

DIVISION I SECTIONAL TOURNAMENT

BOYS BASKETBALL

Arrows out-gun Fremont Ross

By Kevin Shields

Sports writer

GALION — Ashland's unselfish transitional basketball and ability to force Fremont Ross to the perimeter proved a winning recipe in Friday's Division I sectional final.

The Arrows routed the Little Giants 69-41 to earn their first sectional championship since 2008, holding Ross (10-12) to 14-of-48 shooting (29 percent) in a game at Galion High School that was never really close.

Ashland will play top-seeded Mansfield Senior — a 59-56 winner over Mansfield Madison in Friday's opener — back at Galion Thursday at 7 p.m.

"We knew coming in that Ashland was playing the best of anybody in our sectional," said Ross coach Mark Gedeon, whose Little Giants' team was 8-2 after 10 games, before going 2-10 down the stretch. "They shoot the basketball extremely well. Their kids really make a commitment to being in transition and do a great job of playing team basketball.

"Even their head coach (Tim Fralick) said they shot it really well tonight, and they did."

Trey Smith registered a game-high 18 points for the Arrows (12-11), adding seven assists and three steals.

"Trey Smith played an excellent game for us," Fralick said. "Not only did he get points early on, and force them to mistakes defensively, he had multiple assists and probably at least five more passes that led to assists, just because he was able to attack the basket and collapse the defense. He was a catalyst for us."

After Jack Gedeon's 3-pointer brought Ross within 10-7 midway thru the first quarter, Ashland ended the half on a 24-7 spurt.

The Arrows shot 26-of-49 from the field, including 7-of-15 from beyond the arc. When they weren't scoring outside, they got 28 points inside the painted area.

Most of that was created by collapsing the Little Giants' defense and making the extra pass. But Ashland's ability to run and get in transition also

See ROSS, Page 2B

Ross

Continued from Page 1B

factored in.

“That’s what we’ve been doing and we’ve been pretty effective doing it over the second half of the season,” Fralick said. “We’ve rededicated ourselves to pushing and pressuring defensively.”

Isaac White contributed 12 points, along with three steals. Brent Vipperman had 11 points to go with seven boards and four steals.

Gedeon, one of four seniors playing his final game for the purple and white, led Ross with 12 points and eight rebounds. Seniors Jarvis Jones and Drew Solander each had seven points inside, while senior wing Grant McConnell had five points and contributed seven boards.

“Obviously, we didn’t play well and we know we can play better than that,” coach Gedeon said. “We got ourselves an opportunity to play for a sectional title and I think our kids were excited by that.

“But ultimately, it comes down to who plays better basketball and I don’t think there was any question who the better team tonight was.”

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Ashland **19 15 21 14 — 69**

Fremont Ross **10 4 11 16 — 41**

Ashland

Logan Brewer 2 0 4, Grant Denbow 3 1 7, Drew Dickinson 3 0 6, Jonah Moretz 1 0 3, Trey Smith 6 3 18, Zach Stoops 1 1 4, Brett Vipperman 5 0 11, Isaac White 4 3 12, John Wolfe 1 2 4. Totals 26 10-14 69.

Fremont Ross

Jack Gedeon 3 4 12, Jarren Hampton 0 4 4, Brady Jagodzinski 1 0 2, Jarvis James 3 1 7, Grant McConnell 2 0 5, Tavarious Simms 1 0 2, Drew Solander 3 1 7, James Wright 1 0 2. Totals 14 10-16 41.

3-Point Goals - Ashland 7 (Jonah Moretz 1, Trey Smith 3, Zach Stoops 1, Brett Vipperman 1, Isaac White 1), Fremont Ross 3 (Jack Gedeon 2, Grant McConnell 1), **Rebounds** - Ashland 36, Fremont Ross 23.

Record: Ashland 12-11. Next: Mansfield Senior vs. Ashland at Galion Division I District Semi-Final, Thursday 7 p.m.