

1948 Class A Tournament

LITTLE GIANTS TOP NORWALK IN INAUGURAL

Fremonters To Face Tough Ashland Five Saturday

Despite a lineup riddled by injuries and illness, a scrapping band of Little Giants from Fremont Ross upset the early dope bucket by knocking off Norwalk, 42-39, in the first round of the Northwestern Ohio District Class A basketball tournament at Sandusky Wednesday night.

While the Rossmen were eliminating Grant Walls' crew, a highly regarded Ashland quintet, defending champions, bumped into a tartar in George Burkett's Tiff-

Tickets for the Fremont Ross-Ashland game, scheduled for 7 p. m. Saturday at Sandusky's junior high gym, went on sale at Principal Clarence K. Cooper's office today. Only a limited supply of dats are available and they will be withdrawn from local sale Friday night.

fin Columbian outfit and were forced to come from behind in the final minute of play for an unimpressive 31-29 victory.

The A's, tutored by Cloyce Taylor, will meet Ross in the quarter-finals Saturday at 6 p. m. with the winner engaging the Bellevue-Tiffin Calvert victor March 9 in the semi-finals.

Sans their first-string forward, Ralph Gruhs, who is sidelined with a broken foot, and with three other members playing under the handicap of an eye infection or other recent illness, the Fremonters battled into an early lead, stalled off a Norwalk threat late in the second period and then opened a long 14-point advantage during the third period only to see the Raiders bounce right back with another threat that at one time came within a single point of deadlocking the issue.

The outcome was a personal triumph for Al Ziemke, Ross coach, who had groomed his entire crew for this game during the last 10 days. Add to that the offensive success of Dick Baron, despite an attack of "pink eye," Bob Beck and Bob Becker and the general defensive mastery of the entire outfit.

Rough Contest

The game was rough at times and marred by 44 personal fouls which sent Sam Sims, Ross center, to the sidelines shortly before the end of the first half, along with Bill Shew and Jim Chandler, of Norwalk mainstays, late in the tilt.

Baron, Beck and Sims connected in the opening stanza to give the Fremonters a 14-19 advantage while Beck's eight-point third period spurt, and a six-point effort by Becker in the final canto wrapped up most of the Rossmen's offensive work.

After trailing 35-21 at the end of the third period, Walls' quintet rebounded with a determined spurt that carried them to a 40-39 deficit with 33 seconds remaining before Becker slipped through for the "clincher." Five Norwalk fouls in the final seconds while Ross was attempting to stall locked up the outcome.

In the opener, Ashland trailed throughout the tilt as Columbian slowed the Taylor-Tots fast break to a gentle walk and handcuffed their offensive efforts with a tight man-to-man defense. Dick Messner hit on a long shot with 75 seconds left for the winning margin.

Tonight's pairings pit Sandusky against Mansfield Madison at 7 p. m. with Shelby and Willard colliding 90 minutes later.

| Norwalk (39) | C. | F. | M. | P. | Pts. |
|---------------------------------|----|----|----|----|------|
| Chandler, f | 5 | 0 | 2 | 5 | 10 |
| Moore, f | 0 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 1 |
| Mearrow, f | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Nestor, c | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| Shew, g | 3 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 12 |
| Wilde, g | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| McKinley, g | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 7 |
| VanDeffe, g | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Ryan, f | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Borgia, f | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Totals | 13 | 13 | 10 | 22 | 29 |
| Score by quarters: | | | | | |
| Fremont | 14 | 20 | 35 | 42 | |
| Norwalk | 9 | 17 | 21 | 39 | |
| Officials: Bill Orwig (Toledo); | | | | | |
| Lars Wagner (Baldwin-Wallace). | | | | | |

Rossmen Meet Tough Ashland Quint Tonight

Hoping to succeed where 19 others have failed—and a distinct underdog in the bargain—Al Ziemke's Little Giant basketballers collide with a highly touted Ashland quintet in the quarter-finals of the northwestern Ohio district Class A tournament at Sandusky's junior high school tonight at 7 o'clock.

The Rossmen will enter the fray weakened by injuries and illness, but nevertheless inspired by Tiffin Columbian's near-defeat of Cloyce Taylor's offensive-minded Taylor Tots in a first round tussle Wednesday in which the A's gained a last-minute, 31-29 decision after being outplayed throughout.

Dick Baron, still plagued with an eye infection, and Bob Beeker, will team at the forwards with the latter replacing Ralph Grubs as a broken foot continues to keep the rangy football tackle on the sidelines. Occupying the pivot post, as usual, will be Sam Sims, with Bob Beck, who turned in a 15-point scoring performance as the Rossmen eliminated Norwalk's Raiders in the first round, and Walter Weinhardt at the guards.

An all-veteran crew will take to the floor against this combination with All-Ohio Dick Messner and Dave Burns in the front court; Dick Johnson at center, and Dick Cooper and Cliff Hurst at the guards.

Reunion?

It will be a reunion of sorts for Ziemke and Taylor, the two tutors, for the Ross boss served as an underling to the Findlay college graduate last year as their Taylor Tots zoomed to the district championship before being sidetracked by Findlay's powerful Trojans in the regionals.

ZIEMKE'S LADS ALMOST UPSET FAVORED FIVE

Pressing Defense Keeps
Winners In Hot Water;
Final Score 50 To 37

After holding their own against a heavily favored Ashland quintet until the final three minutes of the third quarter, the Little Giants of Fremont Ross closed out the 1947-48 basketball campaign Saturday night by dropping a 50-37 decision to Cloyce Taylor's defending champions in the northwestern Ohio district Class A tournament at Sandusky.

But there was no surge in the ranks of the Rossmen following the clash. For, despite a riddled lineup, the proteges of Al Ziemke presented such a constant threat to the "Taylor Tots" that the A's not once took a chance on weakening the starting lineup with a substitution. It was the "pupil versus the teacher" as Ziemke, a former underling of Taylor's at the Ashland county citadel, came up with a pressing, man-to-man defense that at times had the orange-shirted champs, who were beaten only once in 20 previous starts, definitely "in the air."

The loss, witnessed by a near-capacity crowd of some 2,500 souls, dropped the Rossmen from the conflict and moved the 1947 titlists into the semi-finals where they engage Kenny Sampson's "in-and-out" Bellevue crew.

Honors to Four

Individual honors would have to be shared by four youths with Bob Beck and Walter Weinhardt, topping the Rossmen while Dick Lerch and Dick Mesner paced the A's.

The latter, an All-Ohio selection last year, was held to a solitary basket from out on the floor by Beck, but he added four others on rebounds to trail Lerch and Weinhardt for the scoring honors by a two-point margin.

Lerch was a last-minute substitution for the normal No. 1 guard, Cliff Hurst, as Taylor played a hunch and decided to bench the football fullback, a notoriously weak offensive player, in favor of Lerch, son of Ashland's most noted athlete. His insight paid remarkable dividends as Lerch tied Weinhardt for the point-making honors with 13 and played a generally "bang-up" floor game.

On the other hand, despite the effective defensive play of Beck, Dick Baron, Sam Sims and Bob Beeker, it was only Weinhardt's efficiency with a one-hand push shot from the outer confines of the foul ring that really kept the Little Giants within striking distance.

After falling far off the pace during the first period, Ziemke's white-clad Ross crew battled back to within three points of the Taylor Tots before again dropping nine points to the rear at the intermission.

The first five minutes of the third stanza was all in favor of the Fremonters as they scrapped all but two Ashland scoring threats while connecting for 11 quick points to again edge within three points of the lead. At that juncture the A's took time out and effectively squelched the rally.

Despite heavy pre-game odds which favored Ashland by as much as 20 points, it was only an "under-abled Taylor's quintet to pull this game from the fire. Against this, the Little Giants uncorked one of the greatest performances from the foul line that the tourney has seen. On 15 charity tosses, the Fremonters managed to mesh the cords on 11 occasions.

Start in Lead

Weinhardt sent Ross to the fore in the first minute with a two-pointer from way out on the floor, only to see Mesner retaliate to deadlock the issue. Sims then dropped in a free throw after which Dick Johnson converted a brace of charity tosses to put Ashland in front to stay. Weinhardt was the lone Rossman able to hit from the floor in the first period and then added four of the Little Giants' eight points in the second stanza.

Trailing 25-16 at the start of the third period, Baron finally found the range from mid-court and Beck hit the hoops from the ring and added a free throw. After Mesner's foul shot made the count 26-21, Beeker found the cords on a lay-up attempt. Lerch's two successive long shots sent the A's back into a seven-point lead but Baron hit from the side court and Beck added two foul shots to again cut the deficit to three points. That was the final Ross threat, but it was enough to force Taylor to retain his original lineup throughout the joust.

| The lineups: | | | | |
|--|----|----|----|-------|
| Fremont Ross (37) | G | F | M | P |
| Baron, f | 2 | 1 | 0 | 2 11 |
| Beeker, f | 1 | 2 | 0 | 4 5 6 |
| Frey, f | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 9 |
| Sims, c | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 12 |
| Weinhardt, g | 6 | 3 | 1 | 3 12 |
| Beck, g | 1 | 4 | 3 | 2 8 |
| Totals | 11 | 11 | 4 | 15 57 |
| Ashland (50) | G | F | M | P |
| Mesner, f | 8 | 2 | 1 | 1 11 |
| Burns, f | 2 | 5 | 1 | 3 9 8 |
| Johnson, g | 2 | 5 | 3 | 3 6 |
| Cooper, g | 4 | 0 | 0 | 1 8 1 |
| Lerch, g | 6 | 1 | 1 | 4 13 |
| Totals | 19 | 12 | 9 | 12 50 |
| Score by quarters: | | | | |
| Fremont | 8 | 16 | 28 | 37 |
| Ashland | 15 | 25 | 29 | 50 |
| Officials: Larry Wagner (Baldwin), Wallace; Bill Orwig (Toledo). | | | | |