

ROSS OPENS SEASON WITH 74-53 DEFEAT

by Bill Bray | Nov 28, 2021 | Featured News



By Bill Bray

BOWLING GREEN – The Bobcats erupted for 23 second-quarter points and 25 fourth-quarter points as they handed Fremont Ross an opening-game loss Saturday night.

Ross ended the first quarter with a 13-8 lead, only to see that disappear as they were outscored 23-15 in the second stanza, with the Bobcats leading at the break 31-28.

Bowling Green expanded the third-quarter lead to 49-30 with an 18-12 advantage.

The Bobcats put the game away, outscoring the Little Giants 25-13 in the fourth and final quarter to come away with the big victory.

“Scoring is scoring,” a disappointed coach, John Cahill, said. “So much more goes into winning. We have to learn to make others better with rebounding, and our defense needs to improve.”

Cahill finished his conversation by simply saying, “It was an ugly night. We will get better. We need to get practice time and get our team healthy.”

Junior Ayden Carter led his team in scoring, finishing with 20 points, helped by a strong eight-point first quarter.

Kaden Holmes, fresh off the football field, connected for nine points. Jaedyn Bulger had eight points, Carter Rodriguez finished with seven points, footballer

Anthony Vann had five points, and Jacob Krebs and Kurt Harrison had two points apiece.

The Little Giants are back in action Friday as they travel to the Glass City to take on Whitmer in a TRAC lid lifter.

LITTLE GIANTS FALL TO WHITMER 70-86

by [Bill Bray](#) | Dec 4, 2021 | [Boys Basketball](#)



By Bill Bray

TOLEDO – For the second week in a row, the Fremont Ross Little Giants were scheduled away from home. For the second week in a row, it was the same result as they fell to Toledo Whitmer 70-86 in the Giants' first TRAC contest of the season.

Still coping with nagging injuries and a late start due to the extended football season, Ross is still reeling a bit from being shoved into the Basketball season.

"We have had very few practices with everyone on the floor," coach John Cahill admitted. "We have a kid like Bryson Hammer who was forced to play extended time tonight with only having two days of practice behind him." Hammer had broken his hand in the first football playoff game and is not just trying to get into 'basketball shape'.

Then some are just natural athletes, take Kaden Holmes, for example. Holmes, an all-Ohio candidate in football, has hit the basketball court running. Friday night is the case in point. The 'court general' for the Little Giants, Holmes had a season-high 26 points in the loss, leading all scorers. The junior scored eight of

Fremont's 15 first-quarter points. He led the Giants in scoring in three of the four quarters played.

The Little Giants did have eight players in the scoring column when all was said and done. Following Holmes, Carter Rodriguez tallied 15 points, footballer Anthony Vann, rounding into basketball shape, added 12 points, Labronze Barnett, still plagued by a shoulder injury from football, added seven points. Kurt Harrison had five points, Bryson Hammer and Jaedyn Bulger had two points apiece and Adam Hrynciw added one point.

Looking at the stats, the category that stood out negatively for the Little Giants was from the foul line. The lack of practice and other factors were brought to light as Ross, taken to the line, hit 20 of 40 of those freebies.

The Little Giants played evenly with the Panthers in the second half. The scoresheets show that Whitmer won the second half 45-43. It was the slow start that gave Ross the wrong results. The Panthers had four players in double figures led by Deric Jaynes with 21 points.

"We've had more adversity this preseason than any season I've been through", Cahill said. ""We have yet to have them all healthy and playing. I love this team. They battle.. We will be a tough team to beat down the road."



Fremont's Kaden Holmes led all scorers with 26 points.



Jaedyn Bulger drives to the basket during first half action at Whitmer.



Labronze Barnett shows his shooting form during the first half action against Toledo Whitmer.

ROSS BASKETBALL TEAMS START THE WEEK WITH WINS

by [Bill Bray](#) | Dec 8, 2021 | [Boys Basketball](#), [Featured News](#)



By Bill Bray

Monday night the Lady Giants took their show to the unfriendly confines of Sandusky High School and escaped with their sixth straight victory of the season 47-38.

24 hours later, at the "Purple Pit" the Little Giant boys had a successful home opener as they disposed of Sandusky Perkins 75-58.

The ladies got out to a fast start in the opening quarter, hitting for 18 points. They outscored the Streaks by nine points. Hannah Sheidler connected with a three-pointer and finished the opening quarter with five points.

The Little Giant's scoring dropped off during the second stanza, scoring just six points. Ross took a 24-15 lead into the break.

During the third-quarter action, the Streaks' physical play helped them build an 11-7 lead. Sandusky was sent to the line six times during the quarter. Ross was sent to the line five times during the whole contest. Favoritism? Maybe so, but then again, purple does not go well amongst all the blue that resides in the city by the lake.

The Streaks continued to try to whittle away at the score, but the Lady Giants held their ground and came away with the nine-point victory. It was their sixth win in a row.

"I was proud of the girls for keeping their poise down the stretch," coach Juan Vela said. We were up one and Hannah hit a big three for us from the corner to

go up four in the fourth quarter. The girls rebounded the ball well in the fourth quarter.”

Vela agreed that the win was less than easy. “It certainly was an ugly win. But we were glad that it was a good ugly.”

The scoring leaders for the Giants were Destiny Robinson with 14 and Hannah Sheider with 11 points.

Thursday will be the final game for the Ladies in the “Purple Pit”. A brand new, shiny gym awaits them after Christmas break. But first they need to get their seventh game against TRAC opponent Central Catholic, a team the ladies have never beaten in a conference game.

Tuesday night in the “Purple Pit” the Ross boys were finally at full strength. Ayden Carter and company were more than excited to watch perform. After a loss to Toledo Whitmer last week, the Giants wanted to make a statement and indeed they did. A 42-point first half left the Pirates reeling. Carter, a junior and playing after sitting out the Whitmer game because of a sore back, was one of three that nailed a shot from beyond the arc. Carter Rodriguez and Jaedyn Bulger added threes as well as Ross took an 18-10 first quarter lead. Carter proved that he was equally effective in the paint as the talented junior brought the Ross fans to their feet with two thunderous dunks. Always a momentum builder and crowd pleaser. ““Having him out handling the ball helps,” coach John Cahill said after the first win of the season. Another pair of threes by Carter and Rodriguez in the second quarter helped build a 42-point first half. A 19-point advantage that Perkins never recovered from led the Giants to their initial win.

“I thought we played really good basketball until the fourth quarter,” Cahill added. “We just got kind of sluggish. I like these guys a lot and it’s almost like we are finally getting to the point that the season should be starting,” Cahill added. “With injuries in football we’ve just been playing catch up a lot. We had all 10 guys yesterday at practice and we had all 10 playing tonight. We’ll continue working to get better.”

The scoresheet showed that Carter matched Perkins’ Jayden Rowe as the game’s top scorer with 19 points. Ross had three more players in double figures including Rodriguez with 14, Bulger with 11 and Anthony Vann with 10.



Ayden Carter (22) entertains the crowd with one of his two thunderous dunks during first quarter action



Ross' Kurt Harrison (#30) drives the lane.



Labronze Barnett (#4) goes upon for two points during the first half.



Anthony Vann (#1) soars to the bucket during second-half action.

The Little Giants are back on the road Friday, travelling to Oregon Clay for their second TRAC match-up.

LITTLE GIANTS DRIVE TO FIRST TRAC VICTORY, 61-50

by [Bill Bray](#) | Dec 11, 2021 | [Boys Basketball](#)



By Bill Bray

OREGON – It was the tale of two halves at Oregon Clay High School Friday night as Fremont Ross had the better second half to defeat the Eagles 61-50 for their season's first TRAC win.

"It was a tough night. Clay played hard. I think they are definitely getting better," coach John Cahill said. "While we struggled at times in this game. But I was proud of our kids for having the guts to hang in there. I feel like we got the first quarter handed to us, but then we pretty much took over the final three."

The first half, and particularly the first quarter, was dominated by Clay's senior guard Ben Jones. Jones almost single-handedly led the Eagles through the first quarter to give his team an 18-14 advantage at the buzzer. Jones connected for 13 of his team's 18 points, including two 'threes'.

The Little Giants showed more consistency with their scoring in the first two quarters of play. After their 14 first-quarter points, Ross connected for 13 in the second quarter. Helping Ross maintain an equal level of play was Anthony Vann, who accumulated eight points during the first 16 minutes. Labronze Barnett had seven over the stretch, and Carter Rodriguez also added seven of his own.

Oregon Clay's pace slowed as they collected only eight second-quarter points, giving the Little Giants a 27-26 lead at the break.

Clay came out in the third quarter and used three makes from beyond the arc plus four points from junior Marcus Rahm to account for their 13 third-quarter point.

In the third quarter, Ross' Ayden Carter did for Ross what Ben Jones had done for Clay early in the game. The junior scored 10 of his team's 21 third-quarter points, including one of his patented dunks. Others were contributing as Kurt Harrison played strongly in the post, adding just three points but had some assists and rebounds for the Giants.

"We got the ball in the post a little more in the second half," Cahill added. "We defended better and got some offense off our defense, and I felt like that was a big key for us tonight.":

Carter continued to be the scoring machine in the fourth quarter as he scored nine of Ross' 13 points to lead the purple and white to their first TRAC win.

Statistically, it was, again, a tale of two halves. Ross was led by Carter, who, after scoring just two points in the first half, exploded for 19 in the second half to lead all scorers with 21 points. Carter Rodriguez finished with 11 while Labronze Barnett contributed with nine points. Kurt Harrison and Anthony Vann had eight apiece. Bryson Hammer, still nursing a sore thumb, finished with four. The Little Giants were still a bit cool from the foul line, connecting on 7 of 14. "We took a step back in free-throw shooting. We have been working on that and didn't shoot as well, and that made it a little tough on us," Cahill continued, "but again, we got in a lot of foul trouble early but came back from that and found a way to win. It's a TRAC win, and we will take it and go home and get ready for Tiffin tomorrow."

The Giants will travel south on Route 53 to take on the Tornadoes Saturday night. Varsity game time is 7:30.



Labronze Barnett kept the Giants in the game during the first half of play.



Ayden Carter took control during the second half crashing the boards and making plays.



Anthony Vann played another solid game at both ends of the court.



Kurt Harrison gave Ross big minutes, mostly during the second half of play.

Carter hits court scoring for Ross

Matthew Horn
Fremont News-Messenger
USA TODAY NETWORK

Junior Ayden Carter has never scored fewer than 20 points in a game in his varsity career.

He wants to lead Fremont Ross in every statistical category, if it helps. To Carter, that means he's trying to evoke a little Russell Westbrook.

Little Giants coach John Cahill hears to Magic Johnson. Carter's priority is obviously scoring at the moment.

"I like to do everything," he said. "I like to get my teammates involved. There really isn't anything I don't like doing. Honestly, I just want to win. Whatever I have to focus in on. If I need to score, I will. If I need to rebound, I will."

"If I need to pass, I will."

Carter scored 20 points his first game, but he took a hard fall and didn't finish the contest.

He missed the next game, returning with 20 points.

He followed with 21 points and then 32 in a loss to Tiffin Columbian. He flushed two dunks in a win over Perkins and added one more in another game.

"I knew I needed to try to take over and try to do what I could," he said. "Put my foot on the gas. My role on the team is to score and be a leader. I've been face-guarded. Use my size [6-foot-3]. Use my athleticism and play to the best of my ability, with more emphasis on the scoring part."

"Having confidence in myself. Just going out and playing. Let the game come to me."

Cahill already trusts Carter to take control at times.

"I have the ability and freedom," Carter said.

"Coach has confidence in me. It's my first time on varsity. I don't have varsity experience, but it doesn't matter because I put in the work."

Cahill sees a skill set in Carter that could allow him to defend and do other things at a similar level to his scoring.

"He's long," Cahill said. "He can get in passing lanes. He can jump. He can even



See **CARTER**, Page 3B

Ross junior Ayden Carter hammers a dunk. SUBMITTED

Carter

Continued from Page 1B

protect the rim a little bit. The sky is the limit in terms of being a complete player who can help in a multitude of ways."

Carter averaged 20 points playing AAU for Hopson Elite of Toledo. Founder Dennis Hopson played with Michael Jordan in Chicago.

Carter forged his basketball IQ, playing since the third grade.

"I worked on my overall game," he said. "Every day. I didn't take any days off. I'm not surprised. I put the work in. Going to the rim, driving to attack. I credit my AAU season. I played against top competition."

"Getting into the lane. Making jumpers. Drawing contact on layups and making shots. It got me ready."

Ross juniors Kaden Holmes, Anthony Vann and Labronze Barnett started as freshmen. Senior Jaedyn Bulger is the fifth starter.

Junior Bryson Hammer and senior Kurt Harrison played varsity last season. Juniors Carter Rodriguez and Adam Hrynciw are varsity newcomers, and senior Travis Lotycz is in the mix.

"This team has a whole lot of potential," Carter said. "The first couple games there was a learning curve. The key to success is when we play together as one. I can see us with double-digit wins and making a run in the playoffs."

Cahill wants the Little Giants (2-3, 1-1) to control the things they can control. Effort, energy and intent.

"We've had a tumultuous preseason with football [extended] and injuries," Cahill said. "Our story will be told on how tough we are. We're not the biggest. Can we rebound? Can we defend? We need to take pride in toughness, and work harder for a better shot."

"Traditionally, tough people come out of Fremont. We need to get there."

The coronavirus likely delayed Carter's varsity progression because off-season access was limited. He isn't mad about it.

Still, he wants to make up for lost time in a way.

"I used last year. Those [junior varsity] minutes. It's motivation. I have a chip on my shoulder. I didn't have an opportunity last year."

He hit the ground running when he got a chance.

"He didn't have anything handed to



Ross' Labronze Barnett looks to score. DOUG HISE

him," Cahill said. "He played on the freshman team as a freshman. It never stopped him from working and trying to improve. It makes me happy to see a kid who puts the time in continue to improve."

Carter wants to one day be mentioned with storied Little Giants from the past. He wants to make like Ja Morant and one day bring a versatile game

to Division I, working to take a step toward that goal every day.

He'd like to begin by earning first-team status in the Three Rivers Athletic Conference.

"He worked hard and he's grown a lot," Cahill said.

"We saw glimpses last year. It was such a mess, we didn't see the maturation as coaches. It's no surprise. He can

be a complete player. He can create for others."

"He can rebound. He can defend. He can get points, but he can fill the stat sheet with rebounds, steals, blocks. You're seeing him score right now. You'll see so much more from Ayden to help Ross win."

mhorn@gannett.com

Twitter: @MatthewHornNH

GIANTS GAIN SECOND TRAC WIN OVER ST. FRANCIS

by [Bill Bray](#) | Dec 18, 2021 | [Boys Basketball](#)



By Bill Bray



Junior Carter Rodriguez (10) led Ross with 20 points on the night. St. Francis' Elvis Syroka shot a long ball as the buzzer sounded but it was three points too late, as Rodriguez's foul shots kept Ross on top for the TRAC win.

The contest was nip-and-tuck the entire game. The first quarter ended 12-11 in favor of the Giants. Ross led at the break, 28-25. At the end of three quarters, Ross still clung to a one-point lead at 42-41.

It was the most complete game the Giants have played all season and when the pressure was on, Fremont handled it like champions.



Ayden Carter applies defense during first half action.

Rodriguez was the player of the game for Ross. He sank a three-ball every time the Giants needed it. One in each of the four quarters to be exact. He ended as the game's leading scorer with 20 points.

"I thought we executed pretty well offensively at times," coach John Cahill said after his second TRAC win of the season. "They want to be methodical and slow, and they are bigger than we are, and I thought we shot better tonight. We still made some mistakes, but with Kaden (Holmes) being out and Ayden (Carter) in foul trouble, I thought we showed a lot of guts."



Jaedyn Bulger brings in a rebound during first-half action Friday night at St. Francis.

In the games' stats the Giants (3-3, 2-1) were much improved at the charity stripe hitting on 13 of 15. They hit on five from beyond the arc. After Rodriguez's four, Ayden Carter had the fifth 'three' in the first quarter.

After Rodriguez's 20 points, Carter contributed with 14, and Kurt Harrison added 12, getting some nice feeds from teammates for easy buckets.

The Giants host St. John's Tuesday night. The game will be the last basketball game to be played in the "Purple Pit." There are some pregame ceremonies planned.



Senior Kurt Harrison (30) goes up for an easy two points during first-half action.

Then, on Wednesday night, the last event will take place at the “Pit” when the wrestling team has its final match there against Bellevue, starting at 5:30 pm.

Anthony Vann	1	0	2	2
Bryson Hammer	0	0	1	1
LeBronze Barnett	2	0	0	4
Carter Rodriguez	1	4	6	20
Jaedyn Bulger	1	0	0	2
Adam Hrynciw	0	0	1	1
Ayden Carter	4	1	3	14
Kurt Harrison	5	0	2	12

Boy's end “Purple Pit’s “history with a 81-73 setback

By Bill Bray

FREMONT– The curtain closed on the famed “Purple Pit” Tuesday night, December 21. It wasn't the closure the Giants wanted as they fell to St. John's Jesuit 81-73 in Three Rivers Athletic Conference action.

The Titans broke out to a 23-14 first-quarter lead and never looked back. Fremont Ross continued to have trouble on the defensive end on the court as St. John's Kennedy Vaughn led the Titans' attack with seven first-quarter points.

St. John's maintained the nine-point lead as the teams entered the break with the Titans in front 44-35.

It was the third quarter that spelled doom for the Little Giants on this night. During the third stanza, the Titans were led by Carter Binkowski, who had

11 of St. John's 21 points during the eight minutes. The Titans' defense held the Little Giants to only 10 third-quarter points. The never-say-die Little Giants reeled off 28 fourth-quarter points to close the gap to eight points after having been trailing by 20 points going into the quarter. Statistically, Ross was 10 of 15 from the foul stripe while St. John's hit on 11 of 14 free throws. The Titans also sank six three-point shots during the game. Individually, for Ross, Ayden Carter continued his hot shooting, finishing with nine 2-point shots and three foul shots for 21. Jaedyn Bulger had four 2's, two 3's, and three of four from the line for 17. Kurt Harrison, playing another steady game, hit seven 2's and one 3 for 17 points. Vaughn led St. John's with 24 points. Coach John Cahill remains concerned about the Giants' defensive play. "We can be a much better defensive team, and we will," Cahill said. When asked about it being the final game at the "Purple Pit," Cahill said, "I started going to games in the Pit in the early 80s, played there, coached as the opposing coach there, and now am coaching Ross. It's a special place, and I will miss it."



Ross Junior, Bryson Hammer goes up for a shot attempt during second-half action vs Toledo St.John's

GOOD BYE "PURPLE PIT" THE MEMORIES WILL LIVE FOREVER

by [Bill Bray](#) | Dec 20, 2021 | [Featured News](#)



**BILL AUXTER RELIVES
THE "PURPLE PIT'S"
TOP STORY**

THAT 1 MAGICAL BASKET

By Bill Bray

A tradition, a way of life. A famed gymnasium will soon be but a memory. We will say goodbye to our beloved "Purple Pit" on December 22, 2021.

Since December 3, 1958, the "Purple Pit" has seen some exciting moments. The first basketball game was played that day and resulted in a 56-24 win over Holland. The following night, the Ross wrestlers took to the mats for the first time in the new gym and earned a 48-5 victory over Bowling Green.



Some of the names participating in those inaugural contests in basketball were Rueben Lozano, Steve Cecil, Harry Walter, Roger Mann, and Charles



Pankratz. The wrestler's winning matches included Rueben Rendon, Jim Ayres, George Shanahan, Neil Fausey, Neil Schneider, Dan Coleman, Jim Otermat, Tom Woessner, and Dick Swedersky.

We remember in 1963 when the championship football team of 1928 was honored at halftime, accompanied by Whitey Althoff. We also remember the play of Jim "Pete" Davis, who



Jim Davis, a great Ross player of the early 1960's, was the new career scoring king of Ross Basketball. We remember the 60's being dominated by the play of Tim Thomas, who went on to West Point and served our great country. We also remember a special night in February 1966 that we will get into later in the story. We remember the late 60's and early 70's, when John Lewis was the basketball star who led the Giants to a double-overtime win over Marion Harding. Lewis finished with 24 points in the win.



John Lewis played an exciting brand of basketball in the late 60's and early 70's



Coach Mal Mackey gave the last 22 years of his life to Ross Athletics.

We remember the wrestling match against Toledo Whitmer. A 33-21 victory in 1972. The team came from a large deficit to win. That was secondary to the fact that it would be coach Mal Mackey's last event at Fremont Ross that extended back to the fall of 1950.. The coach died of a heart attack in the following days. His final coaching experience was in the famed Ross High gymnasium.



A young Bob Seger performs on the "Purple Pit" stage in 1973.

We remember the gymnasium for the night in 1973 when a little-known rock band performed on the gymnasium's stage. Bob Seger and his band, not yet called the 'Silver Bullet band,' performed for the 'young people' from around the county. So unknown was Seger at the time that the newspaper did not cover the event.

We remember in 1984 when the Ross gym was renamed "The Purple Pit."

We remember when, on February 1, 1985, Greg



Bender became the first Ross basketball player to reach 1,000 points. To honor him and the other seniors, Athletic Director Dick Sherman, proclaimed the final home game of the 1984-85 season "Purple Pride Night". He asked that everyone wear purple.



Charles Woodson has the record for most points scored in a single game at the "Purple Pit." We remember the night a high-flying Charles Woodson scored 40 points. It came in January 1994. The total was just three points shy of the school record for points scored in a game and remains the most points scored in a game at the Purple Pit by a Fremont Ross player.



Dawn Zerman, arguably the best female basketball player to play at Fremont Ross. We remember the outstanding basketball efforts of Dawn Zerman during the mid 90's. On December 17, 1995, Zerman reached the 1000-point career plateau. It was Zerman's 71st straight start for Sue Wolf's Lady Little Giants.



Ross' Fred Shearon.

We remember in 2003 when Mark Gedeon's Little Giant Basketball team won an exciting overtime game against Napoleon 74-69. Fred Shearon led the Giants with 27 points.

We remember in 2009 when legendary coach Sue Wolf stepped down from her coaching duties after having coached the Little Giant girls from their infancy in



1976.

34 years of coaching excellence. Her most famous player, Dawn Zerman, said this about her coach "I am proud and thankful to have played and learned from such a great person. Thanks, Coach, for everything you have given, not only to me, but Fremont Ross Athletics."



John Cahill returned to Ross after an historic run as the Clyde Fliers girls basketball program. We remember in 2018 when Ross graduate John Cahill returned home after a successful stint coaching the Clyde Flier's girls teams for several years. He returned home to take over the Fremont Ross boys basketball program. "He's an enthusiastic leader who has strong ties to the Fremont community," athletic director Chad Berndt said.

We remember in the fall of 2009 when the administration hired Ross graduate Juan Vela to take a girls basketball program over after the departure of Sue



VELA

Wolf.

Vela is a 2000 graduate of Fremont Ross and played basketball for coach Mark Gedeon before becoming an assistant coach under him in 2007.

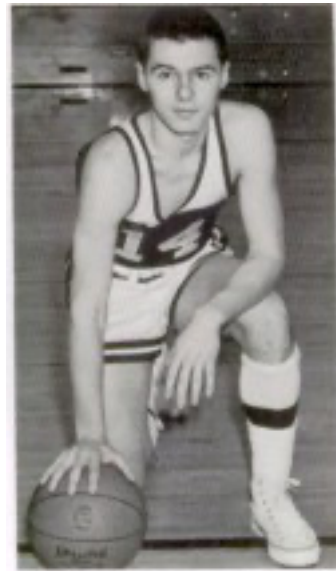
We could go on and on with all the exciting volleyball games, wrestling matches, band and choir concerts, community activities for there were many.

But over all these stories that happened in over 60 years in this place, one must stick out. One that involves a record that was set on one magically night in February of 1966. The site was the Fremont Ross gymnasium. It was a night that saw an explosive Lorain Admiral King come to town to take on our Little Giants. Admiral King had all the tools including one, Jim "Bubbles" Harris, who was a scoring machine for the Admirals averaging over 25 point per game. The idea of Ross coach Dick Norman was to slow the game down and not try to run with the 'run and gun' Admirals.

But run the Little Giants did and they gave Admiral King a lesson in how to succeed at their own style of play by winning the game 100-92.

The 100 points scored in that game by Fremont Ross remains a single game scoring record to this day. The young man who scored the 99th and 100th point remembers it well also to this day. Senior Billy Auxter scored the magical points and loves chatting about it.

"We were just clicking on all cylinders," Auxter remembered. ""We had Timmy



TIM THOMAS

Thomas who was averaging 18 points per game." He scored 27 points. Terry Bork, our second leading scorer, averaging 15 points a



TERRY BORK

game scored a career high 32 points.”

Auxter remembered. “Coach (Dick) Norman assigned me to cover Jim “Bubbles” Harris,” Auxter continued. “Harris was a junior and he came into that game averaging probably 25 points per game. So, coach Norman said. “Auxter, I want you to do nothing but to defend that guy. You be on him like a bad habit. So I was, I guarded him, and I guarded him, and I held him to 31 points,” Auxter said with a



FRED SWAISGOOD

chuckle. So obviously the reason I didn’t score much that night was because I was concentrating on defense,” Auxter said while continue to laugh.

The News-Messenger reported that night, “Fred Swaisgood and Bill Auxter” (two greats from Lindsey, Oh, by the way) “finally combined to reach the coveted high and new school record. With 47 seconds to play Swaisgood hit a jump shot to make the tally, 98-86. Auxter then stole the ball as King attempted to move up the floor. He broke toward the basket for a layup and the 99th and 100th point. It would be two of the three points that Auxter scored that night but as he summed it up saying. “”If there is a life’s lesson I learned from this



experience,” Auxter said. “It is that not everyone can be the high scorer, but if you are the person lucky enough to score the last two points to hit 100 and set a record, that’s the shot everyone remembers”. Goodbye “Ross Gymnasium”, ‘Purple Pit” or any other names the four walls have been giving over 63 years of service to our youth and community. You will definitely be missed.



On a personal note, yours truly grew up in the “Purple Pit”. I (shown in purple and white sweater behind two coaching legends, Norm Bray (my dad) and George Gruse) will always remember the excitement and memories the “Purple Pit” supplied a young man with through the 60s and 70s.

A SENIOR DOING HIS JOB

by [Bill Bray](#) | Dec 30, 2021 | [Featured News](#)



By Bill Bray

FREMONT – When one thinks about Fremont Ross Boys Basketball this season, names like Ayden Carter, Kaden Holmes, or Carter Rodriguez might come to mind. But the Little Giants have a senior leader who contributes every single game.

Kurt Harrison, a 6'5" post player, is always on the floor when coach John Cahill needs Harrison's intensity and rebounding ability. "Kurt is a kid who has a varied role here," Cahill began. "He came up as a sophomore and started some for us. He played a lot as a junior and this year he is kind of in a 'coming off the bench' role, but he does whatever he can to help the team. I compare him a little to the Cleveland Cavaliers' Kevin Love in some ways. Love was an all-star, and now he's doing whatever he can to help his team. Kurt has been huge for us in a few different games so far this season, not as much in scoring but just his overall presence on the court with rebounding and steady play."

The senior is happy with the role that he brings to the team this season. "The last two years I have been here, but we have a bunch of new guys now on the varsity. Some are the same, but others have gotten a lot better as they have grown in the program. But really, I don't mind coming off the bench to do the job that is asked of me. Whether it is to set screens, get rebounds, or hit a few shots and cheer my guys on. It's definitely a big change, but I look for the best in everything."

Harrison grew up in a culture different from the one he now finds himself in. "I attended Fremont St. Joseph. My whole family went there, but I decided to transfer to Ross for 8th grade. It has turned out to be a great decision because I

have met many great friends. The coaching staff is awesome here and they have helped me improve both as a player and person.”

Harrison's extroverted personality was not a good fit at St. Joe. “My class at St. Joe had around 15 students in it, so consequently, I didn't have many friends there. I decided to come to Ross, and I have met about 350 people over the last four years. Many of them will be lifelong friends, so that makes me very happy.”

Basketball was another interest that Harrison came to know and enjoy at an early age. “I started playing basketball in first or second grade,” Harrison remembered. “So, I have been playing pretty much my whole life. I love the sport. I love it because it is so competitive, and it matches my personality: I am very competitive. I love competing with different people and getting to know other guys from playing.

Despite his love for the game, nothing is more critical to Harrison than a good education that will carry him through the rest of his life. “I pay attention much more to school than basketball because that's just how my parents raised me. I love basketball, but school is definitely more important, and I try to maintain the best grades possible.”

That's not to say that Harrison doesn't think the world of the guidance he is getting while playing the sport he loves. “Coach Cahill is a great guy. He came here my freshman year, so I don't know any differently. He has taught me so many things about life and basketball, and he has always been there for me, whether it be school, personal issues, or basketball; no matter what, he's been there for me, and I really appreciate him. Coach Gedeon also. He's been a really nice guy and has also taught me well with school and basketball issues, and he is also very much appreciated.”

Those “best grades possible” will hopefully lead Harrison to his next goal: attending college. “I think I will be attending Bowling Green State University to study business. Everyone in my family studied business, and I feel like it is an excellent path for me as well. I love negotiated deals and just being around people socializing and getting things done in the classroom.

But for now, there are still more immediate goals to achieve while at Ross High School. Let's hope that those goals become a reality and the basketball season can extend far into March.

HIGH SCHOOL BOYS BASKETBALL



Ross' Ayden Carter delivers a pass. MATTHEW HORN/FREMONT NEWS-MSGENDER

Emotional night as Little Giants play final game in Purple Pit

Matthew Horn

Fremont News-Messenger
USA TODAY NETWORK

Large tears rolled down John Lewis' cheeks.

Atkinson Elementary, Fremont Junior High and the Purple Pit are things no longer. Lewis, of course, was particularly saddened by the latter.

Fremont Ross boys lost the final game Tuesday in the old gym, 81-73 to Toledo St. John's in the Three Rivers Athletic Conference. The girls played their last game in the gym earlier this month.

"I spent a lot of time here," Lewis said. "I love Fremont Ross. When I put that jersey on, it wasn't just the jersey. It was representing my family, my community and my school. It's my home."

Little Giants coach John Cahill graduated from Ross in 1987, after attending Atkinson and Fremont Junior High. He played with Greg Bender and cherishes the night in Fremont when the program's all-time leading scorer registered 1,000 points for the first time in program history.

The Little Giants were one of only

two teams to beat state runner-up Admiral King when Cahill was a junior.

"I grew up in this gym," Cahill said. "I spent a lot of time here. I've been coming to games here since the early 1980s. I have a unique experience. I played here. I coached against Ross. I coach here."

Ayden Carter scored 21 points, and Jaedyn Bulger and Kurt Harrison added 17 apiece for the Little Giants.

"We're in the moment," Cahill said. "The ball moved really well early and then the offense got stagnant. We need to defend. It will help to have Kaden [Holmes]. We'll keep working to get better and head to the new gym with a lot to play for."

"We would have liked to have sent the old one out with a win. I love the Purple Pit. It's bittersweet. I'll miss it. We're ready for a change. We'll try to make new memories in the new gym."

The first game at the Purple Pit was 63 years ago, in 1958. It was known as the Purple Pit after 1984.

Lewis, who graduated in 1971, sealed a 49-48 victory over second-ranked Elyria and scored 25 points in a double-overtime victory over Marion Harding in

the regular season.

He scored 28 points in a narrow setback to a ranked Findlay team and 17 consecutive points in a different win over Elyria in Fremont. He averaged 21 points as a senior.

Lewis watched Pete Davis, who graduated in 1963. He considers Davis a mentor, playing together at the park in their neighborhood.

Garry Clark, who graduated in 1976, was at Tuesday's game. He remembers a win over Admiral King in Fremont his senior year that dropped the opposition into a tie with a third team for the Greater Buckeye Conference crown.

He scored off an offensive rebound — his only shot of the game — at the buzzer to beat Marion Harding his sophomore year.

Mark Gedeon is one of Cahill's assistants. Gedeon was head coach from 1995 until Cahill took the helm three years ago.

Ross advanced to regional in 1997 and averaged 16 wins, with four conference championships over a stretch.

See GYM, Page 2B

Gym

Continued from Page 1

“People said that was something that couldn’t be done in Fremont and we had several groups that didn’t believe that and believed in what we can do,” Gedeon said. “I was fortunate to be part of so many [memories].

“That’s a tribute to the players who have come through here.”

Ross beat visiting Sandusky 100-99 in double overtime in 2005. It beat Fostoria 107-65 in Fremont to earn a league championship in the final game of the regular season.

Some things won’t change with the Little Giants’ transition.

“It’s a beautiful new place,” Gedeon said. “We’re all excited. It’s still all about the kids. That’s what makes the high school game special.”

Ross girls coach Juan Vela played for Gedeon before graduating in 2000. Vela canned a 3-pointer as the Little Giants took the lead for good in a double-overtime win over visiting St. John’s.

Reggie Jones tied the game with an alley-oop dunk. Ross led Sandusky 52-18 after a masterful first half in Vela’s senior year.

Russ Zimmerman, who remembers when you couldn’t cup the ball with your palm up, graduated in 1970. Ross beat Elyria by one point in Fremont his senior year. Son Ryan Zimmerman, Justin Perry, Doug Horn and Damon Walker helped offset an injury to Nick Wolf in a win over visiting Oregon Clay.

Wolf, who graduated in 1992, remembers playing with Mark Sheidler. They beat Sandusky and Toledo Whitmer in

Fremont on consecutive weekend evenings.

“We surprised some people,” Wolf said.

He was on 33-year coach Sue Wolf’s staff for a few seasons.

He looks forward to similar circumstances. Ross joins the Northern Lakes League in 2023.

“When you’re young and you’re from Fremont and you come back and you played in games here and you watched games, it’s bittersweet,” Wolf said. “It’s time to move on, forward. Fremont is blessed to have a new building and hopefully, kids are proud to represent the name on the front.

“For Coach Cahill. For Coach Vela. For whomever. I want the kids to work. Everything is earned.”

Players often have more freedom within the offense — or not — than they did when Lewis played for Alex Clark. There were no heat checks or 3-pointers for that matter.

“If I had a green light like kids do now,” Lewis said. “I shot to make it. If they turn me loose, we win half those games [we lost]. I’m a student of the game. They couldn’t guard me. I could tell guys what I’d do, and they couldn’t do anything about it.”

Lewis planned to reach down to slap the floor Tuesday one last time.

“It’s an honor to be a Little Giant and it’s a privilege to play for the community and school I love so dearly,” he said. “I’m 68, but purple and white sets a fire in me. I think of the games I’ve played. As a competitor, you want to play against guys just as good.

“I wish kids would love the game like we do. I played because I loved it. I wanted to represent Fremont.”

GIANTS RUN PAST WAITE, 86-48

by [Bill Bray](#) | Jan 19, 2022 | [Boys Basketball](#)



By Bill Bray

TOLEDO – The Fremont Ross Little Giants got back to their winning ways to the extreme as they defeated Toledo Waite 86-48.

The outmanned Waite Indians, though starting the first quarter even, soon felt the Giants' wrath as they poured in 27 points. It was the play of Jaedyn Bulger, Ayden Carter, Kurt Harrison, and Kaden Holmes that helped the Giants accumulate those points during the quarter. With the 27-16 first quarter in the books, the rest of the contest was smooth sailing for the Giants.

With a 21-5 second quarter, the Giants went to the break up 48-21. Carter helped the avalanche of the quarter's points, exploding for 12 points during the stanza. Ross hit the cruise control button in the second half, as coach John Cahill emptied the bench, and his subs outscored Waite 10-6 in the final quarter for the 38-point margin of victory.

Coach Cahill added his comments after the lopsided win. "I feel like we have been playing pretty well, just not getting results lately against good teams, so with this opportunity, we were going to take Waite seriously and play hard and try to play well. We didn't start particularly well, but once we got going, we played pretty good basketball." With tournament time looming, Cahill is still trying to find the combination of players that will give the Giants their best basketball. "We are really getting to a crossroads when you get to mid-January with the tournament not far away, and you are really trying to start playing your best ball, and I think of the Whitmer game where we had opportunities, and the

Sandusky game, the same thing. So, we aren't far away, but I think we just keep grinding and working, and I do believe this team is destined to do some special things."

When the fourth quarter started, with a 76-42 lead, Cahill emptied his bench. "I liked our bench. I thought they had great energy tonight," Cahill said. "We had 12 of our 13 guys score tonight. They were excited for one another for sure. I think of Jaedyn Bulger right now. He has been starting all year, and he didn't do anything wrong, but we just need that sixth man off the bench. So, we have this bench parade now with Jaedyn, Bryson (Hammer), who is probably our best defender, then Kurt (Harrison), who is different than what we have because he is a true five. I feel like all three of those guys gave us great energy tonight, so we have an eight-man rotation with Adam Hrynciw in there at the end coming in there for a ninth man. But I thought Jayden was excellent again tonight."

Statistically, the Little Giants had four players in double figures for the contest. Carter led all scorers with 22 points and added seven rebounds. Bulger, Harrison, and Holmes each collected 14 points. Along with Bulger's 14 points came six rebounds and five assists.

Next up for the Giants will be a home game on Friday against TRAC foe Oregon Clay. Meeting for the first go around in early December, the Giants took care of the Eagles on their home court with a score of 61-50. "Now we'll get back to work for Clay on Friday. It's a big game for us because we want to keep getting better and keep trying to improve."



Junior Ayden Carter (22) matched his jersey # with 22 points in the Giants' win



Senior Kurt Harrison (30) finished the night as one of three Ross players contributing with 14 points.



Junior Kaden Holmes (55) goes up for two of his 14 points in the non-league win.

LITTLE GIANTS MOLD CLAY INTO WIN

by [Bill Bray](#) | Jan 22, 2022 | [Boys Basketball](#)



By Bill Bray

FREMONT – The Little Giants won their second straight game of the week with a 69-39 TRAC win over Oregon Clay.

It took just over four minutes of the first quarter for Fremont to build an insurmountable lead over their TRAC opponents. At the 4:58 mark of the first quarter, the Giants had already built a lead of 12-2, and by the end of the initial quarter, Ross was comfortably in front 23-9.

Before Clay scored again, the Giants went on a 14-0 run, and by the time the half came, the game was all but over as the Little Giants were up 44-14.

"I thought we shared the ball very well tonight," coach John Cahill said after the TRAC win. "We team rebounded, I haven't seen the stats yet, but our assist numbers are going to be through the roof tonight."

The third quarter was a bit sloppy for Ross as Clay outscored the Giants 17-6 over the eight minutes of action. Even with the 'slump', Ross remained up 50-31.

Fremont had an easy second straight win over teams with a combined record of 0-30.

After the two easy wins coach John Cahill summed it up by saying, "Our practices are hard. We go 1's against 1's a lot. Our guys split up and play, and our practices are tough, so our goal is to go tough in practice because Fremont Ross has not cut a net down in over a decade. The tournament is coming, and we are trying to get better every week."

Statistically, for Fremont, the domination was evident. Ayden Carter continued his offensive dominance, finishing with a game-leading 21 points. Also in double figures were Anthony Vann with 12 points and 11 boards, while Kaden Holmes finished with 11 points. Jaedyn Bulger scored one bucket but was tough again on the boards with 12 rebounds going along with his five assists. The 6-9 Giants will be back in action Tuesday when the 3-6 Springfield Blue Devils come to the "Purple Pit". The freshman game will tip off at 4:45 pm.



Ayden Carter (22) gave another "Carter-like" performance finishing with a game high 21 points including 7-of-7 from the foul line.



Anthony Vann (11) was the “shout out” player of the game for his 12 points and 11 rebounds during the TRAC win over Oregon Clay.



Jaedyn Bulger (13) was strong on the boards for the Little Giants hauling in 12 rebounds.

FOURTH QUARTER SUPER EFFORT FALLS SHORT

by [Bill Bray](#) | Jan 29, 2022 | [Boys Basketball](#)



By Bill Bray

FREMONT – They say a basketball contest can be a war of scoring runs. Thus was the case at the “Purple Pit” Friday night as the St. Francis Knights earned their first victory, 56-48.

After taking off to a 6-0 lead to start the game, Fremont Ross witnessed a team on a mission. The Knights went on a 12-1 run, after a timeout, to end the first quarter with a 12-7 lead.

In the second quarter, Ross closed the margin by two points at 14-13 before the Knights went on another 9-0 run to end the first half with a 23-13 lead.

The third quarter was when the Knights all but put the game away, outscoring Ross 22-6 over the eight minutes. With all eyes on St. Francis at this point, the seas parted, and back came a fighting band of Little Giants.

Before the final quarter came to an end, the gutsy Little Giants scrapped, clawed, and fought their way, led by senior Jaeyden Bulger and juniors Kaden Holmes and Ayden Carter. But Bulger was a man possessed as he played a significant role in the comeback that almost wiped out the huge Ross deficit. By the time the game ended, Ross had outscored St. Francis 29-11 in the final quarter.

Statistics for the game: Fremont Ross was good on 18 of 74 shots, 4 of 24 from three-point land, and 8-16 from the foul line. Individually, Ayden Carter led Ross with 16 points, and Kaden Holmes, along with Carter Rodriguez, got into double figures with 10 points apiece.

For St. Francis, Te'lor Sanders finished with 18 points. Twelve of those came on the 12-1 run in the first quarter. Freshman guard Jameson Heck had 17 points. The big story for the Knights was post player Martin Beredo. The 6-7 senior unofficially blocked 15 of Fremont Ross' 74 shot attempts, though only scoring five points. His impact was certainly felt on the Knights' defensive end without question. The same as Bulger's play impacted Fremont Ross' 29-point fourth quarter. He finished with only eight points, but his defensive play in the final eight minutes almost erased the huge deficit.

"We shot it poorly for three quarters," a disappointed John Cahill said after the game. "But we showed a lot of guts to come back in the fourth quarter, almost to save the contest."

Ross (6-10, 3-7) travels to St John's on Tuesday to take on the (10-6, 5-5) Titans.

GIANT SIZED EFFORT FALLS 1 POINT SHORT

by Bill Bray | Feb 2, 2022 | Boys Basketball



By Bill Bray

TOLEDO – Redemption was on the minds of the Little Giants after their below-par performance against St. Francis last Friday. Four solid quarters of offense and defense left the Giants one point short in a 58-57 loss at St. John's.

After one quarter, Ross trailed by a two-point margin at 16-14. During the quarter, Jaedyn Bulger nailed a pair of threes to help keep the Little Giants close.

The Titans took the second quarter by a 16-15 count. Ayden Carter was the Little Giant to keep his team within three at the break at 32-29. Carter was five of six at the foul line, along with two buckets.

The Fremont Ross performance on both ends of the court kept them close in the third period. Ross took the quarter by six points to have a 44-41 lead when the third stanza ended. The team looked poised for a win over an above-average St. John's.

The fourth quarter was just as fast-paced as the first quarter. The game resembled a heavyweight championship fight. Vaughn of St. John's scored eight fourth-quarter points, including four of four at the foul line, to help his team squeak out the TRAC win.

A very disappointed John Cahill remained proud of the way his team battled in the one-point loss. "We had real opportunities to win this thing," Cahill began. "I'm proud of our growth and what we are doing. We had that bad setback Friday night, and to bounce back on the road, it took nearly a doggone buzzer-beater to beat us. So, I am proud of what we did here tonight. We must eventually get the right outcome. We talk about this, we don't have that signature win that we can hang our hats on. Most of these guys, in any sport they play, have not felt that. Tonight, on the road, at St. John's, with a team that has a good record and has some big wins, we had a real opportunity to get it done, and we just didn't. It doesn't take away the fact that I am proud of how hard we played and how we bounced back, and I am proud of the way we listened to the game plan tonight."

Statistically, in the scoring department, Ayden Carter again led Ross with 24 points, including eight 'twos' and eight of 10 from the foul line. Others in double figures included Kaden Holmes, who finished with seven 'twos' and one of one from the foul line for 15, and Jaedyn Bulger, who finished with two 'threes' and two 'twos' for 10 points.

"A couple of plays here and there that didn't go our way tonight, and it stings," Cahill said. "We'll just keep grinding and working. That's all you can do," Cahill continued. "We have to find ways to keep getting better, and we aren't far away. It's just a question of getting over that last hump of finishing games. I thought we did a lot of things tonight to win it. We just had a few too many turnovers and missed a few free throws down the stretch."

Fremont Ross is back in action Friday night (weather permitting) against the always tough Toledo Central Catholic Irish.



Jaedyn Bulger (13) starts the game with a 'three' for the Giants. Bulger ended the night with 10 points.



Kaden Holmes (55) had a standout game for the Giants making several nice moves and baskets as he ended the night with 15 points.



Ayden Carter (22) kept up with his scoring dominance as he finished the game with 24 points. Always going 100 mph, Carter played a typical great game.

SECOND HALF POINT-BLIZZARD TOPS SPRINGFIELD

by [Bill Bray](#) | Feb 6, 2022 | [Boys Basketball](#)



By Bill Bray

FREMONT – After playing within six points of each other in the first half, the Little Giants used a 42-point second half to win their non-conference game Saturday night over the Springfield Blue Devils 82-59.

Ross sprinted out to a 10-0 run in the first quarter and scored 14 of the first 16 points of the game before Springfield's Marcel Pringle, Jr. sank a trio of three-point shots to keep his Blue Devils in the quarter.

Meanwhile, during the first eight minutes, Fremont's motor, aka Ayden Carter, connected on 12 points, and Carter Rodriguez scored three 'twos' and a pair of 'threes' to match Carter's first quarter output. All this ended with Ross up 26-18.

"We got off to an excellent start," coach John Cahill said. "Then we got in some foul trouble, and it changed what we were doing. Springfield played well. They have played a lot of tough teams this year."

The second quarter saw Fremont's point production lessen because of the foul trouble Cahill alluded to. Carter managed just three second-quarter points, and Rodriguez added seven to be his team's leading scorer at the break with 19 points.

"The second half we played at a high level," Cahill said. "We defended well, shared the ball really well, and with that, we were able to score 82 total points. We've been knocking on the door. You look at this and see that had we played this way against St. Francis and had a few different bounces of the ball against St. John's, we could have been 5-0 over that stretch, but we are 3-2 instead, and we are heading to the tournament, looking for big things there."

With a six-point lead heading into the second half at 40-34, Carter and Rodriguez got some great assists and a few big buckets from Jaedyn Bulger and Kaden

Holmes to help expand the lead. Bulger is Ross's much-needed assistant. He added five during critical times in the non-conference win, along with dropping in 11 points. Holmes had a few marvelous assists and collected six points during the game. On one assist, Holmes had the no-look over-the-head pass to Rodriguez, who made the score 50-40 with that success.

During the second half, the Giants played what could be considered their best half of the season. Scoring 42 points during the 16 minutes, every player contributed, whether it was with points, assists, or rebounds. Kurt Harrison added a three to Fremont's total, Anthony Vann had a bucket, Adam Hrynciw had a bucket late, along with freshman Roberto Moreno, who also contributed to the 82-point total. Contributing at the hoop were Carter and Rodriguez, who finished the game with 30 and 26 points, respectively.

"It was a total team effort tonight," Cahill said. "Points are important, don't get me wrong, but those baskets where other guys found Carter and Rodriguez, or getting that tough rebound, those things are just as big and help to make a good offense even better."

The team has been steadily improving through the last two or three weeks of the season, and Cahill added, "I think if we can stick together and keep working hard, I don't think we are that far away from being that team that can do some great things in the tournament run."

The Little Giants have the higher-level TRAC teams left. Unfortunately, none of the three are in the friendly confines of the "Purple Pit". Findlay, Toledo Central Catholic, and Lima will be significant challenges for the Giants.

All those games are big, and we will see if they come together, play like a team, and get a win in one of those three crucial TRAC contests, or even more. The tournament may be an excellent time for the Fremont Ross boys' basketball.



Junior Carter Rodriguez (10) goes up for two of this 26 points Saturday at the “Purple Pit.”



Junior Ayden Carter (22), grabs two of his 30 points during second half action against Springfield in the “Purple Pit.”

ANOTHER HEARTBREAKER AT FINDLAY, 81-77

by [Bill Bray](#) | Feb 12, 2022 | [Boys Basketball](#)



By Bill Bray

FINDLAY– In what can only be described as the tale of two halves, the Little Giants visited the Trojans and came out on the short end of an 81-77 TRAC contest.

The first half was arguably the best half of basketball Fremont has played all season. Ross, led by seven Carter Rodriguez points in the first quarter, along with a tenacious defense, grabbed a 19-16 advantage during the first eight minutes. The Little Giant (7-12, 3-9) assault continued in the second quarter. Ayden Carter came to life along with the assisting, rebounding, and point production from Jaedyn Bulger. Bulger, known for his aggressive style of play, was Mr. Inside and Outside during the quarter. When he wasn't in the thick of things, rebounding and assisting, he nailed a three-pointer and added a second bucket. Carter, again playing at his exciting style of play, finished the quarter with eight big points, going along with Bulger's six points, as Fremont carried a 40-30 lead into the locker room at the half.

The third quarter began with Ross still maintaining the momentum. At the 3:54 mark of the quarter, Ross had built their advantage to a 15-point 54-39 lead. Enter Findlay's Max Roth. At that point in the third quarter, Ross had held the Trojan sharpshooter to 19 points. What followed was probably one of the best quarters and halves in league play this season.

Findlay (15-5, 8-5) used a two-man offense over the remainder of the third quarter and for the entire fourth quarter, as the momentum began to

change. Roth's 19 points quickly became 27 points with under a minute left in the quarter. Joining forces with Roth was Jake Bishop, who collected 13 points by the end of the period.

The Trojans came back from 15 points down to just a seven-point deficit with 7:00 left in the contest. With Roth sitting at 29 points and Bishop adding 15. The Ross advantage began slipping away. "We just didn't do an excellent job on those two guys," coach John Cahill offered. "We tried several different defenses, and I think Max Roth showed everyone what a scholarship player looks like tonight." The momentum, the cheer of the numerous home fans, began to break Ross' stranglehold on the Trojans. The remainder of the fourth quarter was all about the two Findlay Trojans who rose to the occasion to save the game for their team.

Statistically, the heroic performance by our band of Little Giants was again overshadowed by 'a better team'. Roth's performance was nothing short of amazing, as the Findlay senior led his team. Roth finished with 14 two-point goals, one three-pointer, and was 10 of 10 at the foul line. Bishop finished with four two-pointers, four three-pointers, and a perfect five of five from the foul line for 25 points.

For Ross, Ayden Carter, "Mr. Steady" for the Giants, finished with his per-game average of 21 points. Carter had eight two-pointers, one 'tre', and was two of two at the line. Also finishing in double figures were Carter Rodriguez with 19, including three two-point shots, three three-pointers, and four of four from the foul line. Jaedyn Bulger was good for 14 points and led in rebounds with 14 while adding four assists.

"I'm proud of our guys, Cahill said. "We shared the ball well tonight, we played with courage. We are a much better team than we have been since I have been here. We just desperately need that result. I told the guys the options are to quit or keep working, and we are all going to keep working. We know we were outplayed in the second half, and we have to learn from this, and come out again Saturday night and play harder and better."

The Giants host Toledo Bowsher in a non-conference contest at the friendly confines of the "Purple Pit". Come out and show your support for our athletes who continue to work toward success.



Fremont's Ayden Carter (22) hit for his per game average of 21 points against the Trojans.



Senior Jaedyn Bulger continued his aggressive style of play hitting the boards for 14 rebounds and adding 14 points against Findlay.

CENTRAL CATHOLIC NEEDS OVERTIME TO DOWN ROSS 67-65

by [Bill Bray](#) | Feb 16, 2022 | [Boys Basketball](#)



By Bill Bray

FREMONT– “Winners never quit, and quitters never win.” This quote from Vince Lombardi can be used to define the Ross High basketball team. Despite our team's determination and battling every time out, there was another heartbreaking loss. This time, the Irish of Central Catholic beat the Irish of Central Catholic 67-65 in overtime.

The Little Giants started the game against the number six teams in the state in Division II with fire in their eyes. By the time the first quarter ended, our Giants held a 21-16 lead. Carter Rodriguez nailed two three-pointers, Jaedyn Bulger added one, and Kaden Holmes scored the fourth three-pointer of the quarter. Ayden Carter added seven points to help his team's lead.

After winning the first quarter, 21-16, Ross held their ground over the second eight minutes and took a 38-27 lead into the locker room. Rodriguez hit his third three-pointer and scored two close-range buckets as the junior played inspiring basketball.

Central Catholic came out in the third quarter and slowly began to take away Fremont's momentum. After scoring 38 points in an impressive first half, the Giants were held to 10 points during the quarter's action. Central used a pair of 'threes' to collect 17 points and had Ross to 12. Six of those Ross points came from the shooting touch of Kaden Holmes. Holmes played a big part in attacking the bigger Irish team with his always physical style of play.

Hanging on to a 50-44 lead heading into the fourth quarter, the Central defense stiffened. Holmes and Carter scored all of Ross' 10 points. Meanwhile, the Irish chipped away as they scored a three, along with two two-point shots.

With the score knotted at 60-60, the teams went to overtime. Central broke the tie with a three-point make. Ross committed a turnover leading to another Irish three-pointer, expanding their overtime lead to 66-60. After an Anthony Vann miss, Bulger was fouled. Going to the foul line, Bulger made one of his two free throws to make the score 66-61 with just over a minute remaining in the overtime period. Central took some valuable time off the clock before finally calling a timeout. Holmes committed a foul, but Central's one-and-one was not converted. Bulger rebounded, leading to a Holmes' three-point attempt that fell short, and Central had possession.

Bryson Hammer, who displayed some terrific defense for the Giants during the contest, got his hands on the inbound pass and gave possession right back to Ross. Carter, on an assist from Bulger, made a close-range bucket that closed the Central lead to 66-63. With that, coach Cahill took a full timeout. Full-court pressure by the Giants led to Carter's fourth foul. Central missed yet another one-and-one opportunity as Carter pulled down the rebound. The next offensive possession was another two-pointer from Carter on an assist by Rodriguez to make it a 66-65 Central lead. With Central's next possession, Hammer's quickness and defensive presence led to tying the Central ball handler up. With that, Ross won possession and had one final chance to overtake Central's six-point lead. The possession ended with no points on Carter's miss. In an effort for the rebound, Holmes fouled, and Central had a chance to add to their one-point lead as time was running out. One of two foul shots was converted. Fremont called their final time out with Central holding a two-point lead at 67-65. A desperation three with 1.4 seconds remaining by Bulger from half court following the timeout was off the mark, and Central escaped with the overtime victory. "We showed a lot of poise. We got two good looks and showed some guts," Cahill said. "But it's just hard to continue to think that 'hey, it's going to work out' when you just keep finding ways to lose these things. They are the number six team in the state in Division II and have a chance to go to Columbus, I mean, we are RIGHT THERE. "

Ross finishes their regular season Friday with a trip to Conference leader Lima Senior. They will have a third meeting with St. John's as they move into tournament action on February 26th at Toledo Start High School. Ross will be there because winners never quit.



Bryson Hammer (2) had some key defensive plays during the TRAC battle with Central Catholic.



Carter Rodriguez's sharp shooting in the first half gave Ross a comfortable margin at the half.



Kaden Holmes (55) contributed with his point production and rebounding. Holmes led Ross in scoring with 21 points and hauled in six rebounds to go with his two assists.



Varsity assistant Mark Gedeon gets his point across during a fourth-quarter timeout.