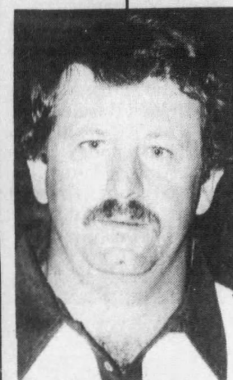


1983-1984 Season Review



JOHN SAWYER

ROSS'S BASKETBALL team for 1983-84 includes, front row, from left to right: Chris Simmons, Jim Hufford, Karl Bury, Ryan Smith and Thad Lee. Back row, from left to right: Dave Kovaleski, Mark Miesle, Shawn McCarthy, Greg Bender, Dan Brudzinski, Jeff Nossaman and Chuck Mamula.

'Rusty' Ross opens Friday night

By BOB MARKER

News-Messenger Sports Editor

Dogpatch, U.S.A., would look pretty nice to John Sawyer.

In Al Capp's friendly hillbilly setting, Sawyer, the Ross High School varsity basketball head coach, would have his "druthers." He'd "druther" have the basketball season for Ross open a little later, but Fremont is not Dogpatch and the Little Giants will open at Sandusky Perkins Friday evening.

"We are a bit rusty right now," Sawyer admitted. "We are about 50 per cent of what we should be."

Sawyer's program had to take a back seat because of Ross's success on the football this season and one team's success has hurt another team.

"We are behind," Sawyer pointed out, "especially the football players; they are not in basketball condition yet. The kids are a step behind right now."

To complicate matters, Sawyer said that point guard Jim Hufford may be forced to sit out the first two games this weekend. Port Clinton will follow the opener on Saturday and Hufford is questionable while he nurses a "turf toe" suffered in the football playoff game at

Dayton.

"With him in the lineup," the Ross coach explained, "the offense is more stable; we seem to run the offense slower and run it better. But I may hold him out so that he will be ready for Marion (the Buckeye Conference opener on Dec. 9)."

While Hufford is counted on by Sawyer to be the team leader this season, the Ross coach has a very tall assortment of players from which to form a lineup.

Besides Hufford, the key returnee for Ross is junior Greg Bender, an All-Buckeye Conference performer as a sophomore. The 6-4 Bender will start at a wing but can move down to the low post. The other wing for Friday will be 6-4 senior Dan Brudzinski while 6-2 junior Chris Simmons and 6-8 sophomore Shawn McCarthy will be in the low post positions.

Should Hufford be ruled out this weekend, junior Mark Miesle, 6-3, will step in.

Hufford, Bender, Simmons, Miesle and Brudzinski are returning lettermen.

Also figuring in at the point will be senior Ryan Smith with Jeff Nossman the replacement at the wings. Bender and Chuck Mamula, 6-2 junior, can be used at the posts.

Point men Thad Lee and Karl Bury, both 5-8 juniors, along with 6-3 sophomore Dave Kovaleski are on the varsity roster but will see most of their duty on the junior varsity level at the beginning of the season.

Sawyer pointed out that Hufford and Miesle could be used at the wing when Smith steps in at point guard.

"I may have to run more guys in and out more than usual the first part of the season," Sawyer explained, "until we get sharp. That will be good because it will give all the kids a chance to play."

Continuing, Sawyer pointed out, "We are going to have to work hard in practice and try not to get frustrated with our defense and ball handling."

"Right now, though, we are shooting the ball well and that is a pleasant surprise but after Tuesday's scrimmage against Fostoria, the kids pretty much realize that they have a lot of work to do."

About Perkins, the Ross coach said, "They are supposed to have their best team in the last 10 years. Right now they are playing like I hope we can by the middle of January."

Perkins falls in overtime 58-54

Bender's 30 paces Ross

By BOB MARKER
News-Messenger Sports Editor
SANDUSKY—Ross came out pretty well for playing half a ball game.

"Yeah," Coach John Sawyer grinned, "we had some mental mistakes in the first half, we ran our offense too fast, we were totally out of our game plan but we were still in the game."

That was the factor that pulled the Little Giants to a 58-54 overtime win over previously unbeaten (2-0) Perkins in a rough and tumble contest in the Pirates' cove.

Greg Bender, a 6-4 junior, tossed in 30 points including five in the overtime, to lead Ross to its season opening victory.

"I feel like I have been snakebit," Perkins Coach John Schlessman said. "This is the fifth game I have had against Buckeye Conference schools and I have not won any. We have lost four to Sandusky—the last two in overtime—and now this one."

Bender, hitting his career high for the Little Giants, canned eight of 22 in a mediocre shooting night but sank 14 of 17 free throws, four of four in the extra session. Mark Miesle, Bender's classmate, hit three off four free throws in the overtime, icing the contest with a pair 12 seconds from the end.

"We were not planning to go to Bender that much," Sawyer pointed out, "but he made things happen when he got the ball."

The biggest Bender happening was in the overtime when he stole a pass, raced three-quarters of the floor and jammed the ball to give Ross a 52-50 lead with 1:10 to play.

"That 'stuff' seemed to spur us on," Sawyer pointed out.

After the jam by Bender, Miesle hit one of two charity tosses but Perkins' Tony Green connected on a pair of free throws to cut the Little Giants' lead to 53-52 with 47 seconds left.

Bender followed with a pair of free tosses for a 55-54 lead but Green hit from the top of the key to trim the Little Giants margin back to one before Miesle hit the clinching shots.

Between both Bender's and Miesle's free throws, Sawyer called timeout.

"With the personnel I had in there," the Ross coach explained, "they were disorganized and I had to get the defense set up. I had confidence in Bender and Miesle that they would make the shots."

The biggest lead of the game was supplied by Perkins, 20-12, as Mark Speer's hot early shooting wilted the Ross zone. At the half, the Pirates held a 27-22 lead.

Two and one-half minutes into the second half, the Little Giants took their first lead, 28-27 on Dan Brudzinski's shot from the left of the circle. Speer's wiped that out with a pair of buckets but Ross regained the lead on Shawn McCarthy's tip and baskets by Bender and Brudzinski for a 34-33 advantage.

The Little Giants built up a 40-35 lead early in the final period but fell behind 45-44 when Mark Stair hit from long range with 2:45 to play in the game.

Bender got Ross back in the lead but one of two charity tosses by Speer deadlocked the game at 46-46 with 1:18 remaining. Bender hit two more free throws at the 1:14 mark but Green's bucket at the 52-seconds mark tied it at 48-48.

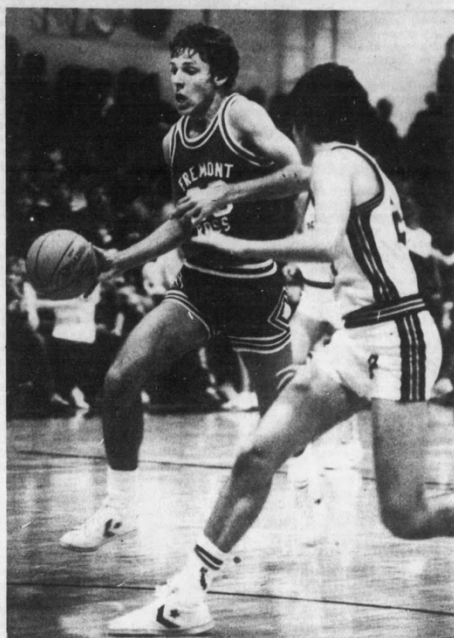
Perkins had a chance to win in regulation but Larry Roman's 22-footer was off the mark at the buzzer.

Gary Castle gave Perkins a 50-48 overtime lead but Bender matched that with two free throws before his steal and stuff.

Up 57-54, Ross's Jeff Nossaman wiped out any Perkins' prayers with a pass theft at midcourt before hitting one of two free throws with four seconds to play.

Ross hit 18 of 53 from the field and 22 of 27 at the foul line. Bender was 14 of 17 at the charity stripe. Perkins was 20 of 52 and 14 of 22 at the stripe. The Little Giants had 45 rebounds to Perkins' 29 as Bender grabbed 11, McCarthy 10 and Chris Simmons nine.

Ross had 22 turnovers and Perkins 13. The Little Giants played without regular point guard Jim Hufford who is nursing a "turf" toe suffered in the state football playoffs. Hufford will also sit out tonight's contest at Port Clinton.



GREG BENDER drives around a Perkins' defender during third quarter

(N-M photos by Bill Kennedy)

Redskins rip St. Joe 70-52

By TOM HOEPPF
PORT CLINTON — There's no place like home.

That's what the Redskins are saying and what Fremont St. Joe is looking forward to after Port Clinton blitzed the Crimson Streaks 70-52 in their Sandusky Bay Conference opener Friday.

Port Clinton plays its second home game Saturday against Fremont Ross, while St. Joe hosts Arlington.

Utilizing a full-court press, the Redskins bolted to a 7-0 lead before the turnover-plagued Streaks took their first shot. Denny Furlong hit a jumper from the foul line to put St. Joe on the board with 6:30 left in the first quarter, but the Redskins outscored them 13-2 over the next 4½ minutes to take a 20-4 lead.

St. Joe committed 12 turnovers the first quarter and took only six shots.

"We were out of it from the beginning," said St. Joe coach Biz Paeth. "We couldn't even catch the ball. We threw the ball where people weren't. It was like we were sleepwalking out there."

"It was a matter of them having a better floor game," he said.

St. Joe committed 31 turnovers to Port Clinton's 20.

"Our scouts told us that pressure would give them trouble and it did," said Port Clinton coach Tom Bodager, who could not recall one of his teams jumping to such a big lead in several years. What pleased him most was the fact they maintained it when he substituted heavily the remainder of the game.

"I'm trying to develop some bench strength and the kids have been working hard in practice. They deserve to play," he said.

Every Redskins player and all but two of them scored.

Paul Colston led the way with 20 points. Duane Norman tossed in 14 and Randi Lorenson added 10. Howard Walters had eight points for the second game in a row.

Eric Kuns was the lone bright spot for the Streaks. The 6-2 senior hit 8 of 13 field goal attempts and scored a game-high 22 points. Furlong added 10.

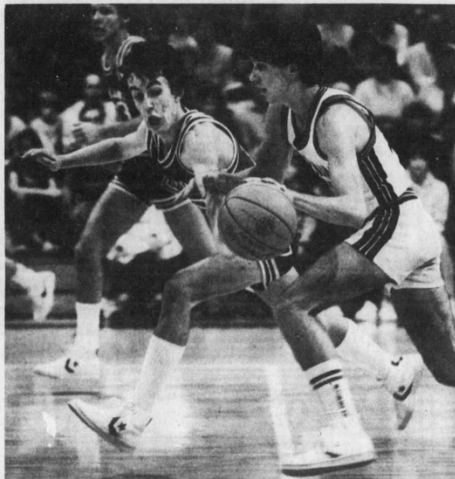
Port Clinton outrebounded the Streaks 34-29 with Doug Gels and Paul Colston grabbing six apiece. Joe Meyers had five for St. Joe.

The Redskins shot 45 percent from the field, hitting 27 of 62 attempts. They were 16 of 29 from the free throw line for 55 percent. St. Joe made 21 of 48 field goal attempts for 44 percent. The Streaks were 10 of 15 at the line.

Bodager said the Redskins played intently after a tough loss Tuesday to Oak Harbor.

"Our fastbreak came out of hiding. Of course the key to that was getting the rebounds. Doug Gels hit the boards, Duane Norman played his steady game at point guard and Randi Lorenson had a fine game," said Bodager. "It was a fun game."

The Redskins are 2-1 going into Saturday's home game against Ross, their first game against another Class AAA team. St. Joe is 1-1.



MARK MIESELE, left, of Ross reaches in while trying to steal the ball from a

Perkins player. A little later, Miesle was whistled for a foul.

Rogers among Saints in grand jury probe

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — George Rogers and six of his New Orleans Saints teammates told a federal grand jury on Friday what they know about a narcotics investigation, but U.S. Attorney John Volz said there is nothing to indicate any wrongdoing by any of the National Football League players.

Subpoenaed with Rogers to appear on Friday were fullback Wayne Wilson; defensive ends Frank Warren and Reggie Lewis; wide receiver Lindsay Scott, a first-round draft choice two years ago, and defensive backs Russell Gary and Rodney Lewis.

Citing rules of secrecy surrounding grand jury proceedings, Volz said he could provide no details of what Friday's testimony involved or what he hoped to prove.

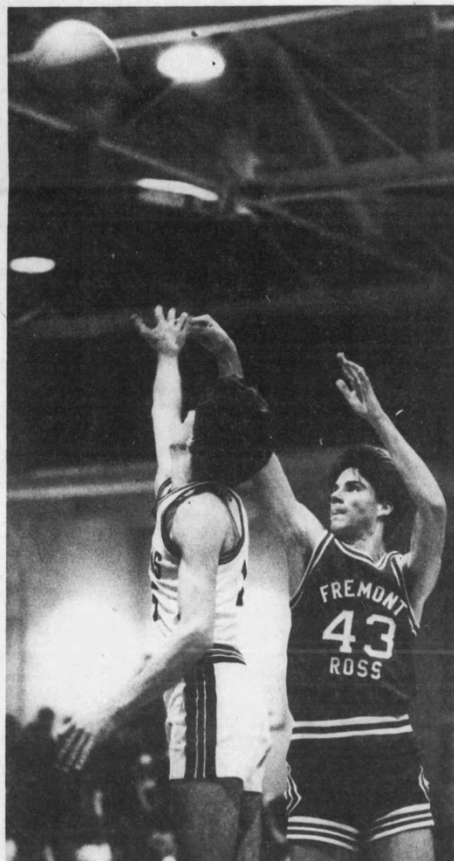
He did say there was nothing on which to prosecute any of the Saints under either federal or state law. "Perhaps it's somewhat unusual to

make that sort of comment," he said after the grand jury session. "I feel like in view of the speculation about the conduct of professional athletes, it's only fair to say that."

"I might also say there is absolutely no connection between this instance and what happened last year."

Last year, Volz prosecuted former Saints running back Mike Strachan, who pleaded guilty to charges of selling cocaine and conspiring to sell cocaine. Strachan is serving a 3-year sentence at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.

Rogers and Warren were among those listed as potential witnesses who would have been called to testify about cocaine purchases from Strachan, had the case gone to trial. During the Strachan case, Rogers checked into a drug rehabilitation clinic and later admitted he had used cocaine "recreationally." He said last year that he had sworn off drugs.



DAN BRUDZINSKI gets off a jump shot in the third period. The shot went

through for one of two buckets in the quarter for the Ross senior.

Ross 58

Perkins 54 (OT)

Score by quarters

Ross	10	12	16	10	10—58
Perkins	12	15	7	14	6—54

Scoring

ROSS: Greg Bender 8-14-30, Dan Brudzinski 3-0-6, Chris Simmons 0-0-0, Shawn McCarthy 2-0-4, Mark Miesle 4-1-3, Jeff Nossaman 1-3-5, totals 18-22-58.

PERKINS: Mark Speer 8-6-22, Larry Roman 1-1-3, Ken Nixon 1-0-2, Mark Stair 4-0-8, Tony Green 6-2-14, Gary Castle 0-5-5, totals 20-14-54.

Season records: Ross 1-0, Perkins 2-1.

JV game

Ross 44

Perkins 43 (OT)

Score by quarters

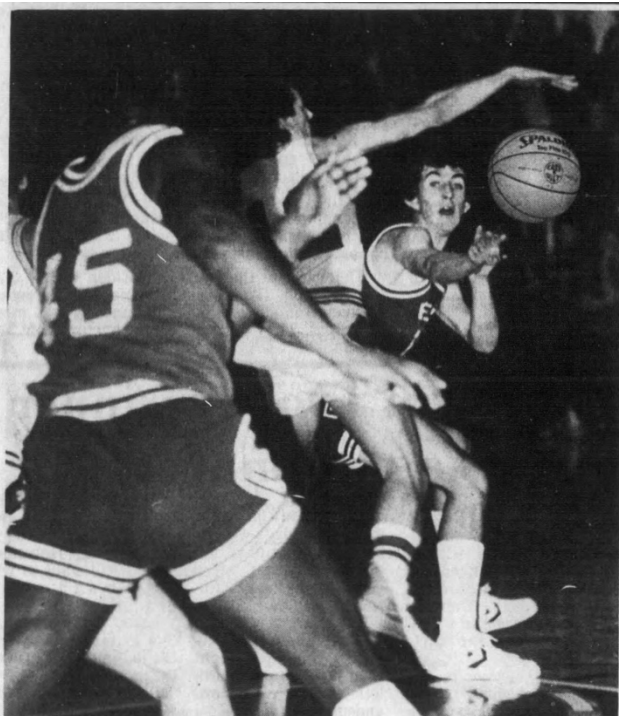
Ross	15	8	10	9	2—44
Perkins	11	8	13	10	1—43

Scoring

ROSS: Karl Bury 3-0-6, Thad Lee 2-0-4, Chuck Mamula 1-0-2, Gregg Gallagher 1-0-2, Dan Gangwer 1-0-2, Pat Hetricks 1-0-2, Stacy Johnson 5-0-10, Dave Kovalski 3-2-8, Bob Stout 3-0-6, Scott Weber 1-0-2, totals 21-2-44.

PERKINS: Rick Roll 1-1-3, Dave Darr 1-2-4, Mark Fry 3-5-11, Beaver Davis 0-1-1, S. Baumgardner 1-0-2, Bryan Skelton 6-8-20, totals 12-19-43.

Season records: Ross 1-0, Perkins 1-2.



MARK MIESLE of Ross gets off a pass toward Chris Simmons (45) during first half action Saturday at Port Clinton. The ball was batted away by a Port Clinton defender.

(News-Herald Photo)

PC on top

Bender tosses in 37 but Ross loses by 4

PORT CLINTON—Greg Bender had the hot hand but Port Clinton had the balance as the Redskins handed the Little Giants a 63-59 setback in high school basketball Saturday.

Bender, who scored 30 points Friday night in Ross's 58-54 overtime win over Perkins, pumped in 37 against Port Clinton. Nineteen of the 6-4 Ross junior's points came in the final eight minutes. He was 17 of 21 from the field.

"It was the best individual effort I have seen in a long time," Ross Coach John Sawyer said. "In that fourth quarter, he just took charge. I think he showed how good he really can be."

But while Bender was blitzing the Redskins, Port Clinton was forcing Ross into numerous turnovers with its press and tight defense.

"We had trouble with the press," Sawyer admitted. "We wanted to get the ball inside to Bender and McCarthy (Shawn) but we did not do it. We thought we could get them into foul trouble inside."

Instead of that, Port Clinton canned 17 of 26 free throws, 12 of 15 in the final period while the Little Giants made five of six.

"We went into a little delay in the last period," Port Clinton boss Tom Bodager pointed out. "We wanted to force them to foul us and we were able to make our shots when they did."

"Port Clinton did a nice job," Sawyer admitted. "their inside people scored and if we gave their guards daylight, they scored."

P.J. Colston tossed in 16 to pace the Redskins while teammates Duane Norman had 12, Randi Lorensen 11 and Howard Walters 10.

The Redskins got eight points and six rebounds from Doug Gels who did not play in the first half.

Port Clinton held a 22-16 lead after one period and was up 31-28 at the intermission. Heading into the final eight minutes, the Redskins had a 41-36 edge.

Ross took the lead briefly in the third period when Chris Simmons pulled down an offensive rebound and tossed in a turn-around jumper from the baseline to put the Little Giants ahead 34-33.

Walters sank back-to-back shots on assists from Colston and Gels popped through an 8-foot jumper for a 39-34 lead and the Redskins never trailed again. Colston tossed through a pair of free throws with 4:25 remaining in the final period to give PC its biggest lead of the night, 55-44.

Bender brought the Little Giants within three on a 16-foot jumper with just over a minute to play.

"I told the kids before the game I thought it was going to be close and that it was going to be a tough, physical ball game," Port Clinton Coach Tom Bodager said. "In all fairness to Ross, they haven't had that much time to practice together as a team and they came off a tough overtime win against Perkins Friday night." — BOB MARKER

Port Clinton 63

Ross 59

Score by quarters

Ross	16	12	8	23—59
Port Clinton	22	9	10	22—64

Scoring

ROSS: Greg Bender 17-3-37, Chris Simmons 1-2-4, Shawn McCarthy 2-0-4, Mark Miesle 1-0-2, Dan Brudzinski 3-0-6, totals 27-5-59.

PORT CLINTON: P.J. Colston 4-8-16, Eric Freimark 1-4-6, Howard Walters 5-0-10, Randi Lorensen 4-3-11, Doug Gels 4-0-8, totals 23-17-63.

Season records: Port Clinton 3-1, Ross 1-1.

JV game

Ross 38

Port Clinton 31

Score by quarters

Ross	7	2	13	16—38
Port Clinton	8	11	4	8—31

Scoring

ROSS: Dave Kovalesski 4-1-9, Karl Bury 5-1-11, Lee 0-1-1, Chuck Mamula 1-1-3, Stacy Johnson 3-0-6, Hetrick 2-0-4, Gallagher 1-0-2, Gangwer 1-0-2, totals 17-4-38.

PORT CLINTON: Dave Monk 6-4-16, Tim Wight 1-1-3, Dave Franck 1-1-3, Troy Johnson 2-5-9, totals 10-11-31.

Season record: Ross 2-0.

Marion spoils Ross's opening BC contest

MARION—Ross opened the Buckeye Conference basketball season on a sour note Friday, losing to a methodical Marion Harding team 50-41.

It was the second straight loss for the Little Giants after opening with a win eight days ago.

Harding, paced by Rod Collins and Dave Sprague, never trailed in the contest, taking an 8-4 lead after one period and stretching that lead to 17-12 by the half.

Harding began with a press that bothered the Little Giants.

"Yeah, it (press) bothered us," Ross Coach John Sawyer admitted, "it took us out of our offensive plan. We had Bender (Greg, who entered the game with a 33.5 scoring average) inside but we could not get him the ball."

Harding dominated the boards in both halves of the contest, finishing with a 32-19 advantage and took advantage of 27 opportunities at the foul line, sinking 16. Ross had a five of eight performance from the charity stripe.

"We have 21 fouls called on us and 10 on them," Sawyer mused.

Ross mounted a charge midway through the final quarter before chasing Marion back into its deliberate style. With 3:44 to play, Ross trailed by a 38-34 count. That was as close as it could get, as Sprague led a procession to the foul line to hold off the Little Giants.

Bender, a 6-4 junior, took only three shots in the first half, scoring four points. In the second half, Bender scored 16, 12 in the final eight minutes.

"That was when we were pressing," Sawyer pointed out. "We were not in our offense..we were just getting the ball to him."

Mark Miesle was the only other Little Giant in double figures, canning a dozen.

"Really, there is not much else I can say about it."

Harding hit 17 of 36 shots and 16 of 27 at the line while Ross was 18 of 42 from the field. Dan Brudzinski was the leading rebounder for Ross, hauling in seven.

In the junior varsity game, Ross won its third without a loss, dropping Harding 44-26.

Stacy Johnson tossed in 11 points and Pat Hetrick added 10 for the Little Giants JVs.

Varsity game

Marion 50

Ross 41

Score by quarters

Ross	4	8	8	21—41
Marion	8	9	16	17

Scoring

ROSS: Greg Bender 9-2-20, Jim Hufford 2-2-6, Mark Miesle 6-0-12, Dan Brudzinski 0-0-0, Chris Simmons 1-0-2, Shawn McCarthy 0-1-1, totals 18-5-41.

MARION: Rod Collins 7-1-15, Jerry Carter 0-2-2, Dave Lehner 5-1-11, Fritz Wink 1-1-3, Dave Sprague 3-9-15, Lester Hill 1-2-4, totals 17-16-50.

Season records: Marion 2-1 (1-0), Ross 1-2 (0-1).

JV game

Ross 40

Marion 26

Score by quarters

Ross	16	8	10	6—40
Marion	10	5	2	9—26

Scoring

ROSS: Dave Kovalski 1-0-2, Karl Bury 1-0-2, Chuck Mamula 3-0-6, Stacy Johnson 4-3-11, Bob Stout 1-1-3, Pat Hetrick 5-0-10, Greg Gallagher 1-0-2, Scott Webber 1-0-2, totals 18-4-40.

MARION: Mario Castaneda 1-2-4, Skip Calbert 4-0-8, Alan O'Niell 1-0-2, Tim Hord 2-0-4, Matt Alexander 1-0-2, Charlie Reece 2-1-5, Rich Gherman 0-1-1, totals 11-4-26.

Season records: Ross 3-0, Marion 0-3.

Little (big) Giants slay Rockets

By BOB MARKER
News-Messenger Sports Editor
OAK HARBOR—Dave Christie would have liked to have had a slingshot.

"It was that giant that killed us," the diminutive Oak Harbor basketball coach exclaimed after watching his team fall to Fremont Ross 65-57 Tuesday night.

Actually, Christie admitted later, it was two Ross giants, 6-8 sophomore Shawn McCarthy and 6-4 junior Greg Bender, that caused the Rockets to fail in its attempts at repeating a victory pulled off by David many years ago.

McCarthy, after scoring nine points in his first three varsity games, canned 22 against the Rockets and Bender, who had entered the game with a 29-point average, had 20.

"I told my kids before the game that if we hold Bender to 20," Christie explained, "that we would beat them. Well, we held Bender to 20 but no one told me that 6-8 kid was going to do that."

The win leveled Ross's record at 2-2 while Oak Harbor is now 4-2.

Both Bender and McCarthy hurt the Rockets defensively, too, combining for eight blocked shots between them. Bender plagued Oak Harbor all-Ohio candidate Don Christie from his point spot in Ross's 1-2-2 zone defense while McCarthy and 6-2 Chris Simmons intimidated the Rockets on the inside.

"Bender hurt Donnie (Christie) out front," the elder Christie admitted. "Their size intimidated us—my big kids, not my little kids."

"This is the first good team effort we have had this year," Ross Coach John Sawyer smiled. "We played well defensively and I felt we handled the press well."

"We turned the ball over but not against the press but rather when we beat the press, we turned it over too much in the transition into our offense."

Ross trailed only briefly in the contest: 2-0, 6-4 and 8-6. The Little Giants took the lead 12-10, and stayed at least even, for good on McCarthy's tip with two minutes remaining in the first period. The Rockets rallied to tie it at 17-17 on Mike Thorbahn's bucket three minutes into the second period but that was the last time Oak Harbor was even.

The Little Giants led 28-25 at the half after leading by as many as six, 26-20.

Bender had 10 points in the first eight minutes and 12 in the first half while McCarthy had six first half points.

In the third period, Oak Harbor

charged to within one at 30-29 on buckets by Thorbahn and a pair of free throws by Christie before Ross began to gradually pull away.

It was 49-37 at the end of three periods and the Rockets were not able to get any closer than six the remainder of the contest.

McCarthy had eight points in both the third and fourth quarters and Jim Hufford, still recovering from a sore toe, had eight second half points to finish with 10 for the game.

"Shawn played ball tonight (Tuesday)," Sawyer praised. "He showed what he is capable of doing by working and practicing at it."

While McCarthy drew the Ross coach's praise, he was just as pleased with the efforts from the four players he brought off the bench.

"Those guys—Dan Brudzinski, Jeff Nossaman, Thad Lee and Bubba Smith—all helped at the right times," Sawyer said and then expounded on Lee's assignment.

"Lee did a good job on Christie when we went into a diamond and one defense. Thad was on him and even though Christie scored some, Thad made him work hard for his points."

That special Ross defense was put into play when Coach Christie made a change he said was made too late.

"The best move we made, I made too late," he second-guessed. "We put Donnie down in the corner because Bender was hurting us out front." Don Christie finished with 23 points but he was only seven of 24 from the field and had four shots blocked. Manny Johnson, after getting a pair of his shots "jammed" by McCarthy and Bender in the first half, came off the bench in the second half to score 12 points, several on short jumpers and four more on a pair of hook shots. Johnson finished with 15 points.

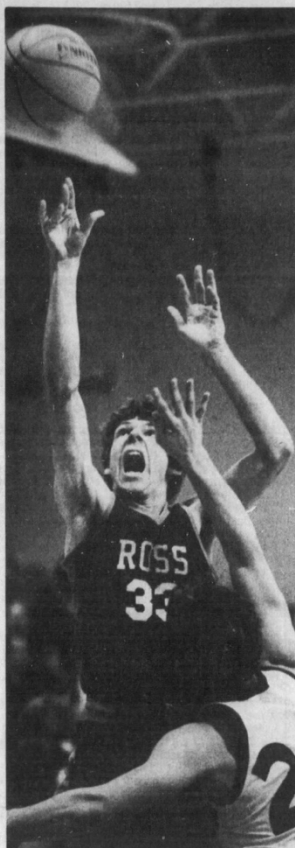
"Ross is a good team," Coach Christie said, "and if they play like this, they will beat some people."

The Oak Harbor coach stopped and smiled before concluding, "I wish we had gotten them earlier."

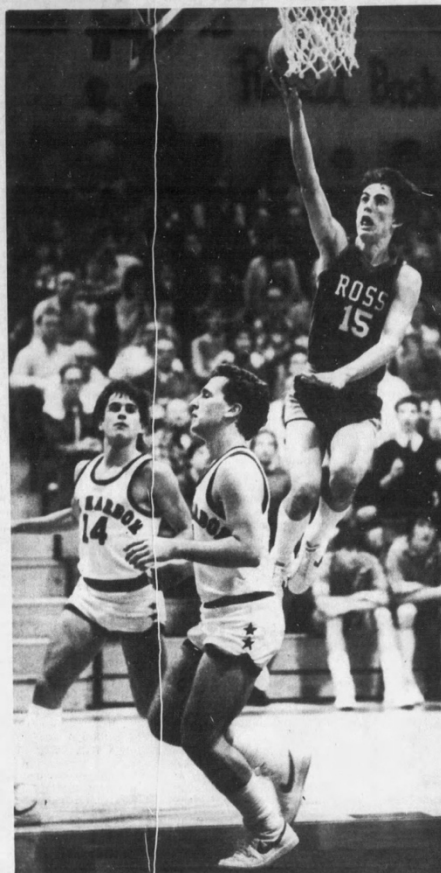
The game had originally been scheduled for Nov. 22 but was postponed because of Ross's involvement in the state football playoffs.

Statistically, Ross hit 20 of 50 shots and Oak Harbor 21 of 50. Ross won the game at the line, hitting a sizzling 25 of 32 while Oak Harbor was 15 of 21. The Little Giants held a 44-28 edge in rebounding with Simmons and McCarthy getting 11 apiece.

In the junior varsity game, Stacy Johnson hit one of two free throws with two seconds remaining to give Ross a 45-44 win.



GREG BENDER of Ross gets off a jump shot over an Oak Harbor defender during the Tuesday game at Oak Harbor High School.



(N-M photos by Bill Kennedy)

TWO POINTS! Oak Harbor defenders Don Christie, foreground and Dave Weirich (14) run past Mirk Miesle of

Ross as he drives in for a layup during second half action. Miesle scored on the easy shot.

GOODYEAR

High school

Varsity game

Ross 65

Oak Harbor 57

Score by quarters

Ross	15	13	21	16—65
Oak Harbor	10	15	12	20—57

Scoring

ROSS: Greg Bender 6-8-20, Jim Hufford 3-4-10, Shawn McCarthy 8-6-22, Chris Simmons 1-3-5, Mark Miesle 2-2-6, Thad Lee 0-1-1, Dan Brudzinski 0-1-1, Jeff Nossaman 0-0-0, Ryan Smith 0-0-0, totals 20-25-65.

OAK HARBOR: Don Christie 7-9-23, Manny Johnson 7-1-15, Dave Weirich 2-2-6, Dan Weirich 1-0-2, Dennis Schiets 2-0-4, Bill Detzel 0-1-1, Mike Thorbahn 2-0-4, Doug St. Clair 0-2-2, totals 21-15-57.

Season records: Ross 2-2, Oak Harbor 4-2.

JV game

Ross 45

Oak Harbor 44

Score by quarters

Ross	11	12	8	14—45
Oak Harbor	8	18	12	8—44

Scoring

ROSS: Karl Bury 4-2-10, Chuck Mamula 1-0-2, Gregg Gallagher 1-0-2, pat Hetrick 3-3-9, Stacy Johnson 4-4-12, Dave Kovalski 4-2-10, totals 17-11-45.

OAK HARBOR: Dave Woolley 1-1-3, Scott Beck 2-1-5, Phil Corbin 1-0-2, Neil Harder 5-0-10, Duane Weirich 7-10-24, totals 16-12-44.

Season records: Ross 4-0, Oak Harbor 2-4.

Phi Slamma Jamma starts new chapter at Ross



MEMBERS OF the Ross Phi Slamma Jamma Chapter are, front row, left to right: Dan Brudzinski, Shawn McCarthy and Dave Kovaleski; back row:

Jim Hufford and Greg Bender. To belong to the fraternity, players must be able to dunk a basketball in practice.

(N-M photo by Bill Kennedy)

By BOB MARKER
News-Messenger Sports Editor
Phi Slamma Jamma.
That's Greek to many but not to the University of Houston and Fremont Ross.

Fremont Ross?
Yeah...Ross.
Akeem Abdul-Olajuwon is the catalyst of a group of Texas basketball players who made that unofficial fraternity—Phi Slamma Jamma—famous. The Houston group jammed basketballs down through basketball hoops at such an alarming rate, that the name caught on.

This fall, a charter for a new chapter was drafted at Ross.
Brian Wilch, the junior varsity coach for the Ross Little Giants basketball team, started the Ross chapter of Phi Slamma Jamma, a select group that has five members.

"The idea of the chapter," Wilch explained, "was just to be a test of jumping ability. Then it was to sit aside an elite group of individuals."

The Ross five has a special plaque hanging in the high school gym above the southeast entrance.

The elitist of the elite is Greg Bender.
"Bender is the president of the chapter," Wilch, who has to be tagged the "Jamma Daddy", said.

Why?
"Because he is the only one to dunk a ball in a game."

With Bender the leader, members of the Ross chapter are seniors Dan Brudzinski and Jim Hufford, and sophomores Shawn McCarthy and Dave Kovaleski. Bender is a 6-4 junior while McCarthy is the tallest at 6-8. Brudzinski is 6-4, Kovaleski 6-3 and Hufford, 6-2, if you let the tape measure sag.

"Actually," Wilch explained, "being in the group proves that they have worked on their

jumping ability and for one high school team to have five kids who can jam the ball, that's kind of rare."

Wilch, who in the 6-4 range, can stuff the ball and he claims that is not as easy to do as it appears.

"I show them the finer points of it," he explained. "You have to have the steps down right before you can jam it. You just don't run down the floor and jam it through."

To qualify for Phi Slamma Jamma, players have to be able to dunk the ball in practice.

"McCarthy and Thad Lee," Wilch pointed out, "have the best vertical leap on the team...31 inches and that helps to dunk."

Don't look for Lee to join the Phi Slamma Jamma. ...he's listed at 5-foot-8, but that is debatable.

"The ultimate test for the members of the group," Wilch said, "is to get one in a game. When you jam one in a game, it has to be a sure thing and you have to know when to do it. It's hard enough to get a clear layup in a game let alone go up and dunk it."

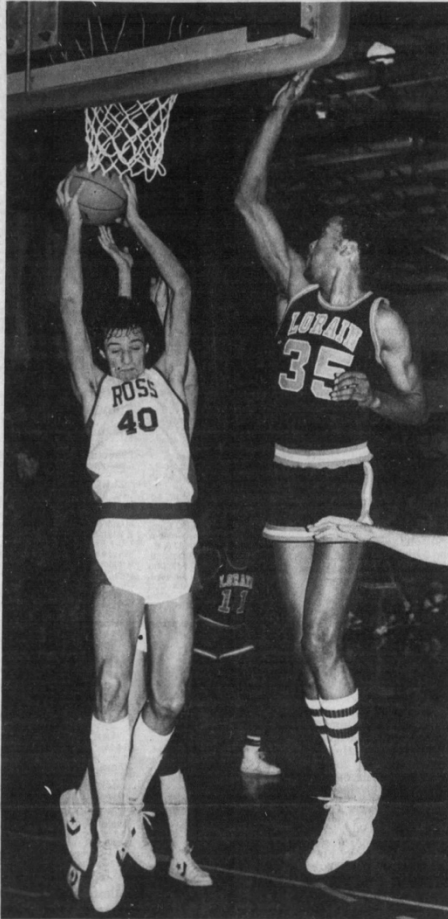
Bender and McCarthy have the green light to dunk Wilch said but added that he felt Hufford and Brudzinski probably would not try it in a game. The four are members of the varsity while Kovaleski is on the junior varsity squad.

"I told Kovaleski if we got a big lead in a reserve game, we would let him take off early and let him try it, but it's going to have to be a big lead," Wilch smiled.

Wilch discounted the slam as a cocky move, reversing back to it being a test of jumping ability but added, "When a kid jams the ball in a game, it really gets the crowd and the team up."

The Ross Phi Slamma Jamma Chapter will have a chance to show its stuff this evening when Lorain Senior comes to town to help Ross open its home season.

Lorain ruins Ross's home opener 63-47



SHAWN MCCARTHY (40) of Ross pulls down a rebound despite pressure from Lorain's Edward Wright during third-quarter action at Ross Friday.

By BOB MARKER
N-M Sports Editor
John Sawyer and Dale Reichert had a difference of opinions.

"I think their quickness intimidated us," Sawyer, coach of the Ross High School basketball team said.

"I think we intimidated Ross with our jumping ability," Reichert, Sawyer's counterpart for Lorain senior, theorized.

Whichever coach was right, and Reichert had a few too many (W)rights for Ross to be right, the Steelmen humbled the Little Giants 63-47 in the Little Giants' season home opener. Lorain climbed to 5-1 overall and 3-1 in the Buckeye Conference while Ross stumbled to 2-3 in dropping to 0-2 in conference clashes.

Edward Wright and Wardell Wright, an uncle and nephew act, respectively, along with Thyrin Wright, no relation, bullied the Little Giants offensively and defensively.

Edward Wright outdid his uncle with 21 points but Uncle Wardell helped the Steelmen control the backboards while scoring eight.

Thyrin Wright had only two points but was a key element in the Steelmen's skin tight 1-2-1-1 full court press.

So tight was Lorain's defense that Ross

missed its first eight shots and had only four field goals in the first half. Shawn McCarthy's layup off an inbound play under the Ross bucket gave the Little Giants their first field goal at the 2:07 mark of the first quarter.

Ross's Greg Bender, a 6-4 junior averaging more than 26 points per contest, was held scoreless in the first half by Edward Wright. The Steelmen slipped into a man-to-man defense when Ross got across midcourt with Wright picking up Bender. So well was Wright handcuffing Bender that it was not until 1:15 remained in the third period before the Little Giant hit his only field goal of the game. Bender finished with four points.

The Little Giants trailed 14-5, thanks to 35-foot jumper by Edward Wright at the buzzer, after the first eight minutes. It did not get any better for the Little Giants in the final 24 minutes. Ross trailed 30-13 at the half and 47-26 at the end of three quarters.

The only bright spots for Ross was the play of 6-8 sophomore McCarthy and the 14 points tossed in by reserve Jeff Nossaman.

"The big kid inside intimidated us a little," Reichert admitted.

"Shawn held his own in their," Sawyer said.

Nossaman was seven of 11 from the field, mostly from the 20-25 foot range. He was the only Little Giant in double figures. Ryan Smith, another reserve, had seven and McCarthy ended up with six.

With 5:48 remaining in the contest and Lorain up 52-32, Sawyer conceded by sending in all his reserves.

"We figured that if we were more than 10 points down going into the fourth quarter, we would pull them (first teamers) and rest them for Saturday (tonight against Findlay) and give the other kids a chance to play," Sawyer said and added, "We cannot play catch-up against a team as quick as Lorain."

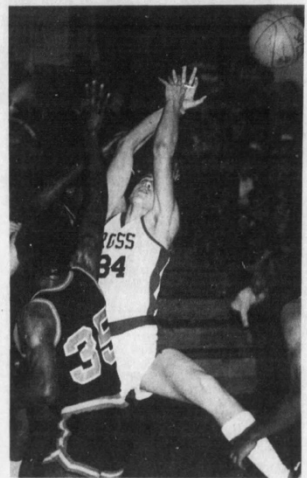
Reichert savored the win, especially since it came on the heels of a 56-42 loss to crosstown rival Admiral King Tuesday.

"This is the fourth Buckeye Conference game that we have played," he explained, "but it is the first one that we played halfway decent."

"We are very pleased with the improvement we had over Tuesday."

Sawyer pointed out that the Lorain quickness took Ross out of its game plan.

"They were able to



DAVE KOVALESKI (34) of Ross loses control of the ball as a result of pressure from two Lorain defenders, including Edward Wright (35).

overplay us so much that they force us out of offense. They kept Bender away from the boards," the Ross coach said, "and defensively, we were checking the guy who got the ball and as a result they were getting a lot of layups."

Lorain finished with 26 of 58 from the field

while Ross was 17 of 49. Lorain outrebounded Ross 30-22 and survived 23 turnovers. Ross had 21 turnovers.

In the junior varsity game, Ross lost 48-38, its first loss in five games. Karl Bury had 12 points for Ross and Jason Williams 28 for Lorain.

Mezinger lone Little Giant in semis

TOLEDO—Mike Mezinger is the lone Fremont Ross wrestler remaining in the championship round of the Rogers Holiday Invitational Wrestling Tournament.

Mezinger, a junior, won the 105-pound division crown in last year's tournament but is wrestling in the 112-pound division in this tourney.

Seeded second in the division, Mezinger had a pair of pins on the first night. He stopped Josh Franklin of Marion Harding in three minutes and 17 seconds in his first match and came back in the second round to pin Dave

Weber of Maumee in 2:21.

In today's semifinal round, Mezinger will take on third seeded Duane Piper of Ottawa-Glandorf.

The team leader in the 16-team field is host Rogers with 100½ points. Wauseon is second with 78½ while Springfield is third with 64½. Anthony Wayne is fourth at 62½, while Toledo Macomber is fifth with 47.

The second five, in order, are Oregon Clay, Maumee, Tiffin Columbian, Lima Shawnee and Findlay. Ottawa-Glandorf, Whitmer, Ross (25), Toledo Scott, Marion Harding and Eastwood

round out the standings.

Ross lost two wrestlers in the competition but have competitors in the consolation rounds at 105 (Charlie Hicks), Mel Clark (119), Dave Middleton (132), John Lozano (138), Kit Sultz (155), George Weisinger (167), Todd Beatty (175), Matt Smith (185) and Andy Chambers (HVY).

Ross Coach Al Voggenthaler pointed out that his young team ran into several top seeded wrestlers in the preliminary rounds.

Wrestling begins at noon today with the finals at 7 p.m.

High school

Varsity game

Lorain 63

Ross 47

Score by quarters

Lorain	14	16	17	16	—63
Ross	5	8	13	21	—47

Scoring

LORAIN: Wardell Wright 4-0-8, Ed Wright 10-1-21, Thyrin Wright 0-2-2, Cleave Johnson 0-3-3, Jimmy Lee Moore 5-2-12, Joel Hartman 2-0-4, Joe Serfozo 1-1-3, Jim Seronka 3-0-6, Kevin Curry 1-0-2, Rob Hendershot 1-0-2, totals 26-11-63.

ROSS: Greg Bender 1-2-4, Jim Hufford 1-1-3, Shawn McCarthy 2-2-6, dMark Miesle 2-0-4, Chris Simmons 0-2-2, Jeff Nossaman 7-0-4, Thad Lee 0-1-1, Dan Brudzinski 2-3-7, Ryan Smith 2-0-4, Dave Kovaleski 0-2-2, totals 17-13-47.

Season records: Lorain 5-1 (3-1), Ross 2-3 (0-2).

JV game

Lorain 48

Ross 39

Score by quarters

Lorain	11	9	13	15	—48
Ross	4	7	13	15	—39

Scoring

LORAIN: Carson Coates 2-2-6, John Curry 0-2-2, Dennis Hughes 0-1-1, Mike Randle 2-2-6, Andy Strauser 2-1-5, Jason Williams 10-8-28, totals 16-16-48.

ROSS: Karl Bury 4-4-12, Chuck Mamula 4-1-9, Pat Hetrick 1-5-7, Stacy Johnson 1-1-3, Dave Kovaleski 2-2-6, Scott Weber 1-0-2, totals 13-13-39.

Season records: Lorain 5-1, Ross 4-1.

Big Findlay run KOs Ross 76-48

By BOB MARKER

News-Messenger Sports Editor

FINDLAY—Eric Vickers and Jim Arnold set Ross up in the first half and Chad McClellan delivered the knock-out punch in the third period as the Trojans rolled up a 76-48 Buckeye Conference victory over the punchless Little Giants Saturday at Findlay High School.

Vickers, a 6-5 jumping jack, playing what his Coach Roger Renz termed as not a good game, led the Findlay victory with 17 points while Arnold broke double figures for the first time this season, scoring 16. McClellan added 15.

Ross never led in the contest and the game was over four minutes into the second half.

Leading 30-23 at the intermission, Findlay ran off 14 straight points and built up a 43-23 lead before Ross moved the figures on the scoreboard in the second half. Jeff Nossaman's bucket with 4:15 remaining in the third period was the Little Giants' first score but the handwriting was on the wall as Ross fell to 2-4 and 0-3 in the conference.

Findlay is 5-2 and 2-2 in BC play.

At first, Ross Coach John Sawyer hesitated to say anything about his team's second straight humbling loss. Friday, Lorain had handed the Little giants a 63-47 setback.

"I don't have any words to describe it," Sawyer said sadly.

"I don't know how these guys get so bad over a year ago especially when this summer they played more than they ever had before. Tonight, it was a disgraceful game.

"We have guys who cannot catch the ball or play defense. Our problem right now is finding five guys by Wednesday who want to play ball."

Ross will travel to Sandusky that night for another conference clash. The game had originally been scheduled for Tuesday but was moved back when it conflicted with another activ-

ity at Sandusky.

Vickers scored 12 first half points and Arnold 10 as Findlay built up a 31-23 lead at the half. Vickers had 32 points and 19 rebounds Friday in a win over Sandusky.

"Vickers has helped us a little," Renz smiled, "but he really did not have that good a game."

Vickers, a junior, transferred into Findlay from Cadiz this summer.

Ross had six turnovers in the first four minutes of the second half and the Trojans cashed in on four of them. Arnold started the run with a bucket seconds into the period. McClellan followed with a basket and a pair of free throws to make it 37-23.

Chris Weaver stole the ball on an inbounds pass off Findlay's press to make it 39-23 and McClellan connected again for a 41-23 Trojan lead. Joe Plott got the last points of the runs before Nossaman hit Ross's first basket.

Sawyer, after that run, began searching for combinations to get the Little Giants moving. None worked as the Trojans' biggest lead was the final score.

"We did not play the Little Giants tonight," Renz contended. "We got them in a downhill night. When Hufford (Jim) gets back to 100 per cent and McCarthy (Shawn) gets more experience and with Bender..., well, they have all that potential and will be better."

The Findlay coach admitted that, although his press which denied the inbounds pass, did not produce many steals, it kept the Little Giants out of any offensive patterns.

"We wanted to put the pressure out front and make them work hard. We just never let them get into their offensive flow," Renz said.

Hufford and McCarthy sat out the majority of the second half during Sawyer's fruitless search. Bender was lifted early in the final period after scoring 23 points.

High school

Varsity game

Findlay 76

Ross 48

Score by quarters

Ross	10	13	13	12—48
Findlay	14	17	27	18—76

Scoring

ROSS: Greg Bender 8-7-23, Jim Hufford 3-0-6, Shawn McCarthy 2-0-4, Chris Simmons 0-0-0, Mark Miesle 1-0-2, Dan Brudzinski 2-2-6, Thad Lee 0-1-1, Jeff Nossaman 2-0-4, Ryan Smith 0-2-2, totals 18-12-48.

FINDLAY: Eric Vickers 8-1-17, Joe Plott 1-2-4, Jim Arnold 6-4-16, Chris Weaver 3-2-8, Chad McClellan 5-5-15, Rich Baerwaldt 2-0-4, Scott Fryer 1-2-4, Dale Parries 1-6-8, totals 27-22-76.

Season records: Findlay 5-2 (2-2), Ross 2-4 (0-3).

JV game

Findlay 58

Ross 46

Score by quarters

Ross	13	7	17	9—46
Findlay	7	16	21	14—58

Scoring

ROSS: Karl Bury 7-5-19, Chuck Mamula 1-2-4, Craig Mosser 0-1-1, Dan Gangwer 1-0-2, Dave Garcia 1-0-2, Pat Hetrick 3-0-6, Stacy Johnson 1-1-3, Dave Kovalski 2-4-8, Scott Weber 0-1-1, totals 16-14-46.

FINDLAY: Darick Ammons 3-2-8, Jim Gibesn 4-6-14, Jim Shaffer 1-0-2, Stan Mizerny 0-2-2, Mark Ritzler 2-7-11, Mark Rsoynon 1-0-2, Kevin Curth 3-1-7, Mike Bihn 3-6-12, totals 17-24-58.

Season records: Ross 4-2, Findlay 2-5.

Sawyer back to basics; Wolf wants regular 5

By BOB MARKER

News-Messenger Sports Editor

John Sawyer is returning to the basics while Sue Wolf is hoping to return to her regular lineup as the Ross girls and boys basketball teams hit the boards tonight.

The Little Giants are at Sandusky in a Buckeye Conference test while the Lady Giants travel to Toledo to play the Central Catholic girls.

Sawyer, after watching his team score 95 points in two weekend losses while slipping to 0-3 in the BC and 2-4 for the season, predicted there would be a "different" Ross team against Sandusky.

"We had a real, good hard physical practice Monday," Sawyer pointed out, "plus we had a team meeting.

"I think the whole problem was lack of discipline on and off the court," the Ross coach explained. "A lot of it was my fault; I went too easy on them after football. I would have liked to give them a week off but I couldn't.

"The team meeting was about a lot of little things like not taking scouting reports home when they should to study them; not talking on the bus ride to a game and fooling around on the bus.

"Now we are going back to like it was before. We are going to assign seats on the bus and do the things we did the last two seasons.

"The practices are going to be more physical and perhaps a little longer. You will see a different team," Sawyer promised. "A team that will play with more emotion and enthusiasm; one on which the kids care what they do."

Sawyer will have a revamped lineup for Sandusky. Thad Lee will start at the point guard slot with Jim Hufford and Mark Miesle on the wings. Greg Bender and Shawn McCarthy will be in the low post spots.

Not in the starting lineup for the first time this season is junior Chris Simmons.

"Ironically," Sawyer explained, "Simmons has been working harder and looking better in practices this season but he has been having his problems in games. I am going to let him study the game at the start and see what he can do coming off the bench."

The Lady Giants are on a three-game winning streak while owning a 6-2 record this season. The last two wins have been without 5-11 senior Tina Michael, the team's leading scorer and rebounder.

"Hopefully," Wolf said, "she can play Wednesday (today). She has a brace on her ankle to protect it but it is up to her parents to give the okay for her to play.

"She is still going to go to Columbus for more examinations on the ankle," the Ross coach pointed out.

Wolf described Central Catholic as a good defensive team that rebounds exceptionally well. That is a key reason why Wolf would like to see Michael back in the lineup.

"Central uses a full court man-to-man press," Wolf explained. "It's a 'deny' defense with pressure everywhere. We are going to have to handle the press and get into our offense plus hit the boards hard."

Ross has beaten Port Clinton 47-21 and Columbian 55-46 in the games without Michael but Wolf said her team did not control the boards, instead, several players picked up the slack in other facets of the game.

"Katie (Marritt) and Sue (Gahn) have picked up the (scoring) slack," Wolf said, "and because Tina has been out, I think it has forced Diane Harms, Denise Wilkins and Shelly Leggett to improve."

Expected to start against the unbeaten Central team, if Michael is not in the lineup, are Marritt at the point, Lisa Luman and Leggett at the wings with Harms and Gahn in the low posts.

The junior varsity game begins at 6 p.m. at Central.

Ross overcomes bad start to drill Streaks

By BOB MARKER
News-Messenger Sports Editor
SANDUSKY—Five minutes into the game, Ross basketball Coach John Sawyer was having flashbacks...bad flashbacks.

Sawyer's Little Giants, fresh off an 0-2 weekend in which Ross scored only 95 points, trailed Sandusky 14-2 with 1:35 remaining in the initial quarter. It was a characteristic start that had plagued the Little Giants in their four losses.

The Little Giants and Sandusky were 0-3 in the Buckeye Conference and Ross was 2-4 and the Blue Streaks 2-3 for the season. It was a battle of the BC's doormats and Ross was giving all signs of being walked on again.

Yet, despite that dismal start, Sawyer's grief was turned to smiles as a rejuvenated Ross squad blitzed Sandusky in the second half and won going away 70-58.

An 11-point run by the Little Giants in the final period, which broke the game open, highlighted a 46-point second half and brought smiles to Sawyer's face.

"This," Sawyer beamed, "was a nice Christmas present. I tell you, this was a nice win."

"This is an indication the kids want to play; how they can play," Sawyer continued. "They really wanted it tonight."

At the beginning it was not apparent that Sawyer's charges wanted anything. Five out of the first six Ross possessions resulted in turnovers and eight Sandusky points. A timeout at the 3:27 mark changed little as the Blue Streaks finished a 10-point run for a 14-2 lead.

Six Ross points, buckets by Dan Brudzinski, Greg Bender and Mark Miesle, began to change Ross's outlook.

Sawyer began shuffling his lineup midway through the first period. He inserted Brudzinski into the lineup for 6-8 sophomore Shawn McCarthy and brought Chris Simmons, dropped from the starting lineup for the first time this season, in for Mark Miesle. The next step was Ryan Lee for stater Thad Lee and the Ross coach had a lineup that carried him to the midpoint of the final period.

With the last three baskets of the first period, the Little Giants ran off six more points, two buckets by Bender and a two Jim Hufford free throws, to deadlock the Blue Streaks at 14. By the half, though, Sandusky had a 10-point run and grabbed a 33-24 lead.

"We did not talk strategy at halftime," Sawyer disclosed. "We talked about doing what we tried to do

in the first half. We had not been faking before we passed in the first half and in the second half we began to do that. The big difference in the second half was that we executed what we were trying to do in the first half."

The Little Giants came out with a vengeance in the third quarter and Bender was the catalyst, hitting 10 straight points on his way to a 29-point night. By the time Sandusky was able to score on a pair of free throws by Paul Moore, the Little Giants had taken a 37-33 lead. Sandusky was to lead just twice more—48-47 and 50-49—midway through the final period.

Sawyer had promised Ross fans a new attitude would be visible after the Little Giants had absorbed the two weekend losses.

"New attitude? I don't know," the Ross coach admitted. "For some reason, they came out to play in the second half. I think they went into the game ready to play but when they turned the ball over, you could see the heads begin to go down but then, our defense got us back into it."

Sawyer stayed almost exclusively with his "pick-up" lineup until he brought in McCarthy and Miesle for Brudzinski and Smith, respectively, midway through the final period. McCarthy responded with two blocked shots and two baskets, one on a "stuff" that put Ross up 66-56 and took the air out of the Blue Streaks.

The Little Giants, after falling behind 50-49, took the lead on Brudzinski's bucket with 4:40 remaining. Hufford followed with two free throw (the Ross co-captain was six of eight from the charity stripe in the final quarter) before Robert Hunter's basket made it 53-52 for Ross.

That was it for Sandusky as the Little Giants scored the next 11 points for a 64-52 lead with 56 seconds left in the contest.

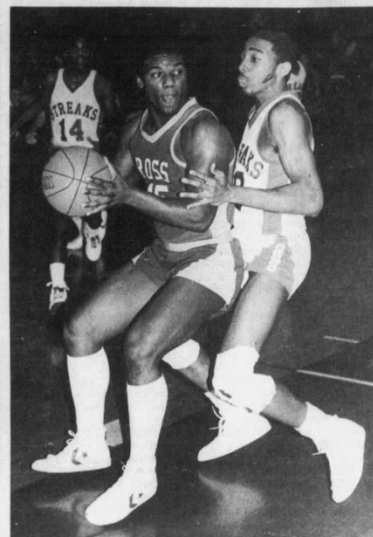
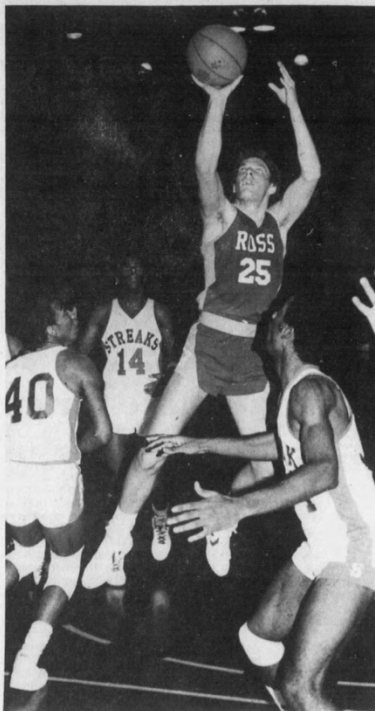
Bender led Ross's scoring with Hufford canning 12 and Brudzinski 10.

"Brudzinski, Simmons and Smith played very well for us," Sawyer said about his three subs who produced 21 points. All three rebounded well and Smith came up with three steals in the third period.

Moore was high for Sandusky with 22 points.

Ross was 28 of 52 from the field, grabbed 35 rebounds to Sandusky's 24 and committed 23 turnovers, 17 in the first half. Sandusky was 23 of 55 from the field and had 19 turnovers.

Ross is idle until Dec. 27 when Elyria visits Fremont for a conference game.



(N-M photos by Bill Kennedy)

JIM HUFFORD (25), left, of Ross, leaps above three Sandusky defenders during a third quarter scoring play Wednesday at Sandusky High School. Darren Jordan (40), David Belle (14) and Robert Hunter are the Blue Streaks players. In the top photo, Chris Simmons of Ross looks for a teammate after grabbing a rebound away from Jordan.

Lady Giants bombed by TCC

TOLEDO—Sue Wolf minced no words when talking about Toledo Central Catholic.

"They killed us on the boards," the Ross girls basketball coach said after her team was drilled by the Lady Irish 56-23.

Central, 7-2, outscored the Lady Giants, 6-3, 40-16 in the second half after holding a 16-7 halftime edge.

"We just did not get many shots off either," Wolf pointed out, "but it was their offensive rebounds, especially in the third quarter, that killed us."

Ross sank just nine of 29 shots and only three Lady Giants scored. Katie Marritt, who had 28 points in Ross's 55-46 win over Columbian Saturday, did not get a point.

Sue Gahn had 13 and Tina Michael, after missing two games because of an ankle injury, dropped in nine.

In the third period, Central, with Martha Kondalski scoring six, Mary Sullivan and Gretchen Kraus four each, outscored Ross 22-8.

"Their pressure defense," Wolf

explained, "took us out of our offense. We would beat the press but never get into our offense when we got downcourt."

Peggy Holmes paced Central to the runaway win with 14 points while Kraus ended up with 11.

Central hit 21 of 54 shots and outrebounded Ross 30-19. Ross had 27 turnovers, three more than Central. The Lady Irish canned 14 of 17 free throws and Ross, five of 15.

The next outing for Wolf's team is Dec. 29 when Clyde visits Fremont.

High school

Varsity game

Ross 70

Sandusky 58

Score by quarters

Ross 8 16 21 25—70

Sandusky 14 19 10 15—58

Scoring

ROSS: Greg Bender 13-3-29, Jim Hufford 2-8-12, Shawn McCarthy 3-0-6, Thad Lee 0-0-0, Mark Miesle 1-0-2, Dan Brudzinski 5-0-10, Chris Simmons 2-0-4, Ryan Smith 2-3-7, totals 28-14-70.

SANDUSKY: David Belle 1-2-4, James Keyes 2-1-5, Darren Jordan 2-0-4, Paul Moore 7-8-22, Brian Watson 5-1-11, Robert Hunter 6-0-12, totals 23-12-58.

Season records: Ross 3-4 (1-3), Sandusky 2-4 (0-4).

JV game

Sandusky 42

Ross 34

Score by quarters

Ross 8 6 10 10—34

Sandusky 8 13 8 13—42

Scoring

ROSS: Karl Bury 7-0-14, Chuck Mamula 2-0-4, Pat Hetrick 4-1-9, Stacy Johnson 3-0-6, Scott Weber 0-1-1, totals 16-2-34.

SANDUSKY: La Mar Brown 1-0-2, Chris Williams 2-0-4, Derrick Keys 1-0-2, Michael Sanders 6-3-15, Eric Jordan 3-0-6, Luis Guevara 1-3-5, Brian Cooper 4-0-8, totals 18-6-42.

Season record: Ross 4-3.

Elyria knocks off Ross

By BOB MARKER
N-M Sports Editor

Elyria repelled a final quarter Ross charge to hand the Little Giants a 70-61 Buckeye Conference basketball loss Tuesday at Ross High School.

The Little Giants, trailing by as many as 19 points with five minutes to play in the contest, roared back to trail by 64-59 with a half minute to play before the Pioneers were able to pull off their sixth victory in eight games while running the Elyria conference mark to 4-1. Ross slipped to 3-5 and 1-4 in BC play.

Ross's final quarter surge was a marked contrast to its play in the first 24 minutes of the contest. Instead of the lethargic pattern displayed by the Little Giants' offense that plagued Coach John Sawyer's team for three quarters of the contest, Ross turned on a running, scrambling, break-neck offense for the final eight minutes.

It caught Elyria by surprise admitted Coach Keith Sooy and left Sawyer wondering if he should insert that style into the Little Giants' offensive scheme.

"We had a zone (defense) team in a man-to-man," Sooy explained, "but we did not attack it."

Ross, with Greg Bender scoring 16 of his game high 22 points in the final eight minutes, outscored the Pioneers 29-22 but a 48-32 deficit entering the quarter was too much for the Little Giants' charge.

"Maybe," Sawyer said painfully, "we may have to start off running like that to get the players into the game."

Elyria, paced by a quartet of double figure scorers, trailed briefly, 8-4, in the contest. An eight-point Pioneer run, with Jeff Thomas getting a pair of baskets, put Ross down 12-8 at the end of the first period.

Chris Fields and Mike Martin combined for 15 of Elyria's 19 second quarter points as Ross's

sleeping offense dug a 31-18 hole at the half.

"I thought we played good defense in the first half," insisted Sawyer. "What bothered me was our board play. I thought they got a lot of three-point plays (Elyria had five for the game) and that hurt us."

"They were shooting from outside," the Ross coach pointed out about Elyria's early offensive tactics, "and we were content to let them do that because you are not going to lose many games to a team that shoots out there. What bothered me was they were getting the second and third shots."

"Our kids thought they were boxing out but they were right under the bucket and instead

of knocking those guy out of there, they were going up, slapping the wrists and getting called for fouls. I would just as soon see them get called for fouls by knocking guys out of the way, not by just slapping the wrists."

With Ross charging, Thomas, who ended up with 19 points, stepped in to douse the Little Giants hot streak. In the final 30 seconds and Elyria up 64-59, Thomas hit a pair of free throws and a basket to take the game out of reach.

Thomas was high for Elyria with Fields ending up with 17 while Jared Wilbanks added 14 and Mike Martin 12.

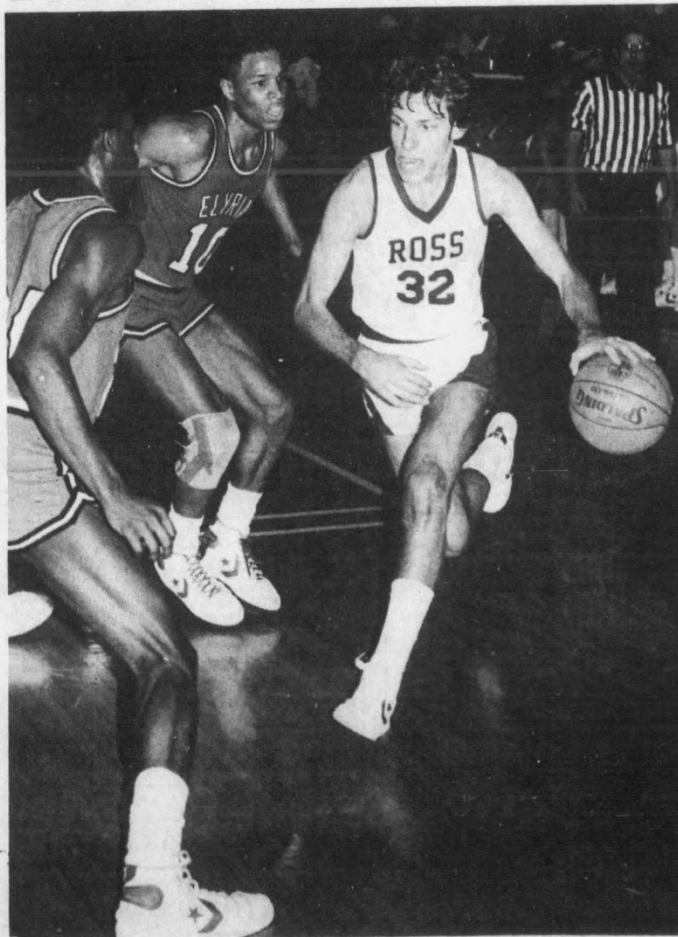
Bender was high man for Ross with Mark Miesle getting 10.

Elyria was 26 of 51 from the field and Ross 26 of 58. The Pioneers hit 10 of 16 final quarter free throws and 18 of 27 for the game to get the winning edge at the line. Ross finished with nine of 13.

Sawyer turned in his thoughts toward Ross's next opponent, undefeated Admiral King, 8-0, on Jan. 6 at Lorain.

"The next one is not going to be easy," he understated. "I guess, after tonight, I will have to try to figure out a new lineup."

In the junior varsity, Ross snapped a three-game losing streak with a 41-27 waltz past the Pioneers. Tracy Johnson paced Ross, 5-3, with 15 points.



GREG BENDER (32) of Ross starts to drive against against Elyria's Brian Rogers (10) and Chris Fields during

third quarter action Tuesday at Ross High School.

Varsity game

Elyria 70

Ross 61

Score by quarters

Elyria	12	19	17	22	—70
Ross	8	10	14	29	—61

Scoring

ELYRIA: Jeff Thomas 7-5-19, Jared Wilbanks 5-4-14, Chris Fields 7-3-17, Mike Martin 4-4-12, Brian Rogers 2-1-7, Kevin Brubaker 0-1-1, totals 26-18-70.

ROSS: Greg Bender 9-4-22, Jim Hufford 2-0-4, Shawn McCarthy 2-0-4, Mark Miesle 5-0-10, Dan Brudzinski 3-0-6, Chris Simmons 2-0-4, Ryan Smith 2-5-9, Thad Lee 0-0-0, Jeff Nossaman 1-0-2, totals 26-9-61.

Season records: Elyria 6-2 (4-1), Ross 3-5 (1-4).

JV game

Ross 41

Elyria 27

Score by quarters

Elyria	6	5	10	6	—27
Ross	12	10	13	6	—41

Scoring

ELYRIA: Ed Taylor 1-0-2, Rich Runser 0-2-2, Bill Alston 2-0-4, Harrison Jackson 1-1-3, Lamar Jackson 3-0-6, Corey Williams 1-0-2, Ed Uzynski 0-1-1, Chris Gubeno 2-1-5, Glen Arbough 1-0-2, totals 11-5-27.

ROSS: Karl Bury 3-2-8, Chuck Mamula 1-0-2, Gregg Gallagher 2-0-4, Pat Hetrick 2-0-4, Stacy Johnson 5-5-15, Dave Kovaleski 4-0-8, totals 17-7-41.

Season records: Ross 5-3, Elyria 2-6.

Giants turn cold, fall to Admirals

LORAIN — Admiral King took advantage of a cold shooting Ross team in the second half to post a 62-38 Buckeye Conference basketball win here Friday.

The Admirals, 10-0 and 5-0 in conference play, outscored the Little Giants 14-4 in the third period after holding a slim 24-21 lead at the intermission.

Ross made just two of 11 third quarter shots to allow the Admirals to pull away.

"They were decent shots, too," Ross Coach John Sawyer said, "but we would miss and they would come down and score."

In the final period, Admiral King marched to the foul line as Ross fouled attempting to catch up. Admirals' substitute Adrian Harris hit 10 of 11 free throws in the final quarter as Ross was outscored 24-13.

"We were in the ball game at the half," Sawyer explained, "but we

came out in the third quarter and could not make the shots. It's hard to play catch-up against them."

Admiral King hit 20 of 56 shots in the contest and 22 of 32 free throws in what Sawyer termed a "very physical game." Ross shot 27 per cent on 13 of 48 from the floor while hitting 12 of 19 foul shots.

The Little Giants committed 23 turnovers, nine in the second half.

"Their press did not hurt us," the Ross coach explained. "We would make it up the floor and then lose it on a dropped pass."

Despite the loss, Sawyer felt his team played respectable.

"We played a good first half and pretty good second half except we did not make the shots."

Greg Bender of Ross was the leading scorer in the game with 14 points. Ron Williams tied Harris for Admiral King honors with 10. Ten Admirals scored.

Admiral King 62

Ross 38

Score by quarters

Ross	12	9	4	13—38
Admiral King	14	10	14	24—38

Scoring

ROSS: Greg Bender 5-4-14, Jim Hufford 1-0-2, Dan Brudzinski 1-0-2, Chris Simmons 2-3-7, Ryan Smith 1-3-5, Mark Miesle 2-1-5, Jeff Nossaman 0-0-0, Dave Kovalski 0-0-0, Chuck Mamula 1-1-3, totals 13-12-38.

ADMIRAL KING: Paul Gensler 4-1-9, Ron Williams 3-4-10, Bob Calamari 2-1-5, Dave Urbanek 1-2-4, Steve Davis 3-0-6, Gary Patton 1-0-2, Scott Zimmerman 4-0-8, Adrian Harris 0-10-10, Dave Bansek 2-2-6, Tim Gerek 0-2-2, totals 20-22-62.

Season records: Admiral King 10-0 (6-0), Ross 3-6 (1-5).

JV season: Admiral King 52-30.

Ross gets a night off before facing Tiffin

By BOB MARKER

News-Messenger Sports Editor

Maybe John Sawyer was thinking about a night off this Friday.

He was smiling and that occurrence has been a rarity this season for the Ross High School basketball coach. His team is 3-6 and 1-5 in the Buckeye Conference after drawing rave pre-season reviews.

"We know we are not going to win the Buckeye Conference," Sawyer admitted Tuesday before practice, "but I think we can come out of the season with a .500 record and be right on track at tournament time."

Sawyer can wait until Saturday before seeing if his Little Giants are ready to get back on track. That night, he will guide his charges against up and down Tiffin Columbian at the Tornadoes' home.

Columbian is 5-6 but holds second in the Northern Ohio League race with a 5-1 mark.

While Columbian concerns Sawyer, the biggest challenge facing Ross is getting back to the .500 mark. "And that is a long way off," the Ross coach smiled. "First, we have to get number four!"

Ross is coming off a 62-38 loss to unbeaten, 10-0, Lorain Admiral King but despite the lopsided score, Sawyer contended his team played well.

"That third quarter," he explained, "when we made only two of 11 shots

stopped us. The score was not like it indicated.

"In that third quarter, we would miss and they would come down and score. We missed several layups that hurt us but we showed some improvement."

Ross trailed the Admirals 24-21 at the half.

"It was nice to see the kids work so hard at Admiral King," Sawyer continued. "The guys were diving for the ball...actually going right into the stands for it and we have not had that type of effort for quite awhile."

"I just told the kids to go out and play as hard as they could and that I was not going to bitch at them. I just wanted them to have fun."

The new Sawyer strategy worked to his liking except for the poor shooting.

"Our press looked okay and we got the ball out and ran well except for the missed layups."

Ross has been hampered this week by illness and nagging injuries but Sawyer was able to come up with a tentative lineup should everyone be healthy Saturday.

Greg Bender, Ryan Smith, Mark Miesle, Dan Brudzinski and Jim Hufford will take the opening tip but Miesle was not in school Tuesday and may be questionable Saturday. Sophomore Shawn McCarthy missed the Admiral King job and is still bothered by a congested chest this week.

Little Giants slither past Tornadoes

By ROB BOUKISSEN
News-Messenger Sports Writer

TIFFIN — The Ross Little Giants probably won't win any beauty awards for their 56-55 victory over Tiffin Columbian here Saturday night, but that doesn't bother Coach John Sawyer.

"I know it was a ragged ball game," said Sawyer, "but I was pleased with our effort, especially down the stretch. Hopefully, this win will give us some confidence, because Columbian is not a bad team."

The victory for Ross ended a modest two-game losing skid and upped its record to 4-6 while the loss for the Tornadoes, who dropped a 56-51 overtime heartbreaker to state power Willard Friday night, put their mark at 5-8.

Greg Bender was the big man for the Little Giants, scoring 19 points and pulling down 15 rebounds. Seventeen of his points came in the second half, including two clutch free throws that eventually proved to be the game-winners.

Playing key supporting roles to Bender's lead were Ryan Smith, Jim Hufford and Chris Simmons.

Smith scored 10 points, handed out seven assists and pulled down nine rebounds. Hufford added eight points and five assists and Simmons grabbed 13 rebounds.

The reason the game appeared so ragged, as Sawyer put it, was because neither team ever seemed to get it in full gear. As a result, it was a fairly close game all the way.

Columbian jumped out to the early lead 8-4 with 3:44 left in the first quarter. But then the Tornadoes went ice cold, failing to score a point over the next 7½ minutes of action. Ross took advantage of that drought to grab a 17-8 lead midway through the second quarter.

The Tornadoes finally found their shooting touch to charge back into a 19-19 tie late in the half before Ross scored the last three points to take a 22-19 edge into the dressing room.

The game stayed tight the entire third period and then began to open up a bit in the fourth quarter in Ross's favor.

The Little Giants used baskets by Hufford and Bender and a foul shot by Hufford to go up 49-41 with 2:32 left in the game.

Right then, it appeared as if Ross had things under control. But Columbian wasn't about to give up.

The Tornadoes, despite giving up two breakaway layups by Mark Miesle off their full-court press, managed to cut their deficit to one point, 54-53, on a rebound basket by Mark Cunningham with 35 seconds left.

The Tornadoes pressed again on Ross's next possession, but once again they left an opening. Bender found the seam and headed for the basket. He went up for the shot and was fouled.

Bender didn't make the shot, but he did nail both free throws to give Ross a 56-53 lead with 24 seconds left.

Columbian quickly came back with a rebound basket by Robbie Paul with 17 seconds remaining to cut it to 56-55. The Tornadoes then intentionally fouled Jeff Nossaman with seven seconds left.

Nossaman missed both free throws, but Columbian's final chance to win it came up short when Al Hostetler's shot from the top of the key hit the front of the rim and bounced away as the buzzer sounded.

Sawyer wasn't pleased that his players left their eight-point lead slip away, but he didn't put all the blame there.

"It seemed like no calls were going their way at the end," said Sawyer, expressing displeasure at the officiating. "We wanted to go into our four-corners offense, but we couldn't get the ball down the court."

"The kids just hung in there and pulled it out." The statistics battle, like the final score, was close. Ross shot 46 percent (24 of 52) from the field to Columbian's 45 percent (22 of 49). Ross outrebounded the Tornadoes 33-31, and Ross committed 17 turnovers to Columbian's 13.

Cunningham led Columbian with 15 points. This was the second game Ross played with 6-8 sophomore Shawn McCarthy, who is expected to be out for maybe two more weeks with a lung problem, according to Sawyer.

Basketball

Ross 56

Columbian 55

Score by quarters

Ross	7	15	18	16	—56
Columbian	8	11	16	20	—55

Scoring

ROSS: Jim Hufford 3-2-8, Jeff Nossaman 3-1-7, Ryan Smith 5-0-10, Greg Bender 8-3-19, Chris Simmons 2-2-6, Mark Miesle 3-0-6, totals 24-8-56.

COLUMBIAN: Al Hostetler 4-0-8, Kevin Leahy 2-3-7, Bill Myers 4-0-8, Mark Cunningham 5-5-15, Robbie Paul 5-2-12, Ric Snyder 1-0-2, Clay Lewis 1-1-3, totals 22-11-55.

Season records: Ross 4-6, Columbian 5-8.

JV game

Ross 36

Columbian 35

Score by quarters

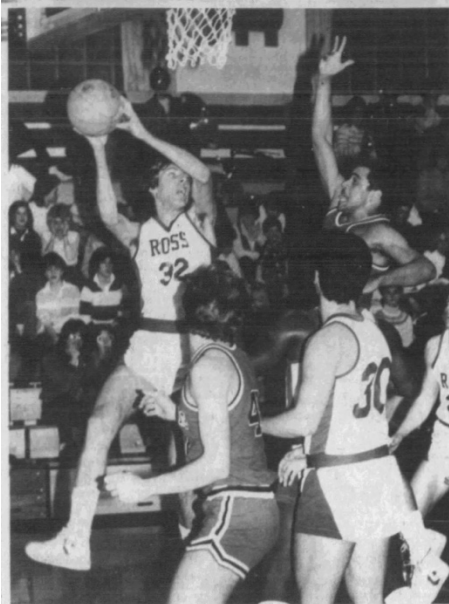
Ross	1	7	14	14	—36
Columbian	4	10	11	10	—35

Scoring

ROSS: Karl Bury 2-2-6, Chuck Mamula 3-4-10, Gregg Gallagher 1-2-4, Dan Gangwer 0-1-1, Pat Hetrick 1-2-4, Dave Kovaleski 4-1-9, Matt Reed 0-2-2, totals 11-14-36.

COLUMBIAN: Scott Whiteman 1-3-5, Jeff Bierly 4-0-8, Paul Dentinger 1-2-4, Rod Kagy 4-1-9, Brian Daniel 1-2-4, Brian Briggs 1-3-5, totals 12-11-35.

Season record: Ross 6-4.



GREG BENDER (32) of Ross looks for an open teammate during action Friday night against Marion Harding at Ross High School.

Bears handle Streaks

CASTALIA — It took the Margaretta Polar Bears awhile to get going, but once they started there was no stopping them as they pulled away to a 77-35 SBC victory over St. Joe Friday night.

The game was deadlocked at the end of the first stanza, but midway through the second quarter the Bears kicked it into high gear and rattled off 12 straight points.

The Streaks, although down by 10 at the half, were still not out of the game. But Margaretta came out from the intermission and picked up right where they left off. By the end of the third quarter the Bears led by 22 and St. Joe was out of the

hunt.

Margaretta had three men in double figures — Jim Bodey with 20, Aaron Kromer 13, and Randy Fredrick 10.

Eric Kuns was once again the leader for the Streaks. Kuns scored 22 points and grabbed eight rebounds. Teammate Denny Furlong added 10 points for St. Joe.

The loss for the Streaks ended their two-game winning streak and dropped them below the .500 level at 4-7. The Streaks are 2-6 in the SBC. Margaretta moves to 6-5 on the season and 5-3 in the conference.

Ross nips Harding in OT

By BOB MARKER
News-Messenger Sports Editor
Ryan "Bub" Smith sank two free throws with 16 seconds remaining in overtime to push Ross to a 46-45 Buckeye Conference basketball victory over Marion Harding at Ross High School Friday.

It was only the third time that the Little Giants led in the game, and, logically, according to Ross Coach John Sawyer, "came just in time." Sawyer, whose club climbed to 5-6 with a 2-5 conference slate, had Jim Hufford and Smith, both seniors, juniors Mark Miesle and Greg Bender and sophomore Stacy Johnson in the lineup when the final buzzer preserved the Ross win.

"We had, what we thought," Sawyer said, "a lineup that could score. We had guys on the bench who could rebound in Chris Simmons and Jeff Nossaman, but were were four or five points down when we took them out and put in Miesle and Johnson."

"If we had gotten even or a point ahead, I would have put the rebounders back in," the Ross coach said, "but we never got there until just in time."

Smith's winning free throws were set up when he grabbed a rebound after Lester Hill of Harding missed a free throw with 18 seconds remaining in the overtime. The ball bounced into the corner where Smith grabbed it and was fouled by Dave Lehner.

The 5-10 Smith hit the first free throw for a 45-45 tie but had to wait, when, ironically, Sawyer called a timeout to set up his defense should Smith make or miss the second shot. He made the second and Ross survived a desperation last second shot from deep in the left corner by Harding's Rod Collins.

"We wanted to put pressure on the ball and then drop back into the '3-2' defense," Sawyer said about the timeout conversation. "We played good defense then but that guy almost made that shot; that's how I felt things were going for them in the game."

Harding, a 50-41 winner over Ross in the first meeting this season, bolted to a 24-10 lead with five minutes to play in the second period. That was the last time the Prexies were to score until Collins hit from the foul line at the 5:10 mark of the third period to give Harding a 26-20 lead.

Ross, with Bender and Hufford

providing the offense, tied Harding at 32-32 seconds into the final period when Miesle tipped in a Bender miss. Harding, with Fritz Wink hitting two free throws and a bucket and Dave Sprague sinking a free throw on a technical on Hufford, took a 37-32 lead with five minutes to play.

In the next three minutes, Ross went on a 7-1 scoring binge as Bender's two free throws gave the Little Giants their first lead 39-38. Sprague hit the first of four straight free throws and Hufford hit two straight baskets, the latter with 1:30 to play to tie the game at 43-43. Hufford's basket was set up on a pass to the base line by Johnson.

Harding went for the last shot, got it, missed and gave it up when Lehner was called for a charge on the rebound. Ross got the ball with one second remaining. After a timeout, Smith nearly gave Ross the win when his shot from 35 feet hit the back of the rim.

In the overtime, Hufford gave Ross a 44-43 lead with a free throw but Lehner came back with a pair for a 44-43 Harding lead with 2:36 to play. Harding had the ball at the 2:06 mark and ran the time down to 18 seconds when Smith fouled Hill to set the stage for his final free throws.

Despite falling behind by 14 in the first half, Sawyer was not unhappy with his team's play.

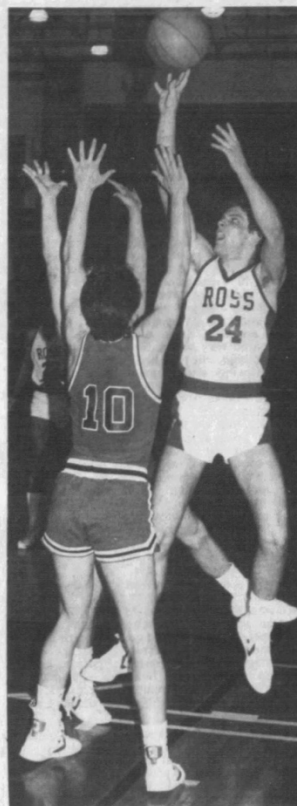
"I thought we did not play that bad," he explained, "but everything was going their way. At halftime though, the kids were still ready to play and they played in the second half. Hopefully, we can put together four quarters tomorrow night."

Ross will host Toledo Whitmer tonight.

Bender and Hufford had 16 points apiece for Ross while Sprague matched that for Harding. Lehner had 11 and Wink finished with 10 for the Prexies.

The Little Giants were 20 of 51 from the floor and six of eight at the line while Harding was 16 of 37 and 13 of 18. Ross, with Bender and Hufford getting six apiece, held a 31-28 rebounding edge.

In the junior varsity game, Ross won in overtime 37-35 as Gregg Gallagher sank a pair of free throws with four seconds remaining in overtime. Gallagher and Karl Bury paced the Ross JVs with nine points apiece.



(N-M photos by Bill Kennedy)

JIM HUFFORD (24) of Ross gets off a jump shot over Marion's Dave Sprague Friday night at Ross.

Basketball

Varsity game

Ross 46

Harding 45 (OT)

Score by quarters

Harding	13	11	8	11	2-45
Ross	6	10	14	13	3-46

Scoring

HARDING: Dave Sprague 5-6-16, Rod Collins 3-0-6, Dave Jones 0-0-0, Dave Lehner 4-3-11, Fritz Wink 3-4-10, Jerry Carter 1-0-2, totals 16-13-45.

ROSS: Greg Bender 7-2-16, Jim Hufford 7-2-16, Jeff Nossaman 2-0-4, Ryan Smith 2-2-6, Chris Simmons 1-0-2, Dave Kovaleski 0-0-0, Stacy Johnson 0-0-0, Mark Miesle 1-0-2, totals 20-6-46.

Season records: Ross 5-6 (2-5), Marlon Harding 3-9 (1-7).

JV game

Ross 37

Harding 35 (OT)

Score by quarters

Harding	10	8	4	11	2-35
Ross	8	8	10	7	4-37

Scoring

HARDING: Mario Castaneda 4-0-8, Kevin Jones 4-6-14, Martin Behm 0-2-2, Rich Gherman 1-3-5, Jeff Carville 2-0-4, Skip Calbert 0-2-2, totals 1-13-35.

ROSS: Karl Bury 3-3-9, Thad Lee 0-2-2, Chuck Mamula 2-2-6, Dave Kovaleski 2-0-4, Gregg Gallagher 3-3-9, Pat Hetrick 1-0-2, Bob Stout 2-1-5, totals 13-11-37.

Sweet odor turned sour for Sawyer

By BOB MARKER
News-Messenger Sports Editor

Just when John Sawyer thought things were smelling sweetly, he got a whiff of a distinct odor.

"We stunk up the gym," Sawyer, the Ross High School boys basketball coach said flatly after his team absorbed a 63-51 setback from Toledo Whitmer Saturday.

The Little Giants were coming off a modest two-game winning streak and had a shot at getting even at 6-6 for the season against the Panthers, now 5-9.

"I would think," Sawyer said evenly, "that with a 5 and 6 record, these kids would come out with fire in their eyes to get even."

The Little Giants did have fire in their eyes . . . for a minute and one-half when a pair of buckets by Jim Hufford and one by Jeff Nossaman gave Ross a 6-0 lead. By the end of the first period, however, Ross trailed 17-14 and was never in the lead again.

Paced by Dave Craig, Scott Grant and Steve Rutkowski, the Panthers bent but did not break in the third period. Ross tied the contest at the half 26-26 and tied the Panthers once more at 28-28 in the third quarter before Whitmer took the lead for good.

"We did not move on defense; we had a slow motion offense," Sawyer explained dejectedly. "We should have beaten this team."

Hufford scored all 10 of his points in the first quarter to keep Ross close. In the second period, Whitmer took a 21-16 lead before Ross got even at the half on Ryan Smith's layup off a pass from Mark Miesle.

The Panthers broke away in the third period after Ross had closed to within a point, 33-32. Don Brighton hit a free throw and followed with a basket for a 36-32 Panther edge. Craig came back with a three-point play — part of his game high 24 points — as Whitmer jumped to a 39-32 lead.

Miesle scored for Ross with 15 seconds to go in

the quarter but Craig's driving layup made it 41-34 at the end of the third period.

In the final quarter, Ross was unable to shrink the Panther lead to less than nine with the biggest Whitmer lead stretching to 15 on two occasions.

Sawyer, glancing over the stats, grimaced. "This is the fifth game where we have outgoaled (21-19) a team but lost," he pointed out.

"We shot 75 percent from the foul line (9 of 12) but we did not get there (to the foul line)."

Ross was 21 of 51 from the floor while Whitmer had 19 of only 35 shots. From the foul line, the Panthers had 25 of 33, including 9 of 10 by Grant. Ross had 29 rebounds, six more than Whitmer.

Greg Bender paced Ross with 17 points, 10 in the final quarter, and 15 rebounds. No other Little Giants scored in double figures. Grant ended up with 11 and Rutkowski 13 for Whitmer.

Ross gets back into Buckeye Conference action Friday, traveling to Lorain Senior. Saturday, Ross will host Toledo Woodward.

Varsity game

Whitmer 63

Ross 51

	Score by quarters			
Whitmer	17	9	15	22—63
Ross	14	12	8	17—51

Scoring

WHITMER: Don Brighton 1-2-4, Dave Craig 8-8-24, Scott Grant 1-9-11, Dave Ice 0-1-1, Mark Klem 1-0-2, Greg Knauss 1-3-5, Steve Rutkowski 6-1-13, Todd Wilson 1-1-3, totals 19-25-63.

ROSS: Dan Brudzinski 0-0-0, Jim Hufford 5-0-10, Jeff Nossaman 2-2-6, Ryan Smith 4-1-9, Greg Bender 7-3-17, Mark Miesle 2-1-5, Chris Simmons 1-0-2, Dave Kovaleski 0-0-0, Stacy Johnson 0-2-2, totals 21-9-51.

Season records: Whitmer 5-9, Ross 5-7.

JV game

Ross 35

Whitmer 34

	Score by quarters			
Whitmer	8	13	4	9—34
Ross	9	7	13	6—35

Scoring

WHITMER: Steve Agard 1-0-2, Steve Clay 1-4-6, Mark Eberlus 4-5-13, Jeff Keifer 3-5-11, Steve Shade 1-0-2, totals 10-14-34.

ROSS: Karl Bury 1-0-2, Thad Lee 0-0-0, Chuck Mamula 3-1-7, Gregg Gallagher 2-0-4, Pat Hetrick 3-1-7, Dave Kovaleski 1-3-5, Matt Reed 1-0-2, Bob Stout 2-2-6, Scott Weber 1-0-2, totals 14-7-35.

Season record: Ross 8-4.

Ross boys, girls in action

By BOB MARKER
News-Messenger Sports Editor

The Ross boys face a tough weekend while the girls basketball team will attempting to be average in an effort to turn the tables on Findlay this evening.

"We played poorly the first time we played Findlay," Sue Wolf, Ross girls coach said. "We shot poorly from the floor and from the line while they shot 51 percent from the floor and 87 percent at the line but still, we only lost by 10 points (65-55)."

The first meeting of the team was a non-Buckeye Conference clash but this time around, it will count. Ross is 8-5 overall but 1-2 in the conference while Findlay is 12-2 for the season.

"If we play our average," Wolf theorized, "it should be a good game. I think if we play our average, we should beat them."

Wolf will keep her normal lineup of Katie Marritt at point guard, Lisa Luman and Shelly

Leggitt at the wings with Sue Gahn and Tina Michael in the low post positions.

Friday, Sawyer will take his boys team to the Lake Erie coast to play the Lorain Senior Steelmen.

"It's going to be a tough weekend for us," Sawyer said about the task facing his 5-7 team. "Saturday, we have Woodward—we have not had a chance to see them—and I hear that they are very tough this year."

Woodward will visit the home of the Little Giants.

Lorain has used the "Wright Attack" in rolling to an 11-2 (6-2 in the conference) season. Ed Wright scored 21 points and got rebounding and defensive help from his uncle, Wardell and Thyrine (no relation). In the first meeting of the teams, Ross outscored Lorain 34-33 in the second half but a poor first half chopped the Little Giants down

63-47.

"The first time we played them," Sawyer pointed out, "they made only three shots outside of the 'key'. We are going to try to pull it in tight with the '2-3' zone this time.

"We have to control Ed Wright and keep them from getting the second and third shots," Sawyer explained.

Sawyer said he has decided on four of his five starters—Greg Bender, Jim Hufford, Ryan Smith and Dave Kovaleski. The latter is a 6-3 sophomore who will be starting his first varsity game. The fifth spot will be filled by either Jeff Nossaman, Mark Miesle or sophomore Tracy Johnson.

Ross will continue to be without the services of 6-7 sophomore Shawn McCarthy. Sawyer said McCarthy is expected to be able to come back to practice after battling chest congestion the past two weeks.

Wright's 36 dumps Ross

LORAIN — Ed Wright scored 36 points as Lorain beat back Ross 78-62 in a Buckeye Conference basketball game Friday.

Wright, a 6-6 senior guard, hit 10 straight free throws, stole the ball and stuffed it in the final four minutes to pull the Steelmen away from the Little Giants. With 3:59 to play, Ross trailed by a 59-57 count. A five-point Lorain run forced Ross to foul Wright.

"They kept getting the ball to him," Ross Coach John Sawyer pointed out, "and we had to foul him while attempting to get the ball."

The Little Giants, 5-8, led the bigger part of the first 20 minutes of the contest, holding a six-point lead—31-25—at halftime. In the second half, Wright scored 24 points as the Steelmen outscored Ross 53-31.

"We played a good game," Sawyer insisted. "I felt we played good defense with our diamond and one on Wright even though he got 36 and we played good offense. We only got out of our offense a couple of times."

Wright scored 47 points Tuesday night in a 72-46 win over Elyria Catholic.

Sawyer, because of a disciplinary problem involving four players before the game, used just six players in the contest. He refused to mention names, saying only that the players would be in uniform ready to play for tonight's game against Woodward in the Ross High School gym. The junior varsity game begins at 6:15 p.m.

Greg Bender, who guarded Wright most of the time out of the diamond and one, tossed in 25 points on 12 of 17 shooting. Ross, for the sixth time this season, outgaled an opponent—29-27—but lost the game.

Lorain, with Wright hitting 16 of 20 from the line, canned 24 of 25 free throws and Ross, four of 10.

"We did not get to the line," Sawyer pointed out, "but we were not penetrating and not getting the ball inside."

Despite that, Ross hit 29 of 52 from the floor in making a run at the 13-2 Steelmen.

Sawyer praised the play of the Ross six. Jim Hufford scored 15 points and sophomore Dave Kovalski, making his first varsity start, played the whole game and scored nine points. Jeff Nossaman came off the bench for seven with Mark Miesle adding four and Ryan Smith two.

Tim Moore added 14, Wardelle Wright 11 and Ken Balmert 10 for Lorain.

Lorain 78 Ross 62

Score by quarters

Ross	18	13	16	15—62
Lorain	15	10	25	28—78

Scoring

ROSS: Greg Bender 12-1-25, Jim Hufford 7-1-15, Dave Kovalski 4-1-9, Jeff Nossaman 3-1-7, Ryan Smith 1-0-2, Mark Miesle 2-0-4, totals 29-4-62.

LORAIN: Ed Wright 10-16-36, Wardell Wright 5-1-11, Thy-rine Wright 0-0-0, Tim Moore 5-4-14, Ken Balmert 5-0-10, Joel Hartman 2-3-7, totals 27-24-78.

Season records: Lorain 13-2 (7-2), Ross 5-8 (2-6).

JV game: Lorain 32-30.

Woodward holds off Ross 64-58

By BOB MARKER

News-Messenger Sports Editor
Woodward and Ross took turns using a high school basketball slingshot Saturday but the Polar Bears had the last shot in dropping the Little Giants 64-58.

In a game of streaks, Woodward, 9-5 and winners of eight of its last nine games, led by as many as 13 and by as little as three in the second half. Ross, 5-9 and loser of three games in a row, would charge but get cut off by its own turnovers while failing to get over the hump against the Toledo City League school.

"The turnovers hurt us," Ross Coach John Sawyer said. "When we had a chance to get Woodward's lead to under three, we would drop the ball or make a bad pass."

The Little Giants kicked the ball away 23 times including four crucial times in the final quarter. Woodward committed 18 turnovers.

The Polar Bears, with Myron Broughton and Dennis Gawrych doing most of the damage, broke open a tight game in the second period by outscoring Ross 11-1 to grab a 31-19 lead. By the half, Ross trailed 34-25, setting the stage for the slingshot second half.

Woodward jumped ahead 38-25 on baskets by 6-7 John Munch and Broughton to open the third quarter but Ross, with Greg Bender dropping in five and Ryan Smith two, bounced back to trail by a 38-32 count. By the end of the quarter, Woodward after running off the final six points, held a 48-37 advantage.

In the final eight minutes, Ross got buckets from Jeff Nossaman, Shawn McCarthy and Smith to make it 48-43 with 6:15 remaining. In the next minute, Woodward got a pair of free throws from Gawrych and a pair of baskets from Terry Woodward to take a 54-43 lead.

Ross was next to grab the slingshot, whipping off eight straight points to close to within 54-51. Twice the Little Giants had a chance that gap but turnovers pushed them back. In the eight-point run, Smith scored twice, Bender and Jim Hufford once each.

After the teams traded baskets, Ross was forced to foul while

attempting to get the ball but Woodward's Tom Barnes hit six straight free throws and Gawrych two in the final minute to hold off the charging Little Giants.

With 53 seconds to play, Bender made it 58-55 but Gawrych hit a pair of free throws for a 60-55 Woodward lead. Bender hit again with 17 seconds remaining but Barnes answered with a pair of free throws at the 10-second mark. Bender followed with a charity toss, missed the second intentionally in hopes of a Ross rebound but the 6-4 junior was called for crossing the foul line too soon and Woodward got the ball out-of-bounds.

Barnes, after being fouled, hit the final two of his six free throws to ice the contest with eight seconds remaining.

"Woodward did a nice job of taking us out of our offense," Sawyer pointed out. "They were trapping at midcourt and instead of passing off before we got to the trap, our guards were dribbling up to it and getting caught."

"Really, what it boils down to was we could not catch the ball or pass it when we had to."

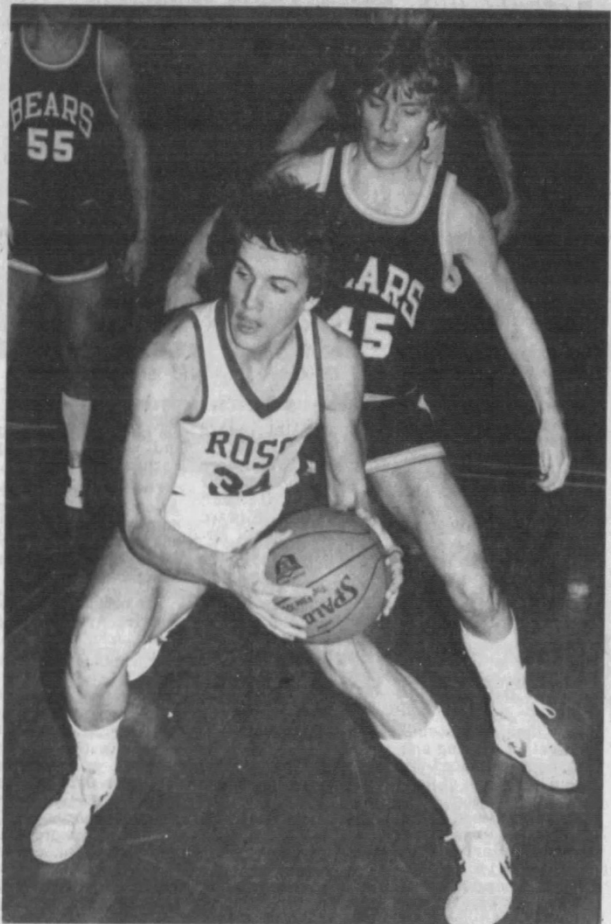
The Ross coach pointed out the efforts of Hufford, sophomore Dave Kovalski and Bender, saying he felt they had good games. He was also pleased with the efforts of players coming off the bench.

Despite the loss in what has to be termed as a disappointing season for Sawyer and his team, the Ross coach said he felt his team is still developing.

"I still think we are coming along," he insisted. "I know it is tough to say that especially when we are losing but I think that this team can come along and be a good tournament team. That's what we have to shoot for now."

Bender wound up with 20 points to lead all scorers. Hufford added 14 and Smith 10 before fouling out with 1:27 to play. Broughton had 14 to top the balanced Woodward attack. Gawrych ended up with 13 and Munch had a dozen.

Sawyer also pointed out that his team is still not getting to the foul line enough saying the Little Giants



(N-M photo by Bill Kennedy)

DAVE KOVALESKI (34) of Ross looks for an opening on the baseline against Woodward's Dennis Gawrych during action Saturday night.

must penetrate more. The Little Giants had 18 charity tosses, sinking a dozen while Woodward was 22 of 33.

From the floor, Ross was 23 of 60 and Woodward 21 of 55. The Little Giants had 42 rebounds, four more than Woodward.

Boys

Varsity game

Woodward 64

Ross 58

Score by quarters

Woodward	19	15	14	16	—64
Ross	13	12	12	21	—58

Scoring

WOODWARD: Myron Broughton 3-8-14, Cecil Harvey 2-1-5, Dennis Gawrych 4-5-13, John Munch 5-2-12, Terry Woodard 4-0-8, Lamont Whitlock 3-0-6, Tom Barnes 0-6-6, totals 21-22-64.

ROSS: Greg Bender 9-2-20, Jim Hufford 3-8-14, Dave Kovaleski 2-1-5, Ryan Smith 5-0-10, Mark Miesle 1-0-2, Shawn McCarthy 1-0-2, Jeff Nossaman 1-1-3, Dan Brudzinski 1-0-2, Chris Simmons 0-0-0, totals 23-12-58.

Season records: Woodward 9-5, Ross 5-9.

Ross hoop teams battle archrivals

By BOB MARKER

News-Messenger Sports Editor

It's Sandusky weekend, basketball style, for both Ross High School basketball teams.

Instead of wild rallies that depicted the football weekend, the basketball weekend will be different...the wild rallies will have to come on the court.

The first shot at a Sandusky team will be this evening when Sue Wolf takes her girls basketball team to the home of the Lady Blue Streaks. Friday, John Sawyer's boys team will host Sandusky. Both clashes are Buckeye Conference encounters.

"They are even in the conference and for the season I think," Wolf said about the team that awaits her 8-6 overall and 1-3 squad in the conference team.

"I expect them to play a tight, full court man-to-man defense, much the same as Admiral King," Wolf explained. "The only time they go into a zone defense is when they have the lead."

The main problem for Ross, Wolf said, is cracking the full court pressure. "I think if we handle the pressure, we should be okay."

Wolf described Sandusky as a quick and very physical team.

"But we are pretty physical, too," she said, "we can handle ourselves there."

The Ross coach said that she will have one change in her lineup. Denise Wilken, a 5-foot-7 junior will start in place of sophomore Shelly Leggett. "She has been playing well in practice and I want to see what she can do in a starting role," Wolf said.

The other starters will be Katie

Marritt, Sue Gahn, Lisa Luman and Tina Michael.

Friday, Sawyer, with tongue firmly planted in his cheek, said should be a jammed house at the Ross gym.

"I read in the Sandusky paper that their coach (Dave Wilbur) said that Sandusky is the best 4-11 team in the state," he said. "Well, if that's true, we have the best 5-9 team in the state at Ross. It should be a full house Friday because two of the better teams in the state will be playing."

While the Ross coach was chuckling, he caught his breath long enough to point out that Sandusky has been improving. In the last two games, the Blue Streaks have lost 57-55 to Findlay and 53-47 to Elyria.

Sawyer admitted one of his fears Friday is his squad remembering the 70-58 win in the first meeting of the teams. In that game, Sandusky held leads of 14-2 midway through the first period before Ross tied it with a 12-point run, and 33-24 at the half before tying it and winning it with an 11-point run in the final period.

"Sandusky can see a win here, too," Sawyer said. "We are going to have to get off to a better start than we had over there. When we played then, the game was not over until the final minute."

Sawyer said his lineup will be the same as it was the last two games: Greg Bender, Jim Hufford, Ryan Smith, Mark Miesle and Dave Kovalesski.

"But I will probably use quite a few kids because of the way Sandusky likes to play...up and down the floor quickly," he said.

Miesle reprieve nips Streaks

By BOB MARKER

News-Messenger Sports Editor
Mark Miesle shot the weight of being a possible goat to become a hero Friday night as the Fremont Ross Little Giants shook off a horrendous start to nip Sandusky 71-70 in overtime in Buckeye Conference basketball game.

Miesle, after committing a turnover, missing an off-balance shot and firing up an air ball on a free throw attempt in overtime, hit both ends of a one-and-one with eight seconds remaining in the extra session to pull Ross even and then give the Little Giants their 71st point.

The Miesle free throws topped off a game in which Ross, 6-9 and 3-4 in the conference, trailed by 16 points in the second period after falling behind 20-6 at the end of the first eight minutes.

John Sawyer, happy with the win, was happier with the reaction from the crowd at the Ross gym. "The first thing the kids said after they got into the locker room," the Ross coach recalled, "was they noticed how much the crowd was involved with the game."

"That is the best game where the crowd has been involved in since I have been here. They really got into the game."

It took the Little Giants several minutes to get into the game; they almost took themselves and the fans right out the gym doors in the first quarter.

"It was our normal first quarter," Sawyer was able to smile. "We went up and down the floor like a fire truck committing turnovers while they were making their shots."

The Blue Streaks, with Robert Hunter muscling in eight and Paul Moore six, dominated the Little Giants inside to go with a skin tight man-to-man defense.

However, just as hot as Sandusky was in the first period, the Little Giants were hotter in the second. Ross lost up 10 shots and all of them went in with Jeff Nossaman hitting five straight shots.

Nossaman, along with sophomore

Shawn McCarthy and junior Chris Simmons to go with regulars Greg Bender and Miesle, pulled Ross to a 27-point quarter while closing to within 33-33 at the half.

"We kept that lineup at the start of the second half," Sawyer said. "I'm going to have to remember that one. Nossaman came in a did a super job. McCarthy and Simmons played very well."

Simmons had 19 for the game, including a bank shot from the top of the foul circle as time ran out in the first half. McCarthy dropped in nine including the Little Giants' only basket in overtime, a stuff shot, to go with 10 rebounds and six blocked shots.

Bender, who finished with 15 points and 12 rebounds, gave Ross its first tie 10 seconds into the second half but the Little Giants committed a pair of turnovers while falling behind 41-37 with 6:59 to play but that was it...Sandusky did not score again until the 7:45 mark of the final period.

By that time, the Little Giants had rolled to their biggest lead of the game, 49-41. A Simmons layup off a Miesle pass gave Ross its first lead 43-41 at the 3:50 mark.

Bender added a bucket and sophomore Dave Kovaleski scored four to polish off the Ross quarter.

Moore brought Sandusky streaking back in the final quarter, canning five of seven shots as the Blue Streaks caught the Little Giants at 59 with 2:25 to play.

Sawyer said that he had wanted to go into a four-corner offense when his team was up 57-49 but a better skelter press forced two turnovers as Sandusky ran off a 10-2 scoring spurt. Moore's shot tied it but McCarthy's tip gave Ross a 61-59 edge with 1:16 to play.

Hunter hit a free throw, one of only a two of 14 performance at the line for Sandusky, to make it 61-60 with 1:01 on the clock. Miesle put in a pair of free throws to give Ross a three-point lead but David Belle's shot make it 63-62 with

45 second left in regulation.

McCarthy hit one of two free throws at the 37-second mark and Brian Watson tied it at 64-64 with 21 seconds remaining. After Miesle missed a free throw with 13 seconds left, Sandusky committed a turnover. Ross got the ball downcourt but had the ball stripped out-of-bounds deep in the left corner with one second left.

After Ross called timeout to set up a play, Jim Hufford lobbed a pass to Bender who took the ball in mid-air to the right of the bucket but the junior's shot bounced off the glass and off the front of the rim and sent the game into overtime.

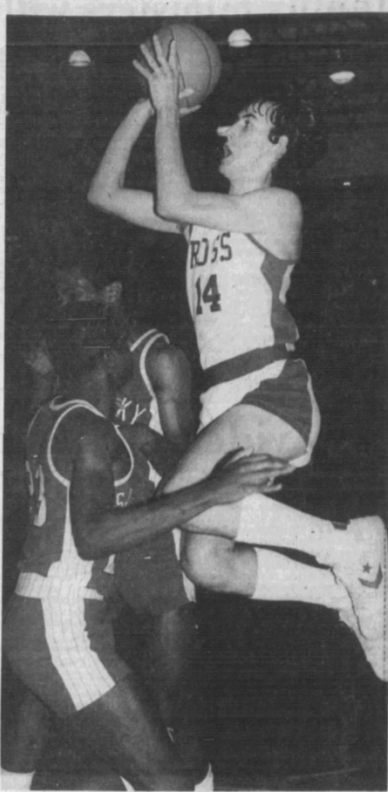
In the extra session, Moore scored three times, with each basket giving his team a two-point lead. The last was 70-68 with a minute to play. Ross's only bucket of the overtime was a McCarthy dunk 30 seconds into the extra period.

With 38 second to play, Hunter committed his fifth foul and was charged with a technical when he reacted too strongly to the call. Miesle, however, tossed up an air ball to erase the one-and-one. Bender got the technical to cut it to 70-69.

The Little Giants were called for an over-and-back with 34 seconds left. Hufford, with 24 seconds left, fouled Belle but the Sandusky lefthander missed the shot and Kovaleski got the rebound. Moore fouled Miesle with eight seconds left to give the Ross junior a shot at redemption. He did not waste the chance.

Ross hit 27 of 53 shots while Sandusky, 4-12, was 34 of 73. From the foul line, Ross was 17 of 33. In rebounding, Bender grabbed 12, McCarthy 10 and Simmons seven as Ross held a 48-36 advantage.

Moore wound up with 26 points and Hunter had 15. Ross had its most balanced scoring game of the season as Bender had 15, Kovaleski, Nossaman and Simmons 10 each, Miesle and McCarthy nine apiece and Hufford eight.



MARK MIESLE OF Ross goes up for a shot over James Keys of Sandusky during third quarter play at Ross High School Friday night. The Ross junior's shot rolled off the rim.

Wildcats upend Lakota

By TOM HOEFF

Special To The News-Messenger
WOODVILLE—Playing defense like their title hopes depended on it, Woodmore held off Lakota 52-44 Friday to move within one game of first place in the Suburban Lakes League.

The Raiders, who shot just 30 percent from the field, remained tied for first place with Oak Harbor because Otsego upset the Rockets 59-56 Friday.

The Wildcats' zone defense put extra pressure on the Raiders' outside shooters while preventing them from getting the ball inside.

"We had to shut off their wings. We know (point guard Chris) Chalfin wasn't going to shoot so we left him have anything he wanted outside, shut the wings off and let Jeff Haar own the boards," said Woodmore coach Greg Place.

Haar responded with 15 rebounds and 15 points in his best performance since breaking a bone in his hand three weeks ago.

"He had to see if he could make the shots. This is the first time he used his right hand to shoot free throws. This will help his confidence a lot," said Place.

Senior Tim Tieli led Lakota with 17 points, but he was the only Raider in double figures.

Lakota, trailing since the opening minutes of the second quarter, twice had chances to tie the game in the fourth quarter, but was unable to score. With Woodmore ahead 45-43 with 3:45 remaining, the Raiders missed two shots. Lakota stole the ball, but the Raiders turned the ball over themselves when Jeff Rospert stole an inbound pass and drove for a layup for a 47-43 lead.

After both teams exchanged turnovers, Lakota worked the ball around for a minute and a half before getting a shot, which missed. The Raiders scored their final point on a technical foul called against Woodmore's Jeff Perkins with 1:32 remaining. Lakota blew its chance to cut the deficit to one point when Woodmore's Sean Mercer tied up Mike Ziptel. Woodmore controlled the tip and the final minute of the game as the Raiders were forced to foul.

Perkins, who led Woodmore with 16 points, sank a pair of free throws with 49 seconds remaining. Haar stole the ball under the Woodmore goal and scored with 20 seconds left to cap the scoring.

Lakota coach Paul Guesper said he felt his team did not play well enough to win.

"We shot poorly from the field and from the free throw line (12 for 22) and made a lot of mental mistakes. That adds up to an eight-point loss."

"They didn't play very smart. When we needed to be under control, we weren't," he said.

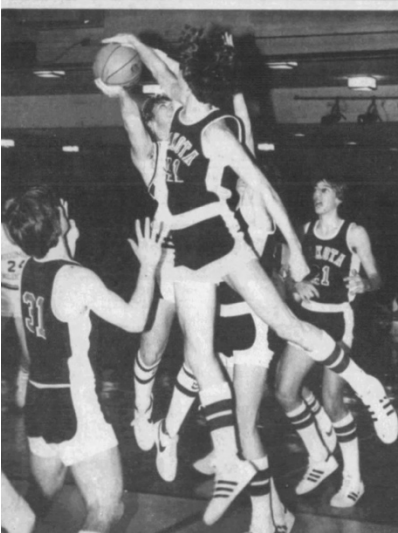
After taking a 14-12 first-quarter lead, Lakota committed six turnovers and missed eight straight shots to start the second quarter. Woodmore scored 12 straight points to take a 24-14 lead. The Raiders did not score until Tieli made two free throws with 4:19 left in the half.

Down 31-22 at the half, Lakota rallied in the third quarter to cut the margin to 39-36.

Woodmore, which shot 50 percent from the field, goes into Saturday's home game against Genoa with a 7-3 record in the league, 11-4 overall. Lakota, 4-6 overall and 3-2 in the league, hosts Oak Harbor Saturday.

Chad Hollinger scored 13 points to boost Lakota's reserves to a 47-46 win.

Steve Avers led the Wildcats with 16 points. Rich McCarthy added 10. Woodmore's record is 10-5.



STEVE WASSERMAN (41) of Lakota blocks a shot from Woodmore's Jeff Perkins during early action at Woodville Friday.

Knights defuse Rockets

The Otsego Knights threw a wrench into Oak Harbor's plans of winning a third straight Suburban Lakes League basketball championship by shocking the Rockets 59-56 in Tonto-gary Friday night.

By winning, the Knights kept the race for the SLL top spot all knotted up between Oak Harbor and Lakota, who will meet to break that tie (both at 8-2) tonight in Kansas.

Lakota also lost last night 52-44 to third-place Woodmore, which greatly enhanced its chances of claiming the league title. In other SLL action Friday night, Genoa edged Eastwood 60-58 in overtime and Elmwood thumped Gibsonsburg 84-59.

Otsego made its final push when Ron Downs hit one free throw to give his team a 57-54 lead with less than a minute left in the game.

Oak Harbor's Don Christie came back with one free throw before Downs clinched matters with two more charity tosses.

Downs finished with 26 points while Christie had 22 for the Rockets.

"Downs played a super game," said coach Christie. "All the Otsego kids played well. They're a good team. I don't think we looked past them."

"We played hard enough to win, we just couldn't put the ball in the basket."

The Rockets made just 35 percent

(22 of 63) of their shots to 44 percent (20 of 45) for Otsego.

Genoa60

Eastwood(OT)58

The Comets withstood a missed Eastwood shot at the end of regulation to defeat the Eagles in overtime at Genoa.

The game was tied at 54-54 at the end of regulation.

Genoa took lead quickly in overtime and losing it. A layup by Brian Baacke with 50 seconds left in the extra session put the Comets up by three and proved to be the clincher.

Baacke led Genoa the entire way with 20 points and six rebounds. Mark Sommer and Tony Zapata each added 11 points.

Elmwood84

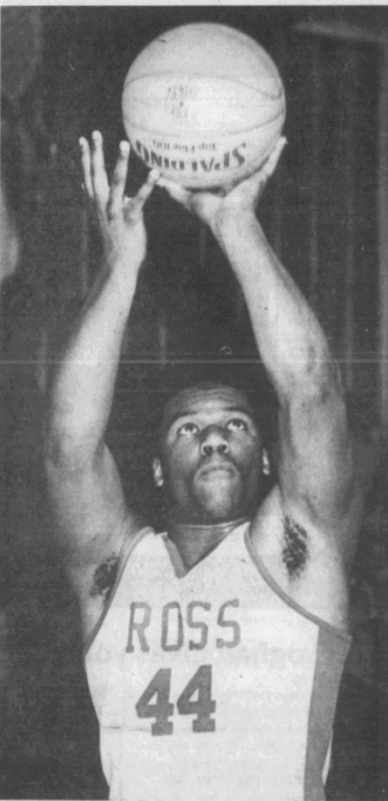
Gibsonsburg59

Elmwood pounced on Gibsonsburg early and never let up to register the easy victory in Bloomdale.

The Royals outscored the Golden Bears 29-10 in the first period and increased it to 52-23 at halftime to take matters in hand.

Four players scored in double figures for the winners, led by Rick Luman's 16 points.

Darin Halstead led Gibsonsburg with 13 points.



CHRIS SIMMONS puts up a short jumper that put Ross ahead 43-41 in the third period. The go-ahead shot came at the 3:50 mark.

High school

Varsity game

Ross 71

Sandusky 70 (OT)

Score by quarters

Sandusky	20	15	6	23	6—70
Ross	6	27	16	15	7—71

Scoring

SANDUSKY: David Belle 4-0-8, Todd Wilkins 0-0-0, James Keys 1-0-2, Brian Watson 5-1-11, Todd Croom 1-0-2, Paul Moore 13-0-26, Robert Hunter 7-15, Darren Jordan 3-0-6, totals 34-2-70.

ROSS: Greg Bender 5-5-15, Jim Hufford 3-2-8, Mark Miesle 2-5-9, Ryan Smith 0-0-0, Dave Kowaleski 4-2-10, Dan Brudzinski 0-0-0, Shawn McCarthy 4-1-9, Chris Simmons 4-2-10, totals 27-17-71.

Season records: Ross 6-9 (3-6), Sandusky 4-12 (2-9).

JV game

Ross 53

Sandusky 51

Score by quarters

Sandusky	18	15	9	9—51
Ross	15	10	13	15—53

Scoring

SANDUSKY: LaMar Brown 0-1-1, Chris Williams 3-1-7, Tim Linden 3-1-7, Michael Sanders 3-5-11, Eric Jordan 3-2-8, Luis Guevara 5-3-13, Joe Nolder 1-0-2, Terrence Newell 0-2-2, totals 18-15-51.

ROSS: Karl Bury 0-0-0, Thad Lee 4-4-12, Chuck Mamula 3-4-10, John Coleman 0-1-1, Gregg Gallagher 1-1-3, Dan Gangwer 2-0-4, Pat Hetrick 2-1-5, Stacy Johnson 4-3-11, Matt Reed 1-0-2, Bob Stout 2-1-5, totals 19-15-53.

Season records: Ross 9-6, Sandusky 8-8.

Ross teams meet Elyria

By BOB MARKER
News-Messenger Sports Writer

Elyria is the common foe for the Ross High School basketball games today and Friday with Toledo Waite providing an extra attraction Saturday for the boys team.

The Lady Pioneers will visit Fremont tonight for a game that Ross Coach Sue Wolf says may determine third place in the Buckeye Conference race. Ross, 11-6, and 2-3 in the conference race, is on a three game winning streak in spite of not playing that well according to Wolf.

"Against Sandusky and Clay," Wolf said, "we did not play that badly but we were about a step out of time. Tuesday at Fostoria, we just played badly."

"The only good thing we got out of Fostoria was that we played badly but still won."

Wolf singled out three Lady Pioneers that she felt her team has to pay close attention.

"Becky Rorrer is a 6-foot center who plays well on the inside," she began, "Kathy Hess at forward is 5-8 and Tina Lawrence, 5-3, is a good junior guard."

Wolf, while clicking off those names, admitted that the Elyria contest will be a difficult one for her team but she was just as concerned over the way her team has been performing.

"It's not that we play horrible—well, we did against Fostoria—but it seems that we play well for awhile but then have a very bad game. Hopefully, we won't have any more bad games this season."

The Elyria boys will put a 14-3 record and the number 12 ranking in the Associated Press AAA state poll against Ross when the Little Giant visit the home of the Pioneers Friday.

One of the victories was a 70-61 victory over Ross Dec. 27, one of nine conference wins. The Pioneers are 9-1 and a game ahead of Admiral King in the BC race.

"They are about the same as they were when we played them the first time," Ross Coach John Sawyer said. "They have balanced scoring out of the starting five but when they go to the bench, they don't get that much."

Jeff Thomas with a 19.1 average leads the Elyria group. Chris Fields is next with a 12.2 followed by Jared Wilbanks at 11.5.

Sawyer said his team will have to be patient, take the fast break when it is there but not try for the break when it is not.

Ross, 6-9 (3-6), will start Greg Bender, the second leading scorer in the conference with a 20.7 average, Dave Kovalski, Jim Hufford, Mark Miesle and Ryan Smith but Sawyer said that is just the starting lineup, he will dip into his bench supply often.

"The guys who came off the bench last week (a 71-70 overtime win over Sandusky) did a good job," Sawyer said. "When we go to the bench, we have size on them."

"We want to go inside and hopefully create some fouls in there."

Saturday, Ross will return home to host Toledo Waite in the first of three consecutive home games. The following Friday, Admiral King will visit while on Feb. 24, Ross closes the regular season by hosting Findlay.

10-point Elyria run stops Ross

ELYRIA—Brian Rogers and Jeff Thomas keyed a 10-point Elyria run in the final quarter as the Pioneers defeated Fremont Ross 75-64 in a Buckeye Conference boys basketball game Friday.

Brian Rogers scored a career high 22 points and helped hold Greg Bender, the second leading scorer in the conference, to no points in the final quarter. The 6-4 Ross junior had scored 20 in the first three quarters.

"We took our last timeout with 5:18 to play," Ross Coach John Sawyer explained. "Greg had a smaller man on his so I moved him into the middle so we could get the ball to him."

The move backfired.

"I don't think he touched the ball the rest of the game," Sawyer said.

Elyria had a 63-54 lead when the Pioneers used several fastbreaks to score the next 10 points. The run started at the 3:56 mark and ended at 1:13.

In the third quarter, Ross trailed 53-41 but Shawn McCarthy scored twice and Bender added two free throws to cut the lead to 53-47 at the end of the eight minutes. McCarthy, a 6-7 sophomore, had five baskets in the period.

Elyria, 15-3, and 10-1 in the conference, was paced by Rogers, 18 by Thomas and 17 from Chris Fields. Bender's 20 topped Ross, 6-10 and 3-7 in BC play, with McCarthy getting 13 and Mark Miesle had a dozen.

Elyria was 29 of 59 and Ross 25 of 62 in shooting.

Tonight, Ross hosts Toledo Waite.

High school

Varsity game

Elyria 75

Ross 64

Score by quarters

Ross 15 13 19 17—64

Elyria 16 20 17 22—64

Scoring

ROSS: Greg Bender 8-4-20, Jim Hufford 1-2-4, Shawn McCarthy 6-1-13, Ryan Smith 3-2-8, Dan Brudzinski 1-1-3, Mark Miesle 4-4-12, Karl Bury 2-0-4, totals 25-14-64.

ELYRIA: Jeff Thomas 8-2-18, Jared Wilbanks 3-0-6, Chris Fields 6-5-17, Mike Martin 4-2-10, Brian Rogers 8-6-22, Henry Smith 0-2-2, totals 29-17-75.

Season records: Elyria 15-3 (10-1), Ross 6-10 (3-7).

JV game

Elyria 59

Ross 53

Score by quarters

Ross 10 12 12 19—53

Elyria 9 11 22 17—59

Scoring

ROSS: Lee 4-3-11, Hetrick 2-0-4, Johnson 5-1-11, Bury 2-4-8, Gangwer 1-0-2, Stout 1-0-2, Mamula 5-3-13, Gallagher 1-0-2, totals 21-11-53.

ELYRIA: Uszynski 0-2-2, Gubano 3-1-7, Cannon 8-4-20, Alston 2-0-4, Williams 5-0-10, L. Jackson 0-3-3, Arbaugh 2-3-7, H. Jackson 0-1-1, Mahone 2-1-5, totals 22-15-59.

Season records: Elyria 4-14, Ross 9-7.

Ross does just enough to beat Waite

By BOB MARKER
News-Messenger Sports Editor

Ross never trailed Saturday while easing to a 59-51 high school basketball victory over Toledo Waite at Ross High School.

The loss put the Little Giants at 7-10 while the Indians are 3-14.

"There is not much to say about this game," Ross Coach John Sawyer said. "We won the game and we were never behind. We got off to a good start for a change and we shot better."

The Little Giants opened on a hot streak, hitting all nine of their shots in the first quarter but taking only an 18-13 lead into the second period. Greg Bender, who finished with 24 points, hit all five of his first quarter shots and sophomore Dave Kowaleski was four of four on his way to a 12-point game.

Ross held a 34-21 lead at the half and, if the Little Giants had followed their

coach's way of thinking, should have increased that to 26 by the end of the game.

"We don't seem to have the killer instinct," Sawyer said. "After we got up by 13, they played us about even."

Waite, with Ellis Green and Bill Sanders the catalysts, pulled to within six, 44-38, with 5:45 remaining in the game but despite that, the Little Giants never appeared to be in trouble.

After the Indians had made that last quarter surge, Bender changed the momentum by driving around Green in the middle and slam dunking the ball. He followed a Waite turnover with a lay-in and Ross was back up by 10.

Waite came back to trail by 50-43 but 6-7 sophomore Shawn McCarthy turned in a three-point play and the 6-4 Bender hit four consecutive free throws for a 57-45 lead with under a minute to play.

Sawyer went to his bench freely during

the Parent's Night game. Eight of the 10 players scored. Green was high man for Waite with 15.

Ross was 26 of 51 from the floor and canned seven of eight free throws while Waite was 22 of 47 but only seven of 21 at the line. In rebounding, Ross had 31 and the Indians 29. The Little Giants turned the ball over 14 times while Waite was guilty of 12 give-aways.

Ross will finish out the season with three straight home games, entertaining Admiral King Friday and state-ranked Class AA power Fostoria Saturday. The latter was rescheduled from Nov. 26. Findlay will close the regular season on Feb. 24.

In the junior varsity game, Ross fell to 9-8 as Waite scored the final eight points of the game for a 38-36 win. Chuck Mamula had eight to pace Ross while Ruben Perales had 14 for Waite.

High school

Varsity game

Ross 59

Waite 51

Score by quarters

Waite	13	8	11	19—51
Ross	18	16	8	17—59

Scoring

WAITE: Ron Witt 2-0-4, John Duren 4-1-9, Ellis Green 6-3-15, Myron Frazier 2-0-4, Robert Lockett 4-0-8, Bill Sanders 3-3-9, Jeff Joldrichsen 1-0-2, totals 22-7-51.

ROSS: Greg Bender 9-6-24, Jim Hufford 0-0-0, Dave Kovaleski 6-0-12, Mark Miesle 2-0-4, Ryan Smith 3-0-6, Shawn McCarthy 2-1-5, Jeff Nossaman 2-0-4, Chris Simmons 1-0-2, Dan Brudzinski 1-0-2, Karl Bury 0-0-0, totals 26-7-59.

Season records: Ross 7-10, Waite 3-14.

JV game

Waite 38

Ross 36

Score by quarters

Waite	3	13	8	14—38
Ross	5	12	8	11—36

Scoring

WAITE: Ruben Perales 5-4-14, Charles Winbush 2-6-10, Mike Vargo 3-0-6, Greg Hyndman 1-2-4, Charles Bumpus 0-2-2, Julian Boose 0-2-2, totals 11-16-38.

ROSS: Karl Bury 1-3-5, Thad Lee 2-0-4, Chuck Mamula 3-2-8, Gregg Gallagher 2-0-4, Dan Gangwer 2-1-5, Dave Garcia 1-1-3, Pat Hetrick 1-0-2, Stacy Johnson 1-3-5, totals 13-10-36.

Season record: Ross 9-8.

Bender top AAA player

Greg Bender of Fremont Ross was named the Class AAA District 6 Coaches Association player of the year Monday.

The 6-4 junior had averaged 21 points per game for the Little Giants this season.

In the girls Class



BENDER

AAA, Tina Michael, 5-11 senior, averaging 17 per game, for Ross took first team honors. Katie Marritt, a 5-5 Ross senior, was named to the second team.

Paul Colston of Port Clinton was a AAA second team pick. Dave Sprague, a 5-9 Marion Harding senior, was named the district delegate for the Norht-South Al-Star game.

Tom Bodager of Port Clinton was named the coach of the year.

In boys AA, Steve Martinet of Mansfield Malabar was named the player of the year and his coach, Steve Miller was named the top coach.

Eric Kuns of Fremont St. Joe was named to the coaches' second team in Class A. The player of the year was Lance Kimmel, a 5-11 senior

from Buckeye Central who averages 22 points per game.

Matt Hiestand, an Old Fort sophomore, won second team honors.

For the girls, Sue Gahn of Ross was named honorable mention in AAA while Carla Norris of Mansfield Senior won player of the year honors.

In AA, Margaretta's Laura Kromer was named player of the year. Karen Lepley was first team and Bellevue teammate Mary Haynes was second team. Dave Meadows of Bellevue won coach of the year honors.

Heidi Gast of Danbury-Lakeside was named the player of the year and her coach, Jim Rinaldo, the coach of the year in Class A. Cindy Oprie of St. Joe was a second team pick.

Admirals top Ross to earn share of title

By BOB MARKER
N-M Sports Editor
Admiral King held off
a last quarter Fremont
Ross rally for a 58-51
victory Friday night at

Ross High School.
The win, coupled with
Lorain Senior's 49-47
win over Elyria, gave
the Admirals a Buckeye
Conference co-

championship. Elyria
and Admiral King fin-
ished the conference
season with 10-2 re-
cords.
The Admirals, 18-2

and the ninth ranked As-
sociated Press Class
AAA team, nearly
squandered away an 11-
point lead in the final pe-
riod. Benefitting from
five Ross turnovers, Ad-
miral King sailed away
from a 37-34 advantage
with two minutes left in
the third period to a 45-
34 advantage a minute
into the final quarter.

In the next four min-
utes, Ross outscored the
Admirals 12-4 to trail 49-
46. Ryan Smith started
the run with a pair of
free throws for the Little
Giants. Mark Miesle fol-
lowed with two more
charity tosses before
Dave Urbanek stuffed a
rebound for the
Admirals.

Greg Bender, the
Little Giants leading
scorer with 15, canned a
shot to make it 47-40.
Jim Hufford and Shawn
McCarthy hit back-to-
back buckets to pull
Ross to within 47-44
before Urbanek hit from
the right side. At the
three-minute mark,
Hufford found Smith
open under the basket
for a layup to make it 49-
46.

That was the end of
the line, the Admirals
put up the spinnaker
and Ross's shot at an
upset floated over the
horizon. A rebound
bucket by Steve Davis
off a Ron Williams
missed free throw gave
the Admirals a 51-46
lead. Davis followed
with a layup off Admiral
King's four-corner
offense and Ross was in
a whirlpool from which
it was unable to swim.

"All in all," Ross
Coach John Sawyer said
quietly, "I thought we
played a good ball
game. We just had a few
too many mental
errors—a bad pass, a
bad shot or a bad foul—
but if we had gotten a
couple of breaks, it
could have gone the
other way."

Ross held a 10-8 lead
after one quarter.
Bender's bucket and a
free throw by Hufford
had wiped out an 8-7
Admiral King lead in
the final minute.

In the second quarter,
with Davis hitting seven
of nine free throws and a
pair of baskets, the
Admirals grabbed a 24-
22 halftime lead. Ross
led by as many as five—
14-9—when McCarthy
hit a pair of free throws
and Miesle scored on a
juniper a minute into
the period.

The Admirals caught
Ross at 17-17 and took
the lead on two Davis
free throws. Hufford
tied it with two charity
tosses but Davis scored
to put the Admirals up
by two. Bender gave
Ross a 22-21 lead with
three consecutive free
throws before Davis
scored on a three-point
play to end the first half
scoring.

"Defense? I don't
know," Admiral King
Coach Mitch Gillam
said when asked if
Ross's defense had
handicapped his team in
the first half. "I'd say it
was our 20 per cent
shooting."

"Of course, their
defense did force us to

take some bad shots."

In the second half,
Gillam pointed out that
his team attacked the
Ross defense much
better than it had in the
first 16 minutes.

The Admirals, using
their normal pressing
defense, did not bother
Ross getting downcourt
but once inside the
midcourt line, the Little
Giants were cold. In the
second quarter, the
Little Giants made one
of 10 shots and for the
game, 16 of 34 attempts.

"You cannot put an 86

per cent foul shooter on

the line like we did with

Bender in the second

quarter," Gillam

pointed out. The 6-4

Ross junior hit five of

six as Ross made 10 of 12

free throws in the

quarter.

The Little Giants fell

victim to a four-point

play midway through

the third period...a play

that put Ross behind for

good. With the game

deadlocked at 30-30, Ron

Williams scored on a

foul line jump shot but

Ross's Jeff Nossaman

was called for pushing

Davis on the play.

Admiral King got the

ball out-of-bounds and

Urbanek scored from

the left side, giving the

Admirals a 34-30 lead.

Nossaman got a

bucket back 30 seconds

later but Ross never

pulled even or led again.

Davis had 24 points

and Urbanek 10.

McCarthy had 10 to go

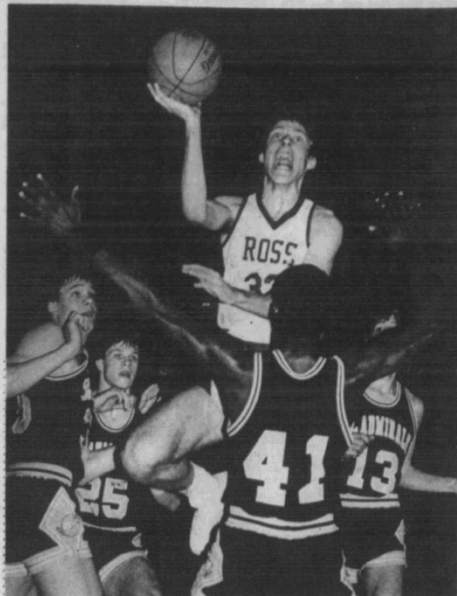
with Bender's

production for Ross.

The Admirals made 19

of 50 shots and 20 of 27

free throws. Ross was 19
of 24 at the line.
The Little Giants will
host Fosteria, 17-1, and
the state's fourth-
ranked Class AA team,
this evening. The JV
game begins at 6:30.



GREG BENDER of Ross goes up above
Steve Davis (41) of Admiral King on a
third quarter drive to the bucket.
Other Admirals moving in on Bender
are Dave Urbanek, left, Bob Calamari
(25) and Mitch Gillam.



(N-M photos by Bill Kennedy)

SHAWN MCCARTHY grabs a rebound away from
Bob Calamari of Admiral King late in the first
quarter. Jim Hufford (24) of Ross flies in from the
left side for a better view of the Ross sopho-
more's rebound.

High school

Varsity game

Admiral King 58

Ross 51

Score by quarters

Admiral King 8 16 17 17—58

Ross 10 12 12 17—51

Scoring

ADMIRAL KING: Steve Davis 7-10-24, Bob Calamari 0-6-6, David Urbanek 5-0-10, Paul Gensler 1-1-3, Scott Zimmerman 2-0-4, Ron Williams 1-0-2, Mitch Gillam 0-2-2, Dave Bansek 3-0-6, totals 19-20-58.

ROSS: Greg Bender 4-7-15, Jim Hufford 3-3-9, Dave Kovaleski 0-1-1, Ryan Smith 3-2-8, Mark Miesle 2-2-6, Shawn McCarthy 3-4-10, Chris Simmons 0-0-0, Jeff Nossaman 1-0-2, totals 16-19-51.

Season records: Admiral King 18-2 (10-2), Ross 7-11 (3-8).

JV game

Admiral King 69

Ross 49

Score by quarters

Admiral King 13 17 23 16—69

Ross 12 18 7 12—49

Scoring

ADMIRAL KING: Lee Wilson 2-0-4, Lebron Gladden 8-1-17, Dave Chavez 0-5-5, Mike Thomas 6-4-16, Malcom Thomas 2-2-6, William Washington 3-5-11, Tyrone Jeter 1-0-2, Dave Cannon 1-1-3, Jerry Evans 0-1-1, totals 25-19-69.

ROSS: Karl Bury 3-3-9, Gregg Gallagher 4-2-10, Dan Gangwer 1-0-2, Pat Hetrick 4-0-8, Matt Reed 2-2-6, Bob Stout 2-2-6, Scott Weber 3-2-8, totals 19-11-49.

Season records: Admiral King 17-3, Ross 9-9.

THE NEW MESSIAH'S BROTHER AS BROTHERS' BROTHERS, FOSTORIA BEAT THE REDMEN, BUT THE GIGANT'S POWER OF A BROTHER AFTER THE RACE. GREG BENDER AND JIM HUFFORD.

Debbie Armstrong and Christin Cooper

Fostoria escapes Ross's upset bid

By BOB MARKER
News-Messenger Sports Editor
Fostoria passed its test as the state's fourth-ranked Class AA basketball team edged Fremont Ross 55-53 Saturday night at Ross High School.

Dan Hampton sealed Ross's fate, stealing a rebound from Greg Bender, putting in a layup and sinking a free throw to give the Redmen a 55-51 lead with seven seconds left on the clock.

Bender, the Little Giants' 6-4 junior, had grabbed a rebound after Fostoria's Roger Dunbar missed a free throw with 10 ticks of the clock remaining.

Ross trailed 52-51 at that point but Hampton stayed close to Bender, reached in and cleanly swiped the ball away for the layup and the foul by Bender.

"That was a super play," Fostoria Coach Steve Russell pointed out about Hampton, a third year letterman.

Ross had led by six—43-37—with six minutes to play in the game when Fostoria began to come back.

The Redmen tied it at 47 on Jim

Norman's bucket. At the 3:04 mark, Brett Cousin gave Fostoria its first lead since the beginning of the second half with a pair of free throws.

Bender pulled Ross even with an eight-foot jumper before Hampton stepped in and took charge.

The stocky, 6-2 lefthanded senior, canned a 20-footer from the right side for a 51-49 Fostoria lead with 2:10 to play.

Norman, a 6-4 senior, made it 52-49 with one of two free throws, but the Redmen came up with the rebound off the missed second attempt. A turnover gave the ball to Ross but the Little Giants were unable to connect.

Ross got a break when Steve Glenn of Fostoria missed two free throw attempts at the 31-second mark.

Bender canned a pair of charity tosses to pull Ross to within 52-51 with 22 seconds left before Dunbar went to the line to set up Hampton's thievery.

The final two Ross points came on an uncontested layup by Mark Miesle.

"We felt going into the game that this was going to be a true test of our strength which is our size," Russell said. "Ross's strength is size and we needed a game like this to get ready for the tournament.

"I think my kids were up tight," Russell continued, "because we have a good rivalry with Ross and we are not used to having our shots blocked; it's usually us that does the blocking. I think once we had a few of our shots blocked, the kids were a little reluctant to shoot."

Norman wasn't. He continually took the ball inside and either scored (six of 11 from the floor) or was fouled (11 of 18 at the line). He wound up with 23 points to take game honors. Hampton finished with nine, the same number as another Fostoria sub, Tom Latham.

The loss overshadowed a standout performance by Ross senior Jim Hufford.

The 6-1 Hufford scored all 13 of Ross's third quarter points. His first bucket of the second half pulled Ross even at 24-24 and before the quarter ended, Hufford had pushed Ross into a 35-32 lead.

Fostoria did not score in the second half until Latham canned a 15-foot jumper five minutes into the session.

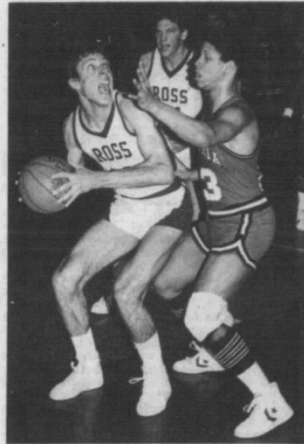
The loss left Ross Coach John Sawyer stunned.

"I just hope that the kids don't give up after two tough losses," the Ross coach said. The Little Giants lost 58-51 Friday to Lorain Admiral King, ranked ninth in the Associated Press Class AAA poll.

"Since we lost to Whitmer (63-51 on Jan. 21), each ball game that we have played, the kids have gotten a little better," Sawyer explained. "This weekend, we played good ball but we just were not able to get the breaks."

Hufford ended up with a season high 18 points, the same as Bender. Shawn McCarthy was next for Ross with six.

Fostoria held a 40-36 rebounding edge while Ross turned the ball over 14 times, one less than Fostoria. In shooting, Ross was 19 of 55 and Fostoria 18 of 50 while at the line, the Little Giants hit 15 of 18 and Fostoria 19 of 31.



GREG BENDER of Ross looks to go up for the layup against Fostoria's Roger Dunbar during action Saturday night at Ross. Bender's teammate, Jim Hufford, backs up the play.

High school

Varsity game

Fostoria 55

Ross 53

Score by quarters

Fostoria	12	12	8	23—55
Ross	12	10	13	18—53

Scoring

FOSTORIA: Brett Cousin 1-2-4, Steve Glenn 0-0-0, Chris Hoover 1-0-2, Jim Norman 6-11-23, Bob Sheets 2-2-6, Tom Latham 4-1-9, Roger Dunbar 1-0-2, Dan Hampton 3-3-9, totals 18-19-55.

ROSS: Greg Bender 5-8-18, Jim Hufford 7-4-18, Dave Kovalski 0-0-0, Mark Miesle 2-1-5, Ryan Smith 2-0-4, Shawn McCarthy 2-2-6, Chris Simmons 0-0-0, Dan Brudzinski 1-0-2, Jeff Nossaman 0-0-0, totals 19-15-53.

Season records: Fostoria 18-1, Ross 7-12.

JV game

Ross 32

Fostoria 29

Score by quarters

Fostoria	7	10	6	6—29
Ross	8	7	8	9—32

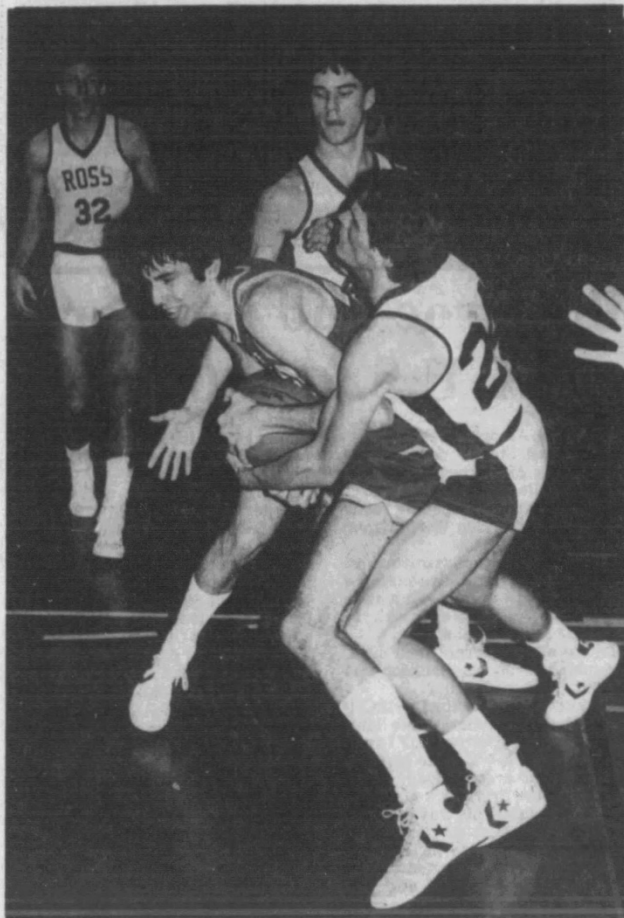
Scoring

FOSTORIA: Felix Cantu 3-0-6, Joel Clay 1-0-2, David Coburn 2-5-9, Delbert Hutchisson 0-3-3, Perry Johnson 0-2-2, Donovan Lonsway 2-0-4, Stacey Schubert 0-1-1, Steve Trumpler 1-0-2, totals 9-11-29.

ROSS: Karl Bury 3-1-7, Thad Lee 0-0-0, Gregg Gallagher 1-2-4, Dan Gangwer 0-2-2, Pat Hetrick 3-2-8, Matt Reed 2-1-5, Bob Stout 1-4-6, totals 10-12-32.

Season record: Ross 10-9.

Arnold lifts Findlay past Ross



JIM HUFFORD, right, of Ross reaches around Findlay's Joe Plott to grab the basketball during fourth quarter action Friday at Ross High School. Get-

ting a good look at the action is Dan Brudzinski behind Hufford and Plott and Greg Bender (32).

By BOB MARKER
N-M Sports Editor

Findlay ran off eight unanswered points in the fourth quarter to pull away from Fremont Ross and post a 55-50 Buckeye Conference basketball win Friday at Ross High School.

Ross finished the regular season at 7-13 and 3-9 in the conference while Findlay is 12-8 and 7-5 in the BC. The Little Giants will be back in action Monday, playing Ashland at Ashland College in the Class AAA sectional tourney.

The Little Giants, after trailing 36-31 with a minute to play in the third quarter, ran off six straight points to take a 37-36 lead 30 seconds into the final period. Jim Hufford's steal and basket with three seconds left in the third quarter keyed the run.

Dan Brudzinski scored on a layup off the fourth quarter tip and Mark Miesle hit a jumper from eight feet to give Ross the lead with 7:30 remaining.

Famine hit the Little Giants after that. Findlay took off on its streak and with the same deliberate play that it used the whole game, methodically matched Ross bucket for bucket down the stretch.

Ross crept to within 50-46 with 45 seconds remaining on buckets by Greg Bender (two) and Miesle. Findlay's Jim Arnold, a six-plus points per game player, canned two free throws with 40 seconds to play before Jeff Nossaman scored for Ross to make it 52-48 with 30 seconds left.

Arnold hit the final two of his game high 24 points for a 54-48 Findlay lead. Bender followed with a buckewt but it was too little, too late.

"We cannot even foul," Ross Coach John Sawyer said disgustedly after the game. "We wanted to foul Plott (Joe), Arnold or Fryer (Scott)...anyone of those three but we couldn't do it."

"It just seems like nothing goes right for us," Sawyer said quietly. "Of course, you have to make your own breaks."

"I really cannot think of anyone, except Chris Simmons, who played well for us," the Ross coach said.

Findlay Coach Roger Renz could think of

many.

"Arnold and Fryer had super games," Renz exclaimed, "but our guards (Chris Weaver and Chad McClellan), although they did not score many points, controlled the tempo for us."

"Arnold and Ritzler (Mark) did a super job on Bender," Renz continued. "Anytime you hold Bender to four field goals, that is super defense."

Bender, Ross's leading scorer with nearly a 21-point average, finished with 15. Miesle ended up with 10. Fryer had 14 for Findlay, 10 in the second half.

Findlay, missing Eric Vickers, a 6-5 junior out with a broken arm, played deliberately, passing several times before getting a high percentage shot. Using that style, the Trojans hit 22 of 42 shots while Ross, stymied by the Trojans' tight man-to-man defense, held Ross to 36 shots. The Little Giants made 18 of them and added 14 of 16 free throws. Findlay was 11 of 15 at the line.

"It's just awfully frustrating," Sawyer said about the loss. "I thought our defense was okay but they shot well from outside and if you have to lose, that is where you want them to shoot from."

In the junior varsity game, Pat Hetrick sank an 18-foot jumper from the left corner with two seconds left to give Ross a 47-45 win.



ST. JOE'S Tom Weickert trains Jon Nye to the mat during action Friday night.

District swim meet

Black wins 200 individual medley in record 1:56.19

BOWLING GREEN—Chris Black set a Northwest Ohio District Swim Meet record while winning the 200 individual medley at Cooper Pool on the Bowling Green State University campus Friday.

Black, a Ross High School senior, recorded a 1:56.91 in his specialty. The old record of 1:57.13 was held by John Stauffer of Sandusky. The first place gave Black a berth in the state swim meet next weekend in Canton.

Napoleon led the meet with 64 points while Findlay was second with 62 and Ross had 38. Sylvania Southview was fourth with 32.

The Aqua Giants medley relay held onto a slim chance of a berth in the state meet with a third place finish. The team of Black, Brian Mowry, Mark Lowther and Andy

Scott finished in 1:42.21, a half second off the Ross school record.

The medley team must now wait to see if it qualifies, by time, for an at-large berth in the state meet. The top two teams were automatically in the state meet.

Ross had several other swimmers competing in the two-day meet. Andy Scott was 13th and Tracy Turner 14th in the 50 free-style. Scott had a 23.31 and Turner 23.41.

In the girls portion of the meet, Heather Winning of Ross was seventh in the 50 free with a clocking of 25.91 and the medley relay team of Kelly Sabiers, Lori Smith, Winning and Teresa Gloer was seventh in 2:02.1.

Swimming today will begin at 5:15.

Basketball

Varsity game

Findlay 55

Ross 50

Score by quarters

Findlay 8 16 12 19—55

Ross 7 16 10 17

Scoring

FINDLAY: Chad McClellan 2-2-6, Chris Weaver 3-0-6, Rich Baerwaldt 0-1-1, Jim Arnold 10-4-24, Joe Plott 1-2-4, Scott Fryer 4-2-14, totals 22-11-55.

ROSS: Greg Bender 4-7-15, Jim Hufford 3-1-7, Dave Kovalski 0-2-2, Mark Miesle 5-0-10, Shawn McCarthy 0-2-2, Chris Simmons 2-2-6, Dan Brudzinski 1-0-2, Jeff Nossaman 3-0-6, totals 18-14-50.

Season records: Findlay 12-8 (7-5), Ross 7-13 (3-9).

JV game

Ross 47

Findlay 45

Score by quarters

Findlay 13 14 7 13—45

Ross 5 14 9 19—47

Scoring

FINDLAY: Jim Givens 4-1-9, Rick England 0-4-4, Keith Fulkerson 2-0-4, Mark Roynon 3-2-8, Kevin Curth 5-2-12, Chris Degenero 3-2-8, totals 17-11-45.

ROSS: Karl Bury 2-6-10, Chuck Mamula 2-0-4, Gregg Gallagher 2-2-6, Dan Gangwer 1-3-5, Dve Garcia 1-0-2, Pat Hetrick 5-2-12, Matt Reed 0-3-3, Bob Stout 0-1-1, Scott Weber 2-0-4, totals 15-17-47.

Season record: Ross 11-9.

Wright top Buckeye player; Bender named to first team

Ed Wright was named player of the year while leading the Buckeye Conference All-Conference selection released today.

The three teams were selected by a vote of the seven conference coaches.

Wright, a 6-5 senior from Lorain Senior, posted a 25.7 scoring average to lead the conference. He was second in field goal percentage and hit 76 per cent of his free throws while averaging seven rebounds and five assists per game.

Keith Sooy, in his first year at Elyria, was named the coach of the year. Sooy's team shared the conference title with Admiral King while posting a 10-2 conference record and finishing the regular

season at 17-3.

Also on the first team are Greg Bender, 6-4 Fremont Ross junior, who averaged 20.1 points per game, Jeff Thomas of Elyria, Eric Vickers of Findlay and Admiral King's Steve Davis.

Thomas, 5-11 senior, averaged 18.3 points and Davis, 6-5 senior, 11 points. Vickers, a junior, sat out the final few games of the season, but the 6-4 junior managed a 14.2 average.

Heading up the second team was 6-1 junior Paul Moore of Sandusky, second in conference scoring with a 20.6 average. Bob Calamari of Admiral King, Dave Sprague of Marion, Chad McClellan of Findlay and Wardell Wright, Ed's uncle, of



BENDER

Lorain Senior, rounded out the second five.

On the third team are Chris Fields of Elyria, Jered Wilbanks of Elyria, David Urbanek of Admiral King, Dave Lehner of Marion and Brian Watson of Sandusky.

Bender captures four Ross awards

Greg Bender took home four individual trophies to highlight the Ross Winter Sports Award Program Tuesday in the high school cafeteria.

Bender, a junior and the Ross boys basketball team leader in scoring (20.1), rebounding (nine per game) and free throw shooting (81 percent), also was presented with a captain's trophy. He shared the captain's duties with senior Jim Hufford.

Besides Bender, Katie Marritt, Mike Mezinger and Chris Black won most valuable honors for their respective sports.

Boys basketball Coach John Sawyer, in addition to the awards won by Bender, presented the most valuable junior varsity player award to junior Chuck Mamula. The most improved honor went to sophomore Dave Kovaleski and junior Chris Simmons won the best defensive player honor.

Marritt won the MVP trophy for the girls team. Coach Sue Wolf also presented Marritt, a three-year starter, with the best defensive player and captain trophies. The MVP for the junior varsity went to Chris Yeager, a sophomore.

Tina Michael, senior, took home two girls awards, winning the best foul shooter (70 per cent) and rebounding leader trophies to go along with a captain's trophy. The most improved honor went to sophomore Shelly Leggett.

Chris Black, a state placer in the individual medley (sixth) and the 100-yard freestyle (eighth), was named the most valuable swimmer. Coach Art Bucci also presented Black and Mark Lowther, both seniors, with the Coaches' Award. The same two received trophies for serving as co-captains.

The most improved swimmers were Tom McDonald and Bill Taylor.

Bucci also announced the co-captains for the 1984-85 season, Tracy Turner and Mike Robinette who will be seniors.

Junior Mike Mezinger won the MVP for Coach Al Voggenthaler's wrestling team. He also won the award for the most takedowns and a captain's trophy. Senior Kit Sultz also received a captain's award. Voggenthaler also announced that Sultz had been named to the northwest Ohio academic team by the Coaches Association.

The most improved wrestler award went to junior Todd Beatty while sophomore Matt Smith won the most pins honor. Beatty won 16 matches this season after winning only two as a sophomore.

The Coaches' Award went to sophomore Rick Snyder.

The varsity and junior varsity cheerleaders were also honored at the program.

Following are the letter winners:

BASKETBALL

Girls: first year, Michel Blue, Diane Harms, Leggett and Denise Wilkins; second year, Sue Gahn and Lisa Luman; third year, Marritt and Michael.

Boys: first year, Kovaleski, Shawn McCarthy, Jeff Nossaman and Ryan Smith; second year, Bender, Dan Brudzinski, Hufford, Mark Miesle and Simmons.

WRESTLING

First year: Andy Chambers, Charles Hicks, John Lozano, Mike palomo, Matt Smith, Rick Snyder, Chris Vaffis, George Weissinger and Bob Flahiff (manager/trainer).

Second year: Beatty, Mezinger, Dave Middleton, Sultz and Chris Hull (statistician).

Third year: Melvin Clark.

SWIMMING

First year: Jim Boggs, Teresa Gloer, Nathan Greene, Jon LaGrou, Tom McDonald, Brian Mowry, Paul Ochs, Julie Randolph, Andy Scott, Taylor and Todd Turner.

Second year: Dean Beck, Mike Robinette, Kelly Sabiers, Lori Smith, Tracy Turner and Heather Winning.

Third year: Black, Lowther and Troy Overmyer.

CHEERLEADERS

First year: Brenda Brown, Tammy Marinis, Lori Mooney and Monna Rodriguez.

Second year: Lesley Brooks, Colleen Gibbs, Sharon Schneider and Susan Stotz.



GIRLS SPECIAL award winners were, front row, left to right, Katie Marritt and Tina Michael and back row, Shelly Leggett and Chris Yeager.



SPECIAL AWARD winners for the boys were, front row, left to right, Tom McDonald, Rick Snyder, Mike Mezinger, Bill Taylor, Mark Lowther and Kit Sultz; back

row, from left to right, Chris Black, Todd Beatty, Dave Kovaleski, Greg Bender, Chris Simmons, Chuck Mamula and Matt Smith.