 19 points to lead the Little Giants. Amy Smith scored eight for Ross, despite missing much of the first half with a turned ankle.

Findlay dominated the boards, outrebounding Ross, 34-19 in the game. Jessica Lawson grabbed nine, Williams grabbed eight and Baker added six boards for the Trojans.

"We didn't do anything inside," Wolf said. "They killed us on the boards."



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

AMY SMITH (12) and Natasha Watson of Fremont Ross battle each other for a rebound in the first quarter of their game against Findlay Thursday night at the Purple Pit. Findlay defeated the Little Giants 62-46.

The Little Giants turned the ball over 25 times, including eight in a disastrous first quarter that saw Findlay take a 17-8 lead.

The second quarter also belonged to the Trojans. After the teams traded baskets, Buck hit back-to-back layups to push the lead to 11 points.

After a putback basket by Dusty Ruffing for Ross,

Williams scored four points in a row to extend the lead to 27-12.

The Trojans lead was 34-16 late in the second quarter when Dowell attempted to bring Ross back. With less than two minutes left she buried a 3-pointer while being fouled. She hit the free throw to complete the four-point play and went on to score eight straight points to bring Ross within 34-24.

But Findlay's Swearingen hit a 3-pointer for Findlay with 3.6 seconds left to push the lead back to 13 points.

Wolf felt the Little Giants were a little too distracted by the "Senior Night" festivities.

"You have to get ready to play every basketball game and we weren't," she said. "We got a little too wrapped up in the fanfare."

All-Northwest Ohio

Ten area basketball players were selected to the first, second or third All-Northwest Ohio teams:

Division I — Joell Heidelberg, Fremont Ross (2nd team); Emily Dowell, Fremont Ross (3rd).

High School Girls

GLL ALL-LEAGUE

FIRST TEAM

Emily Dowell, Fremont Ross, Sr.; Jessica Lawson, Findlay, Jr.; Lyndsey Robinson, Fostoria, Jr.; Elizabeth Edinger, Whitmer, Sr.; Megan Beshalske, Clay, So.

SECOND TEAM

Kyle Gibson, Whitmer, Sr.; Jody Harrington, Clay, Jr.; Dymon Terrell, Sandusky, Sr.; Tiffany Bennett, Whitmer, Sr.; Amy Smith, Fremont Ross, Sr.

HONORABLE MENTION

Clay: Shelli Habbegger, Jr.; Betsy Revenaugh, Jr.

Findlay: Katie Wendt, Jr.; Keri Baker, Sr.

Fostoria: Angie Kammeyer, Sr.; Leticia McBeth, Jr.

Fremont Ross: Natasha Watson, Jr.; Sashay Price, Fr.

Sandusky: Jennifer Treat, So.; Kenya Graves, So.

Whitmer: Kelly Klawonn, Sr.; Betsy Youngs, Sr.

COACH OF THE YEAR

Roger Achter, Clay

CO-PLAYERS OF THE YEAR

Gina Bollman, Clay, Sr.; Samantha Williams, Findlay, Jr.