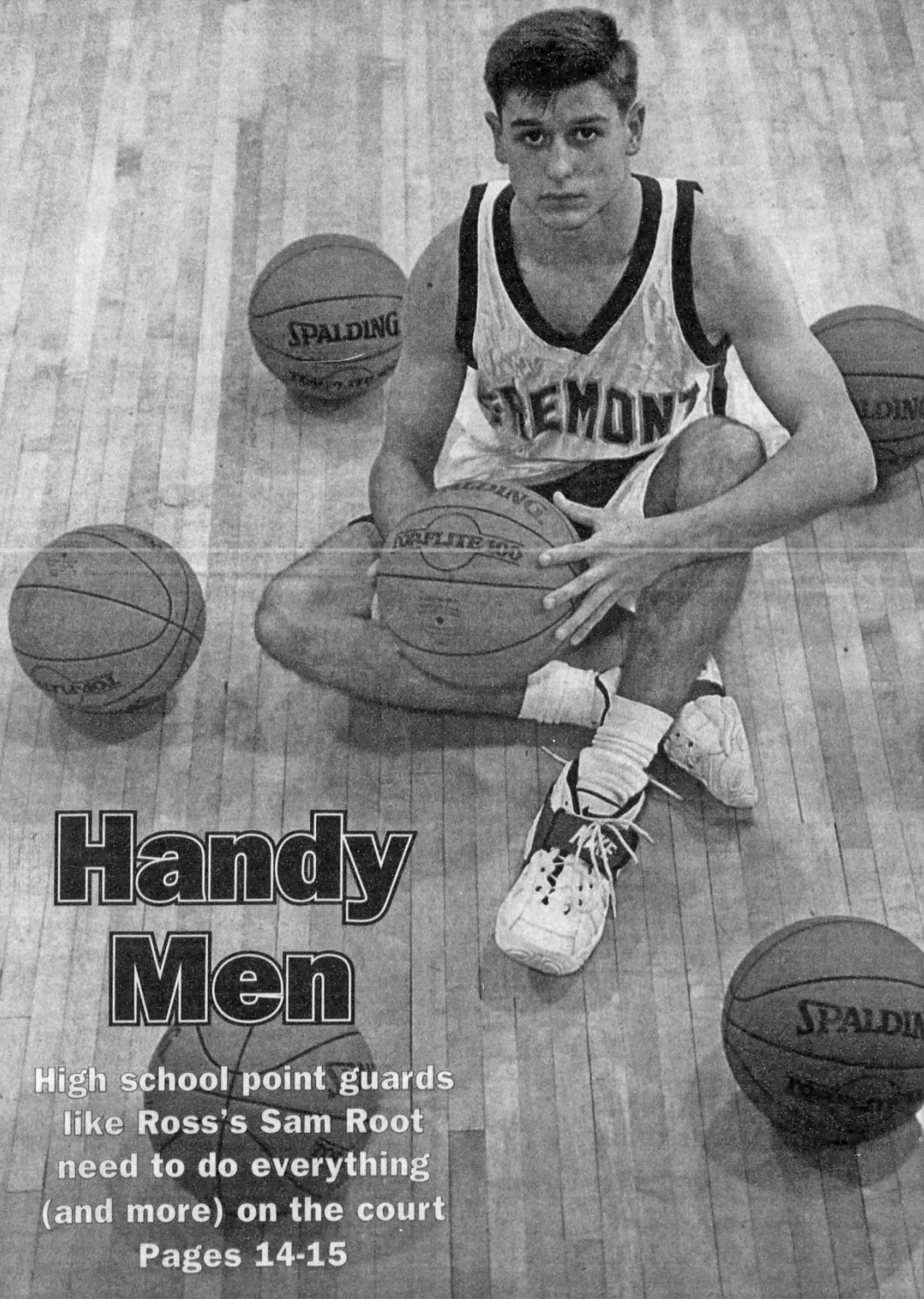


1996-1997 Season Review

The News - Messenger

BASKETBALL



Handy Men

High school point guards
like Ross's Sam Root
need to do everything
(and more) on the court

Pages 14-15

Little Giants out to make history

Gedeon's troops coming off successful summer training

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

The Chicago Bulls hadn't yet become a dynasty, The Artist was still known as Prince and Ross Perot had a prayer the last time the Fremont Ross boys basketball team had a winning record.

It's been four long years since that 11-10 mark in 1991-92.

This year, coach Mark Gedeon and his Little Giants are out to change history.

"One of our goals is to be known as the best team Fremont Ross has had in the '90s," said Gedeon, whose team finished 9-12, 6-8 in the Great Lakes League, in his first year as varsity coach.

History tells us that Ross has won more than 13 games only three times, the last time being 1989-90. The Little Giants' effort in the offseason, which included a summer league tournament victory at Bowling Green, gives Gedeon reason to be optimistic.

"We had a great offseason, and the climax was at Bowling Green," said Gedeon. "We have six returning lettermen, giving us a lot of experience coming back, and the expectations already exist between myself and the players."

Though key cogs Doug Hershey, Ryan Shively and Shaun Root have graduated, Ross

A look back

Last year: 9-12 overall, 6-8 GLL (sixth place)

Postseason: Lost to Mansfield Madison, 73-62, in first round of sectionals

Key losses to graduation: Doug Hershey (12.6 ppg, 7.4 reb), Shawn Root (5.6 ppg, 2.8 reb)

1996-97 schedule

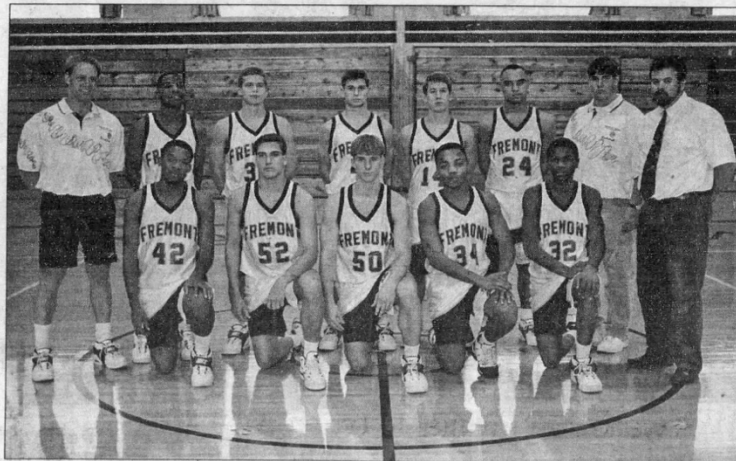
(Games 6:15 p.m. unless noted)

Nov. 29	Bowling Green
Dec. 3	At Toledo Waite, 6
Dec. 10	Clay, 6
Dec. 13	At Napoleon
Dec. 20	Findlay
Dec. 21	At Bedford, 6
Dec. 27	At Sandusky Tourney TBA
Dec. 28	At Sandusky Tourney, TBA
Jan. 3	At Toledo Whitmer
Jan. 10	Fostoria
Jan. 17	Bedford
Jan. 18	At Toledo St. Francis, 6:30
Jan. 24	Napoleon
Jan. 25	Tiffin Columbian
Jan. 31	At Clay
Feb. 7	At Findlay
Feb. 11	Whitmer, 6
Feb. 14	At Fostoria
Feb. 15	Port Clinton
Feb. 21	Toledo Bowsher

returns its leading scorer, senior forward Derrick Hershey (14.6 ppg, 6.9 rpg), who will move back to the middle from the wing.

"We want to work on rebounding so we can get out and run the transition game," said Gedeon. "We think we can be an exciting team by putting a lot of points on the board."

Six-foot-4 Kevin Mosser (5.8



ppg, 3.1 rpg) will fill the center slot, while sharp-shooter John Overberg and the defensive-minded Harry Liggins will be on his wings.

After hitting 43 3-pointers last year, Overberg will look to break the Ross record for treys (57), held by Nick Wolf.

Gedeon plans to take advantage of point guard Sam Root's smarts to spark an up-tempo style.

"He's a very smart player, a very quick player and likes to get us in the transition game offensively and defensively, and he makes things happen on the floor

for us," said Gedeon.

The fundamentally-sound Kurt Snyder complements Root in the backcourt.

The Little Giants have already suffered their first setback, as talented freshman Reggie Jones is recovering from a broken arm and will have to wait two weeks before he can resume contact.

Improved perimeter defense and rebounding top Gedeon's wish list, but he is blessed with a strong bench.

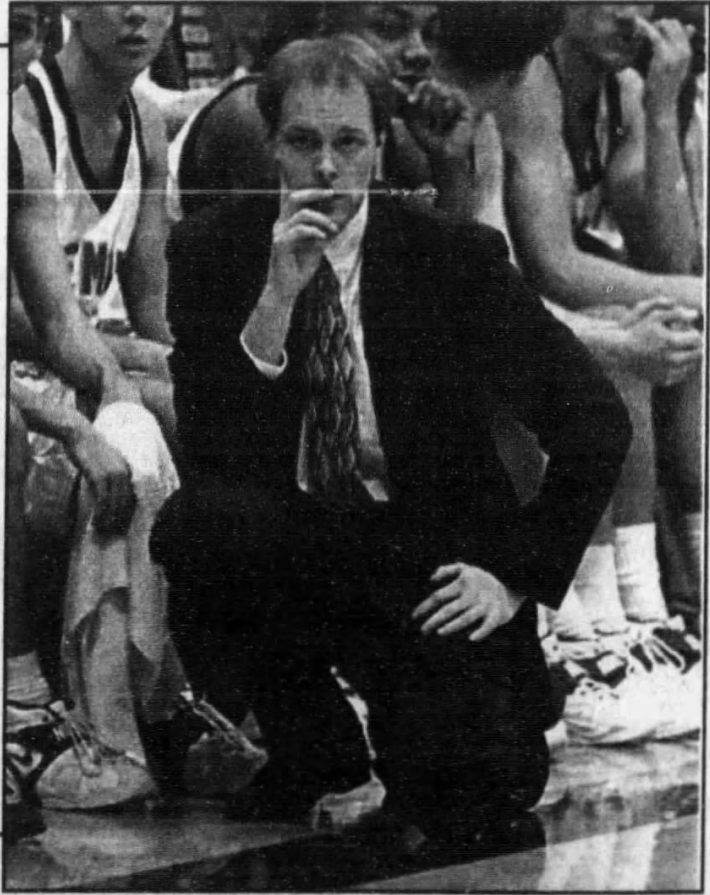
"All 10 players," he said, "are going to contribute every game for us."

1996-97 roster

NO.	PLAYER	POS.	HT.	GR.
4	Sam Root	G	6-0	12
12	Joell Heidelberg	G	5-9	10
14	John Overberg	G	5-10	12
24	Harry Liggins	G	6-1	12
30	Kurt Snyder	G	6-0	12
32	Reggie Jones	F	6-3	9
34	Edmund Peters	F/C	6-3	12
42	Rob Liggins	F/C	6-3	12
50	Derrick Hershey	F	6-3	12
52	Kevin Mosser	C	6-4	12
Head coach: Mark Gedeon, 2nd year (9-12 career record)				
JV coach: Brent Swartzmiller				
Assistant coach: Matt Wolf				
Managers: Kris Myers, Jason Vestel				

Ross opens season with a victory

Mark Gedeon, beginning his second season as head coach of the Fremont Ross Little Giants boys basketball team, watched his squad post a 85-62 win over Bowling Green Friday night at Ross High School. Senior Derrick Hershey paced the Little Giants with 28 points. Ross travels to Toledo Waite Tuesday night. Details on the Ross win and other area games on **B1-3**.



Ross bowls opening victory



DERRICK HERSHEY of Fremont Ross soars past Bowling Green's Andy Spittler for a first-quarter basket Friday night. Hershey scored 28 points as the Little Giants defeated the Bobcats, 85-62, at the Purple Pit.

News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

Hershey's 28 lift Little Giants to first win over BG in 5 years

By **MICHAEL BOSI**
Staff writer

The Fremont Ross boys basketball team had an experience not felt on North Street in six years: a win on Opening Night.

The Little Giants sandwiched a fiery start and equally strong finish around a second-quarter sag to defeat Bowling Green, 85-62, Friday night before a raucous Purple Pit crowd.

Senior Derrick Hershey helped erase the 1990's jinx, dominating beneath the rim for 28 points and 13 rebounds as Ross took the first step toward its first winning record in four years by beating the Bobcats for the first time since 1991.

"We worked well as a team for the first time in a couple of years," said Hershey. "We've had problems the last couple of years, but finally we're starting to work as a team and starting to pick up our defense a lot better."

It was quite obvious that seven of the 10 players in the Bobcats' lineup were in their first varsity game.

Also playing its season opener, Bowling Green committed 25 turnovers to Ross's 15, and the Little Giants fired off 12 of the game's first 14 points en route to a 21-10 lead after the first quarter.

Joell Heidelberg (7 rebounds) was perfect on his four first-half shots, with six points in the first 6½ minutes.

All nine Ross players scored, with John Overberg (four 3-pointers, 7 assists) and Kurt Snyder each notching 12 points.

Snyder, a 6-foot senior guard, was particularly effective off the bench, knocking down a pair of treys after missing his first three shots.

A Snyder 3-pointer gave Ross a 31-15 lead midway through the second quarter before the Bobcats' switch to a 1-2-2 defense finally paid off.

Bowling Green went on a 14-4 run, and Tony Szymczak helped

his team score the last seven points of the half with five of his team-high 19.

"We wound up missing a couple of shots right off the bat and we wound up taking the first available shot rather than reversing the basketball and letting our post players hit some post touches," said Ross coach Mark Gedeon, who beat his high school alma mater for the first time.

"Patience was the big thing. We just weren't patient."

Bowling Green continued its surge and closed the gap to 48-46 on a pair of Doug Whitmire free throws with 3:27 left in the third. Ross went on a 12-2 run to close the quarter with a 60-48 advantage.

"From about the middle of the second quarter to late in the third quarter, we got in a stretch where we played some basketball that I think we're capable of playing," said BG coach Mike Vannett.

"We just need to get more experienced."

Hershey, matched — or rather overpowering — Bobcat sophomore Matt Taylor (13 points) for most of the night, scored 11 points in the third quarter.

Ross regained its inside edge in the fourth quarter. Its largest lead came on Overberg's fourth 3-pointer, which made it 85-60 with 10 seconds left.

LITTLE GIANTS NOTES:

Ross's last opening victory was Nov. 27, 1990, an 80-46 decision over Northview. ... Gedeon was coaching before 30 friends, family members and former teachers. "Those are the type of people who supported me as a player, and it's nice to have them see me do something positive with students as they did for me." ... Freshman Reggie Jones will have his broken arm re-examined Dec. 5, and could return to action by Dec. 13 against Oregon Clay. "He's anxious, I'm anxious, we're all anxious," said Gedeon.

FRIDAY'S BOX SCORES

Ross 85, Bowling Green 62

BOWLING GREEN — Tony Szymczak 8-2-19, Andy Spitler 1-0-3, Doug Whitmire 2-2-7, Matt Saneholtz 1-0-2, Chris Campisi 5-2-12, Paul Mellon 3-0-6, Matt Taylor 6-1-13. Totals 37-5-85.

FREMONT ROSS — Sam Root 3-0-6, Joell Heidelberg 5-0-10, John Overberg 4-0-12, Harry Liggins 2-0-4, Kurt Snyder 5-0-12, Edmund Peters 1-2-4, Rob Liggins 1-0-2, Derrick Hershey 13-2-28, Kevin Mosser 3-1-7. Totals 37-5-85.

Bowling Green 10 22 16 14 — 62

Fremont Ross 21 16 23 25 — 85

3-PT FGs — Bowling Green 3-9 (Szymczak 1-1, Spitler 1-1, Whitmire 1-4, Ellis 0-2, Saneholtz 0-1); Ross 6-17 (Overberg 4-10, H. Liggins 0-1, Snyder 2-6).

RECORDS — Bowling Green 0-1; Fremont Ross 1-0.

JUNIOR VARSITY — Ross 72, Bowling Green 46.

Ross loses lead in final 44 seconds

Hershey scores 27 in loss

News-Messenger reports

Fremont Ross took a two-point lead into the final minute against Toledo Waite Tuesday, only to watch the Indians score the final eight points for a 69-63 win.

Following a missed Ross free throw with 44 seconds left, Waite's Tony Scruggs hit a three-point shot to give the Indians a 64-65 lead. Ross then turned the ball over and was forced to foul Scruggs with 14 ticks left. He hit both, and the Little Giants called timeout trailing by three.

A Waite player then intercepted the inbound pass as the Little Giants were looking to John Overberger, and raced the length of the floor for an additional layup at the buzzer.

"Very disappointing," Ross coach Mark Gedeon said of the loss, which dropped his team to 1-1. "We did so many things right ... Waite's an outstanding ball club."

Gedeon lamented his team's missing 4 of 5 field goals to end the game.

"Certain people react better to pressure," he said. "Toledo Waite just fed off it."

The Little Giants were also hampered by a foot injury to Sam Root.

"He was in third gear all game," said Gedeon, who praised Root for playing through pain.

Derrick Hershey led the Little Giants with a game-high 27 points and nine rebounds. Kurt Snyder added nine.

High schools

Boys basketball

Toledo Waite 69, Ross 63

ROSS — Sam Root 1 6 8, Joell Heidelberg 1 0 2, John Overberg 3 0 8, Kurt Snyder 3 2 9, Edmund Peters 1 0 2, Derrick Hershey 12 3 27, Kevin Mosser 3 1 7. Totals 21 12 63

WAITE — Tony Scruggs 5 6 19, Aaron Peacock 4 0 8, Richardson 1 0 2, Jamele Croom 2 0 5, Jeremy Pratt 4 0 8, Michael Evans 6 0 12, Shem Horton 1 0 2, James Walker 4 3 12. Totals 27 9 68.

Rebounds: Ross (Hershey 9), Waite (Evans 10).

Ross	12	20	20	11	—	63
Waite	10	15	23	20	—	69

Record: Ross 1-1

JV score: Ross 49, Waite 42. Leading scorer: Juan Vela (R) 20. JV record: Ross 2-0.

Little Giants erupt for 92 in victory

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

The Fremont Ross boys basketball game against Oregon Clay Tuesday night was a throw-back to the days of yore. Or at least the days of the old Buckeye Conference.

In their greatest scoring barrage since they were members of the now-defunct conference, the Little Giants exploded for a 92-65 Great Lakes League win at the Purple Pit.

"The 92 points just reaffirms what we're trying to do as far as our offensive and defensive transition: making sure everyone gets involved and everyone plays hard," Ross coach Mark Gedeon

Snyder leads highest Ross output since 1965-66

said.
"At the same time, it makes a statement for us that yes, we can compete in the GLL. ... It's a nice confidence-booster to beat a team like Clay."

The victory was Ross's first over Clay (2-1, 1-1 GLL), which finished runner-up to Whitmer last year, since Jan. 12, 1993 — a seven-game stretch.

Indeed, the GLL table could slowly be turning.



SNYDER

"Fremont has a very good team, and I think they have a legitimate shot at the league this year," Eagles coach Joe Guerrero said.

The Little Giants (2-1, 1-0 GLL), who received 19 points off the bench from guard Kurt Snyder and 17 points and five rebounds from forward Derrick Hershey, showed few ill effects from either a heartbreaking defeat at Toledo Waite or from the one-week layoff.

The main reason was that this was the first time the team dressed 10 healthy bodies, and

Tuesday	
Fremont Ross	92
Oregon Clay	65

Friday	
Fremont Ross at Napoleon	7:35 p.m.

nine of them will show up in today's box score.

"It's what you call a team," said Snyder. "We don't have just one guy stepping up every time. It's everybody."

Ball control was another reason. Ross committed just seven turnovers.

The Eagles' saving grace was

Ryan Hugueley's shooting. The 6-foot senior guard canned 6-of-11 3-point attempts and finished with a game-high 23 points. Junior forward Tom Clay scored 18.

Ross grabbed a 22-8 first-quarter lead, producing a 14-2 run in the final 4:46 with the help of six of Clay's 22 turnovers.

Ross's 24-point second quarter was highlighted by a riveting slam dunk from 5-foot-9 sophomore guard Joell Heidelberg in the first minute and the first three points of potential-filled 6-foot-3 freshman Reggie Jones' career.

See LITTLE GIANTS, B3

Little Giants get points from 9 players in win

Continued from B1

Kevin Mosser scored eight of his 12 points in the first half. Rob Liggins was the fourth Little Giant in double figures with 10 points.

Trailing 54-34, Clay called timeout 3:44 into the second half and responded with a 12-2 string sparked by six Hugueley points.

"He's our one experienced guy, he played last year," Guerrero said. "I told our guys they have to get used to this intensity, and by the time they realized it, they

were down 15 points and that's tough to come back from."

Exactly.

Snyder didn't help Clay's cause either, scoring 12 second-half points, the last six coming on nothing-but-net 3-pointers in the fourth quarter.

"(Snyder's performance) shows a little bit that you don't necessarily have to start to be successful in this system," said Gedeon. "He's a coach's son, and you can see the fundamentals out there."

You could see them in every Little Giant Tuesday night.

LITTLE GIANTS NOTES:

Jones, coming off a broken arm, scored seven points in his high school debut. "He's been cleared to play, but he's only practiced three times," Gedeon said. ... Sam Root was still "not 100 percent," but shrugged off his foot injury enough to collect six points and four assists. ... The scoring outburst was Ross's most since its 100-92 win over Admiral King in the 1965-66 season. ... Clay hit just 6-of-16 free throws, while Ross was 17-of-21. ... Prior to the game, the Ross boosters honored Michele Smith for her all-state volleyball season.

High Schools

Boys Basketball

ROSS 92, OREGON CLAY 65

CLAY — Joe Romano 0-1-1, Justin Guerrero 1-0-2, Ron Henneman 2-0-4, Ben Beshalske 1-0-2, Dave Watruba 2-0-4, Chris Bohlan 0-2-2, Tom Clay 8-2-18, Ryan Hugueley 8-1-23, Ben Tobias 4-0-9. Totals 26-6-65.

ROSS — Sam Root 3-0-6, Joell Heidelberg 3-1-7, Harry Liggins 2-1-5, Kurt Snyder 9-0-19, Reggie Jones 3-1-7, Edmund Peters 3-3-9, Rob Liggins 5-0-10, Derrick Hershey 4-9-17, Kevin Mosser 5-2-12. Totals 37-17-92.

Clay 8 19 21 17 — 65

Ross 22 24 16 30 — 92

3-PT FGs — OC 6-13 (Henneman 0-1, Watruba 0-1, Hugueley 6-11); FR 3-10 (Root 0-1, Overberg 0-4, Snyder 3-5).

TUNOVERS — Clay 17, Ross 7.

REBOUNDS — Ross 29 (Hershey 5).

RECORDS — Clay 2-1, 1-1 GLL; FR 2-1, 1-0 GLL.

Ross Green with envy for Wildcat star

News-Messenger reports

Louis Green surprised no one Friday night, which is exactly what Fremont Ross was afraid of.

Green, Napoleon's 6-foot-4, 210-pound senior forward, connected on 15-of-17 field goals and scored 35 points to lead the Wildcats to a 79-72 win against Fremont Ross.

Napoleon improved to 3-1 this season and 2-1 in the Great Lakes League. Ross fell to 2-2 and 1-1.

Earlier in the week, Green scored 30 points in a three-point loss at Toledo Whitmer.

Friday
Napoleon79
Fremont Ross72

Next
Findlay at Ross, Friday

"It wasn't like he was making layups," Ross coach Mark Gedeon said. "He was hitting 10-foot turnarounds with a man right in his face."

"Louis Green had a tremendous night."

Not that the Little Giants did not try to stop him. Ross tried a variety of defenses against the

Wildcats, including putting two men on Green at once.

"We were double-teaming him ... but Napoleon was very patient at getting him the ball," Gedeon said.

Derrick Hershey had a big night of his own for Ross, scoring 27 points and matching Green's game-high total of nine rebounds.

"Hershey had a very nice game both offensively and defensively," said Gedeon, who also praised Kurt Snyder (four 3-pointers) and Rob Liggins (six first-half points off the bench).



HERSHEY

Wildcats the lead for good.

"Mike Linbird actually hurt us (in the second quarter)," Gedeon said. "He had eight points and several assists as well."

Linbird finished with 16 points.

Ross jumped out to a 19-14 lead after one quarter and were even with the Wildcats with three minutes left in the first half. But a 13-3 Napoleon spurt gave the

Ross Durham, whom Gedeon expected to be a Napoleon weapon, scored just one point.

Gedeon was pleased with the overall play of his team, picked third in the preseason GLL poll behind Whitmer and Napoleon.

"This is the sixth time we've gone over there, and I think it's the first time we've been within 20," he said. "We got down 17 points in the third quarter and cut it down to six with five minutes to play."

"I'm very proud of our kids' effort."

High Schools

Boys Basketball

Napoleon 79, Ross 72

FREMONT — Sam Root 1-1-3, Joell Heidelberg 1-0-2, John Overberg 0-1-1, Harry Liggins 1-0-2, Kurt Snyder 4-0-12, Reggie Jones 3-4-10, Edmund Peters 1-2-4, Rob Liggins 3-0-6, Derrick Hershey 9-9-27, Kevin Mosser 1-0-2. Totals 25-17-72.

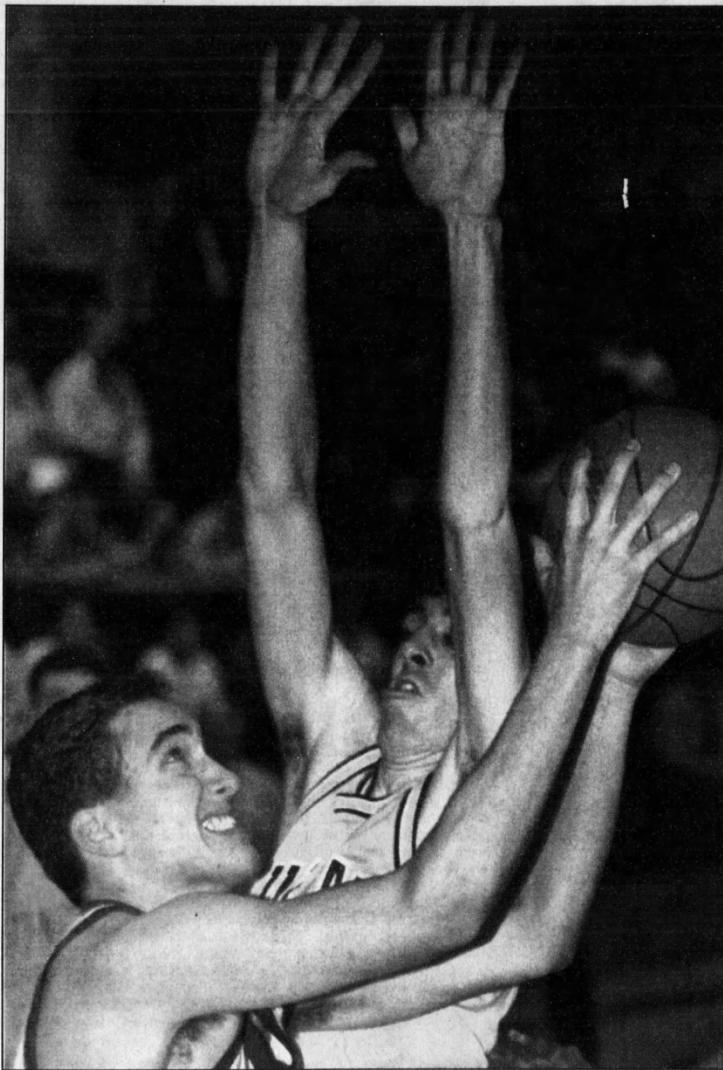
NAPOLEON — Kevin Good 3-2-10, Brian Bosteiman 1-2-4, Mike Linbird 5-5-16, Jared Van Ausdale 0-1-1, Jared Rathge 2-0-4, Todd Kruse 2-4-8, Ross Durham 0-1-1, Louis Green 15-5-35. Totals 28-20-79.

Ross	19	13	13	27	—	72
Napoleon	14	27	18	20	—	79

3-PT FGs— Ross 5 (Snyder 4, Overberg), Napoleon 3 (Good 2, Linbird 1). Rebounds — Hershey (Ross) 9, Green (Napoleon) 9.

Records — Ross 2-2 (1-1 GLL). Napoleon 3-1 (2-1)

JV score: Ross 48, Napoleon 44. Leading scorer: Mike Weaver 17 points



KEVIN MOSSER of Fremont Ross shoots against David Buck during the Little Giants' 63-50 win Friday night at the Purple Pitt. Mosser scored 12 points for Ross, second best on the team to Derrick Hershey's 15.

Up-and-down Little Giants top Findlay

By BRIAN SPIESS
Sports editor

The gyms was cold, the semester's schoolwork was history and Jolly Ol' St. Nick was just around the corner.

And the Little Giants were off. Not bad, but off.

"It was a real peaks and valleys night for us," Ross coach Mark Gedeon said. "I talked with (junior varsity) coach Brent Swartzmiller in warmups about how we seemed to lack that extra spurt."

Still, Ross had enough spurts, steals and fast-break layups to defeat Findlay 63-50 Friday in the Purple Pitt. The win was a sign to point guard Sam Root that this year's Little Giant team is the best in recent memory.

"Now we can have a sloppy game and still win," said Root, who described the usually warm gymnasium as "freezing." It did not stop him, however, as he scored nine of his 11 points in the first half.

Ross's first "valley" came late in the first quarter and at the start of the second, when Findlay rattled off a 14-4 run to take an 18-12 lead. Ross returned the favor, scoring 16 of the half's final 22 points to take a 30-24 advantage at the break.

"It was definitely a game of runs," Gedeon said.

Derrick Hershey did the most damage for Ross during its first half run, scoring 10 second-quarter points. Hershey's fourth points, off a Harry Liggins assist, trimmed Findlay's lead to 20-19. The next trip down he was followed while shooting and converted both free throws to give Ross a 21-20 lead.

Friday

Ross	63
Findlay	50

Next

Ross at Bedford, tonight

Findlay's David Buck answered with a layup to take back the lead for the Trojans, but it would be their last. Ross senior Kevin Mosser hit both ends of a one-and-the bonus situation and Ross had a 23-22 lead.

On Ross's next possession, senior guard Kurt Snyder hit the first of his two 3-point shots.

"Snyder broke our backs," Findlay coach Jerry Snodgrass would say after the game. "Did he only make two?"

Ross closed the first half scoring on eight of nine possessions.

At halftime the Trojans made adjustment and attempted to slow down Ross's quick outlets for easy Hershey baskets.

Consecutive baskets David Buck, Nick Patterson and Buck again closed the lead to 36-31.

But Harry Liggins tipped in a John Overberg miss while being fouled to spark Ross and thwart a Findlay rally. Overberg would score the next five points for Ross.

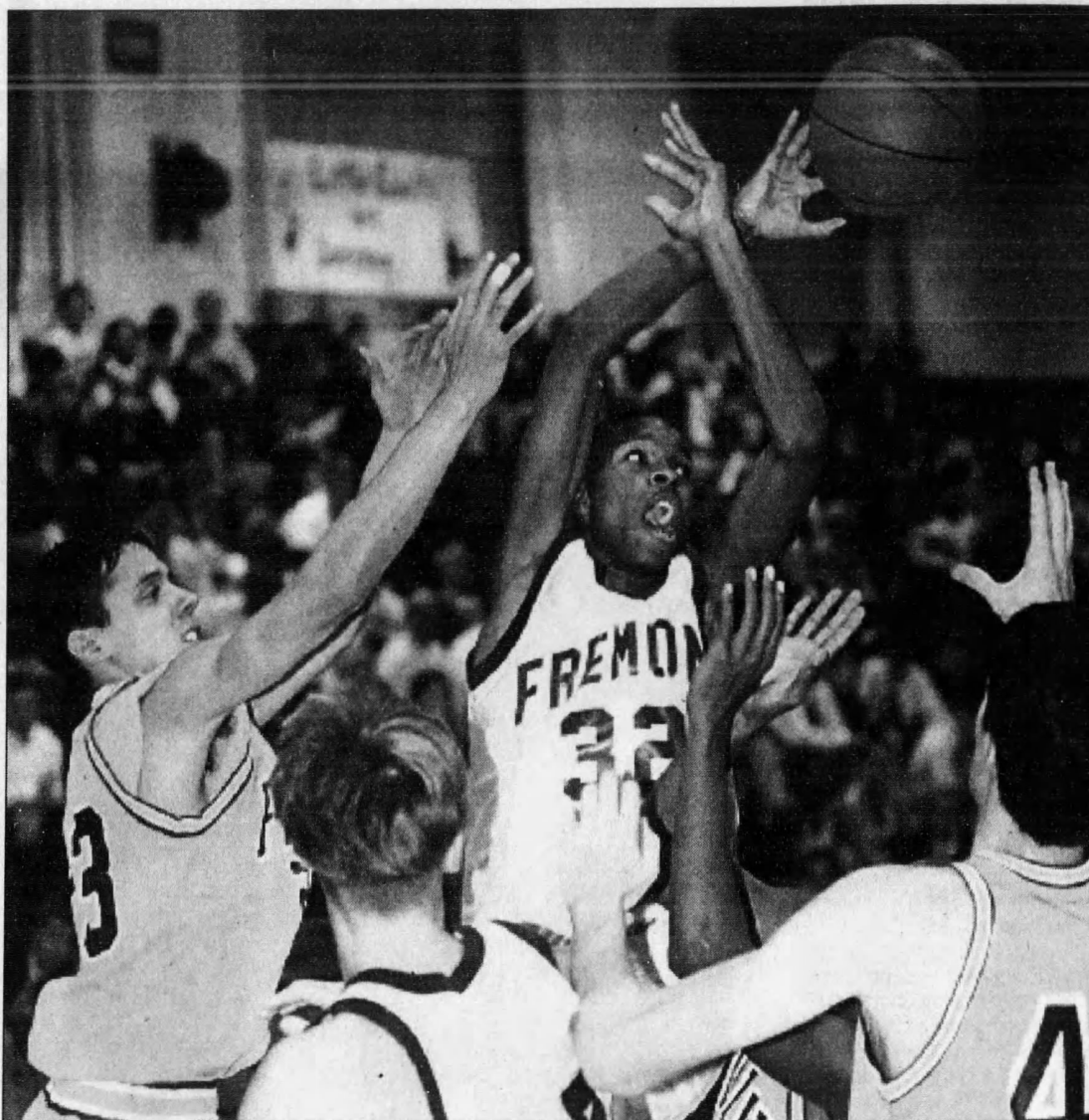
And then, both coaches agreed, the Trojans ran out of gas.

"Maybe late in the third their legs went a little," Gedeon said.

"Shaun (Ball, who kept up with Hershey in the first half) tired, and nobody else has his quickness," Snodgrass said. "Hershey's just quick."

Ross took its biggest lead, 55-37, on a play that looked like it might have been the biggest of

See ROSS, B2



News-Messenger/Jeremy Wadsworth

REGGIE JONES of Fremont Ross passes the ball as Findlay's J.P. Martinez and Mark Wilson defend.

Ross beats Findlay at home

Continued from B1

the game. Freshman Reggie Jones caught an outlet pass in front of the Findlay defenders, and the crowd stood and gasped with anticipation of a possible Jones dunk (He was known to rattle the rims last year as an eighth-grader). But Jones appeared to have a moment of indecision in midair and chose to put in a conventional layup off the glass.

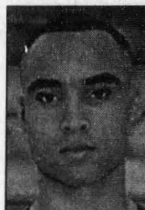
"My knee just buckled," the

lanky Jones said after the game.

Findlay's P.J. Martinez led all scorers with 16, followed by Hershey's 15 and Mosser's 12.

"On Dec. 20, I'll give credit where credit is due. Ross is 13 points better than us," Snodgrass said.

LITTLE GIANTS NOTES: For a key stretch in the third quarter,



LIGGINS

Harry Liggins was the only starter on the floor as his teammates rested: Joell Heidelberg, Snyder Rob Liggins and Edmund Peters joined Harry Liggins during that stretch. ... Ross cheerleaders Randi Fielding and Beth Huffman were honored prior to the start of the game for being selected to perform at a New Year's Eve parade in London. Both were selected to go overseas during a Universal Cheerleaders of America camp at Ross.

High Schools

Boys basketball

Ross 63, Findlay 50

ROSS—Sam Root 5-0-11, Joell Heidelberg 2-0-4, John Overberg 3-0-7, Harry Liggins 1-0-2, Kurt Snyder 2-0-6, Reggie Jones 2-0-4, Edmund Peters 1-0-2, Derrick Hershey 5-5-15, Kevin Mosser 5-2-12. Totals 26-7-63.

FINDLAY—Nick Patterson 2-0-4, P.J. Martinez 7-2-16, David Buck 3-1-7, Mark Wilson 3-0-6, Shaun Ball 1-1-3, David Bills 2-0-4, Benji Ballmer 2-0-4, Derrick Jackson 2-1-5, Kurt Lindamood 0-1-1. Totals 22-6-50.

Findlay	12	12	11	15	—	50
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Ross	12	18	20	13	—	63
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3 PT GOALS—Ross 4 (Snyder 2, Root, Overberg). REBOUNDS—Findlay 37 (Buck 7), Ross 29. TURNOVERS—Findlay 17, Ross 17.

JV result

Ross 54, Findlay 43

ROSS—Robb Ritzman 4-1-11, Andrew Diller 1-0-3, Juan Vela 4-0-10, Drew Root 4-0-8, Mike Weaver 2-0-5, Matt Martel 1-3-5, Frank Kaiser 5-2-12. Totals 21-6-54.

FINDLAY—Doug Barnes 4-4-13, Wes Hahn 1-1-3, Jason Wenner 2-2-6, Adam Cavallero 3-2-10, Ryan Truax 3-0-6, Matt Wolery 1-2-4, Jason Householder 0-1-1. Totals 14-12-43.

Findlay	7	7	14	15	—	43
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Ross	7	15	15	17	—	54
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3 PT GOALS—Ross 8 (Ritzman, Vela, Root 2, Diller, Weaver), Findlay 3 (Cavallero 2, Barnes).

Giants pressure Mules into loss

News-Messenger reports

Fremont Ross's boys basketball team took just two quarters to find Bedford's weakness. Then they exploited it.

The Little Giants (4-2, 3-1 Great Lakes League) used a zone press to rattle the Mules and win the game, 64-62.

"We went into our diamond press in the second quarter and they threw the ball out of bounds two straight times," Ross coach Mark Gedeon

said. "They panicked, and once you smell blood, you go after it.

"That was the best that we have run (the 1-2-1-1 diamond press) this year," said Gedeon, whose team forced Bedford into four 10-second violations.

That helped Ross build a five-point edge, and they kept Bedford at least four points beneath them for most of the game.

The successful defensive showing could not have come at a better time for the Little Giants, who shot just 38 percent from the floor, compared to 52 percent for the Mules.

"The press did not lead to that many scores, but it gave us that many more possessions (to score from)," Gedeon said.

Ross increased the lead to nine points at 48-39 with one quarter remaining before Bedford made a run.

The Mules closed to 61-58 with 47 seconds to play before senior Kevin Mosser hit two free throws to give Ross what would be its deciding points. Bedford scored with four seconds left to make it 64-62, but because Bedford had no timeouts left, Ross did not have to inbound the ball before time expired.

"We always had the lead, we just never put them away," Gedeon said.

Derrick Hershey led Ross with 22 points.

BOYS BASKETBALL ROUNDUP

Ross 64, Bedford 62

ROSS—Sam Root 5-1-11, Joell Heidelberg 0-2-2 John Overberg 3-0-6, Kurt Snyder 1-4-7, Edmund Peters 1-0-2, Rob Liggins 1-0-2, Derrick Hershey 9-4-22, Kevin Mosser 4-4-12. Totals 24-15-64

BEDFORD—Blake Flessner 6-1-15, Joe Banks 8-6-22, Joe Albring 1-0-2, Jeff Francis 1-1-3, Clay 1-0-2, Dukate 5-2-12, Clark 1-0-2, Forreg 1-2-4. Totals 24-12-62.

Ross	20	12	16	16	—	64
Bedford	13	14	12	23	—	62

3 PT Goals—Ross 1 (Snyder), Bedford 2 (Flessner 2). Rebounds—Bedford 32 (Dukate 15), Ross 26 (Snyder 6). Turnovers—Bedford 25, Ross 9.

Records: Ross 4-2 overall, 3-1 in GLL; Bedford 2-3, 1-2 GLL.

Ross JV 60, Bedford 36

ROSS—Rob Ritzman 4-0-9, Mack Cole 3-0-6, Andrew Diller 2-0-5, Juan Vela 8-1-19, Drew Root 6-0-12, Matt Martel 2-0-4, Tyson Liggins 2-1-5. Totals 27-2-60.

BEDFORD—Francis 1-0-2, Wiens 1-0-2, Weaver 2-2-6, Lisk 0-1-1, Funk 1-2-4, Mienhart 2-2-6, Smith 0-1-1, Nied 6-2-14. Totals 13-10-36.

Ross	18	16	7	19	—	60
Bedford	10	9	9	8	—	36

3-point goals: Vela 2, Ritzman, Diller. Rebounds Martel 10, Root 5.

Records: Ross 6-0, 4-0 GLL.

Ross left feeling Blue

4th-quarter surge falls short vs. Sandusky

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

SANDUSKY — Fremont Ross boys basketball coach Mark Gedeon was eager to find out how his team would fare in its first trip to the highly competitive

Friday	Sandusky
Sandusky75	Streakball
Fremont Ross70	Classic.
Tonight	What he
Ross vs.	learned
Olmsted Falls	was that
6:30 p.m.	falling
	behind by

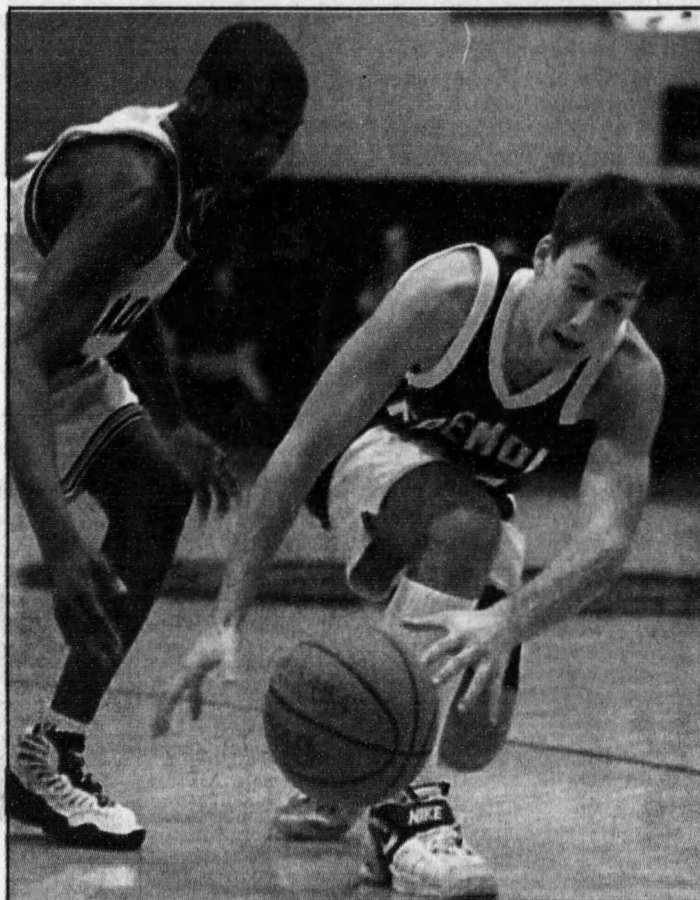
12 points after three quarters against tradition-rich teams that field talent at all five positions is not the secret to success.

That was the hole the Little Giants plowed themselves into before they mounted a furious fourth-quarter charge — only to fall Friday night, 75-70, to a Sandusky team starving to make the finals of its own tournament for the first time since the days of stars Dashay Jones and Rashaan Palmer (1992).

"We got down and our kids could have packed it in and they didn't," Gedeon said. "I'm proud of the effort they gave to get back into the game. We had some kids step it up, and once we realized we could play, it was a matter of us to start going instead of thinking about it."

"If we take from this game the fact that if we do what we're expected to do, we can be successful."

Because of Robert Crabb's



JOHN OVERBERG of Ross tries to escape from the defense of Sandusky's Quinn Redding during the Blue Streaks' 75-70 win Friday night.

28 "all aggressive, blue-collar" points and Jamarus Hampton's keen ball control down the stretch, Ross (4-3) has to settle for a consolation matchup against Olmsted Falls, which fell to Erie Cathedral Prep in Friday's nightcap.

After a sloppy first quarter that saw Sandusky (4-2) commit 11 turnovers and Ross 10, the Blue Streaks took thorough control as Crabb poured in 13 first-half points.

Of the 33 first-half turnovers, 18 belonged to Ross.

With 1:36 left in the half, Crabb hit 3-of-4 free throws and a jumper off a steal on an in-bounds pass to lift the

Streaks to an eight-point lead, 29-21.

Two free throws by Ross freshman Reggie Jones, who finished with a season-high 15 points, cut the Little Giants' halftime deficit to 31-28.

"I don't know if it was so much spotting them too much as much as we failed to capitalize on many of our opportunities in the first half," Gedeon said. "Those are shots that hopefully we get to take, and even if we have an off-shooting night, it's that many points we have a chance to get."

Crabb scored 11 points in the

See ROSS, B3

Ross can't catch Streaks

Continued from B1

third quarter as Sandusky stretched its lead into double digits. His 3-point play gave Sandusky a 45-36 lead with 4:13 left, and a free throw with 1:43 left made it 52-42.

Other than his 10-for-12 shooting, a perfect example of how well Crabb's night was going was when the ball bounced off his shoulder and into the net after an in-bound to make it 54-42.

"Those are all aggressive, blue-collar points from Robert Crabb," Sandusky coach John Schlessman said.

Ross trailed 56-44 going into the fourth quarter when senior leadership keyed its comeback. Derrick Hershey scored 12 of his 26 points in the last eight minutes, with the help of Harry Ligins' feisty defense.

With Hershey scoring nine points during a 16-3 run in the opening 3:18 of the final stanza, including a layup off his own midcourt steal, Ross took its first lead, 60-59.

"Our guards got a little more aggressive offensively and defensively (in the fourth quarter)," Gedeon said.

"When we switched back to the man-to-man defense, the kids got more aggressive. I think we got into a zone mentality and we were just standing around and reacting to what

happened as opposed to making things happen."

But after Sandusky called timeout, the Blue Streaks regained control as Hampton scored nine points and hit eight straight free throws down the stretch.

Ross's best bid of its last-ditch attempts to tie the game was a missed 3-pointer by John Overberg with 17 seconds left.

Quinn Redding added 12 points for Sandusky, but it was the heroics of the Crabb-Hampton duo that gave Ross fits.

"(Crabb) was second team all-district last year; it's not a mystery he's a talented player, and sure enough he was able to do some things in the third quarter that pushed it up to that double-digit lead at one point," Gedeon said.

"Down the stretch, it was just Jamarcus Hampton doing a great job of controlling the tempo and running the show."

LITTLE GIANTS NOTES: Ross has now lost nine of the last 11 meetings against Sandusky, which will join the Great Lakes League next year. ... Hershey led the Little Giants with six rebounds. Sandusky outrebounded Ross, 26-21. ... In the second game Friday, R.J. Fiorelli scored 18 points and Graham Witherspoon had 14 points and nine rebounds to lead Erie Cathedral to a 58-53 victory.

High schools

Boys Basketball

Sandusky 75, Ross 70

STREAKBALL CLASSIC

FREMONT ROSS — Sam Root 2-2-7, Joell Heidelberg 3-4-10, John Overberg 2-0-6, Harry Liggins 1-0-2, Kurt Snyder 1-0-2, Reggie Jones 6-3-15, Derrick Hershey 8-8-26, Kevin Mosser 0-2-2. Totals 23-21-70.

SANDUSKY - Jamarcus Hampton 6-8-20, Jason Jones 2-3-7, Robert Crabb 10-7-28, Quinn Redding 4-3-12, Bobby Manuel 0-3-3, Rodsein Germon 2-1-5. Totals 24-25-75.

Fremont Ross	9	19	16	26	—	70
Sandusky	12	19	25	19	—	75

3-PT FGs — Ross 3-9 (Root 1-2, Overberg 2-4, Snyder 0-2, Hershey 0-1); Sandusky 2-6 (Crabb 1-1, Redding 1-3, Mason 0-2). TURNOVERS — Ross 26, Sandusky 23. REBOUNDS — Ross 21 (Hershey 6), Sandusky 26. TEAM RECORDS — Ross 4-3, Sandusky 4-2.

Ross ends 1996 with little consolation

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

SANDUSKY — Word has it that some of Fremont Ross's boys basketball players bowled over 200 Friday night following the team's opening loss in the Streakball Classic.

After the Little Giants' hobbled out of Sandusky winless in the four-team tournament Saturday night, they were wishing they had knocked down as many buckets as they did pins.

Be it the late night out at Cedar Lanes or — more likely — a physically draining loss to Sandusky, Ross lacked intensity as it lost to Olmsted Falls, 64-50,

in a consolation-less consolation.

That leaves Ross at .500, 4-4, as it bids adieu to 1996.

"It was tougher than I thought it was going to be (to bounce back Saturday)," head coach Mark Gedeon said. "Many of our kids said they felt just really slow, and when you're looking to create a style that revolves around quickness, that's not something you want to hear your kids say."

Not even having 6-foot-8 Bulldog star Tim Schaefer sit the bench for all but a minute of the first half after incurring two fouls could aid Ross's cause.



HERSHEY

Credit 6-9 senior Jim Kalembo, Olmsted's only other returning senior letterman from last season's 21-3 team, with the save. Kalembo stepped into the

spotlight to score 16 points, including eight in a 10-0 second-quarter streak that gave Olmsted its biggest lead of the game, 29-13.

Ross sealed its own fate by shooting just 9-of-24 — missing some painfully easy layups — in

the first half. But that was after the Little Giants came out carrying the momentum.

Derrick Hershey (16 points) sank a free throw as Schaefer was tagged with his second infraction just 46 seconds into the game, and Hershey gave Ross a 5-2 lead with a low-post bucket.

But two John Storey hoops began an 8-0 Olmsted run, and the Bulldogs never looked back.

Kalembo scored 10 first-half points as the Bulldogs (6-1) took a 33-21 lead into halftime.

"We missed shots that nor-

See ROSS, B2

Ross falls flat vs. Olmsted

Continued from B1

mally we would make," Gedeon said. "I think we lost some of our aggressiveness, as well. When Schaefer got his second foul and it was a 5-2 ball-game, I thought our kids said, 'Oh my gosh, he's out,' and I think they relaxed a little bit and stopped attacking as much as we were looking to right off the bat."

Kalembe finished with 11 rebounds, as Olmsted beat Ross on the boards, too, 30-23. When Schaefer finally returned in the third quarter, he scored nine points. Storey added 12 points and six assists.

"For the most part, we've played better this year without Schaefer than we have with him. ...," Olmsted coach Pat Donahue said. "The kids know how to play without him. Unfortunately, I don't think we know how to play with him."

For the second straight night, Ross's made just three 3-pointers. John Overberg made 3-of-5 treys Sat-

urday, but the Little Giants attempted just one other 3-point shot.

"They did a very good job of taking away our transition game by playing up the line on the wings and taking that outlet pass away," Gedeon said. "They were really working hard to take away our reversals. We basically had to go to a set offense and we couldn't run our secondary breaks, so give them a lot of credit for taking away our No. 1 weapon, which is our transition game."

And without a transition game, Ross truly was the littlest of giants in this tournament of basketball powers.

LITTLE GIANTS NOTES: Hershey, who scored 42 points in two nights, was Ross's representative on the all-tournament team. ... Tournament MVP R.J. Fiorelli of Erie Cathedral Prep (8-0) scored a team-high 18 points to lead the Ramblers to a 57-53 victory over Sandusky in Saturday's thrilling final. Jamarcus Hampton, an all-tourney selection, had a game-high 19 points for the Blue Streaks (5-2).

High Schools

Boys Basketball

Olmsted Falls 64, Ross 50

STREAKBALL CLASSIC CONSOLATION

OLMSTED FALLS — John Storey 3-5-12, Keith Knapp 1-0-3, Manzie Williams 3-0-6, Chris Rybicki 0-1-1, Dan Pellerite 0-2-2, Sean Radigan 3-2-9, Josh Schneider 3-2-6, Jim Kalembe 7-2-16, Tim Schaefer 2-5-9. Totals 22-19-64.

FREMONT ROSS — Sam Root 4-0-3, Joell Heidelberg 2-0-4, John Overberg 4-1-12, Reggie Jones 1-2-4, Rob Liggins 1-0-2, Derrick Hershey 6-4-16, Kevin Mosser 2-0-4. Totals 20-7-50.

Olmsted Falls 13 20 11 20 — 64

Fremont Ross 7 14 13 16 — 50

3-PT FGs — Olmsted Falls 3-10 (Storey 1-4, Knapp 1-2, Williams 0-1, Rob zczek 0-1, Radigan 1-1, Schaefer 0-1), Fremont Ross 3-6 (Overberg 3-5, Kurt Snyder 0-1). TURNOVERS — Olmsted Falls 15, Fremont Ross 19. TEAM REBOUNDS — Olmsted Falls 30 (Kalembe 11), Fremont Ross 23 (Mosser 5). TEAM FOULS — Olmsted Falls 16, Fremont Ross 24. TECHNICAL FOULS — Hershey. TEAM RECORDS — Olmsted Falls 6-1, Fremont Ross 4-4.

Ross drops third straight

Campbell pours in 38 to give Whitmer its 5th GLL victory

News-Messenger reports
TOLEDO — As small as it is and as hot as it can get, the Purple Pit doesn't seem so bad after all to the Fremont Ross boys basketball team.

The Little Giants will finally get a taste of some home cooking when they return to North Street next Friday.

But they'll do so having lost their last three games, all road contests against potentially state champion-caliber teams, including a 74-65 Great Lakes setback Friday night at Whitmer (6-2, 5-0 GLL).

"We knew going in to the beginning of the year this would be a tough stretch for us," Ross coach Mark Gedeon said of the schedule, which included last weekend's losses at the Sandusky Streakball Tournament.

Six-foot-4 junior Floyd Campbell scored 38 points, with eight rebounds and three assists. He missed just two shots the entire game.

"Our kids just played their hearts out, and I can say we lost to a very good Whitmer team and Floyd Campbell had a very outstanding night," Gedeon said. "We tried diamond-and-one on him, zone, man, putting different people on him, and he was just in one of those zones."

Campbell erased Ross's only lead with a 3-pointer and a layup off a steal in the last 20 seconds of the first half to give Whitmer a 30-29 lead.

"He's just a very fluid scorer," Gedeon said. "It's no secret Floyd Campbell can score, and being 6-4 makes him that more difficult to guard."

A back-and-forth third quarter saw Whitmer open up a 48-43 lead with eight minutes left.

Derrick Hershey led the Little Giants (4-5, 3-3 GLL), who are just 1-5 on the road, with 25 points and four rebounds. Kevin Mosser was Ross's only other double-figure scorer, with 11 points.

Andy Boyd backed up Campbell's monster effort with 16 points.

Chad Baxter had just four points, but his late 3-pointer gave Whitmer a 10-point lead that iced the contest.

Ross's other road losses have come against Toledo Waite, Napoleon, Sandusky and Olmsted Falls.

"It's not like we're going on the road and playing a bunch of cupcake games," said Gedeon, whose team hosts Fostoria next Friday.

"It's going to be nice getting back to home playing Fostoria," he said. "Hopefully the kids and the fans are looking forward to that."

High Schools

Boys Basketball

Whitmer 74, Ross 65

FREMONT ROSS — Sam Root 3-0-6, Joell Heidelberg 1-1-3, John Overberg 2-0-6, Harry Liggins 1-0-2, Kurt Snyder 1-0-2, Reggie Jones 3-0-6, Edmund Peters 2-0-4, Derrick Hershey 11-2-25, Kevin Mosser 4-3-11. Totals 28-6-65.

WHITMER — Floyd Campbell 17-3-38, Jake Lyons 2-1-5, Andy Boyd 5-5-16, Chad Baxter 1-1-4, Charles Moses 3-1-7, David Rodriguez 1-0-2, Dann Shanteau 1-0-2. Totals 30-11-74.

Ross	15	14	14	22	—	65
Whitmer	17	13	18	26	—	74

3-PT FGs — Ross 3-5 (Overberg 2, Hershey 1); TW 3-6 (Campbell, Boyd, Baxter. REBOUNDS — Whitmer 15 (Campbell 8), Ross 11 (Hershey 4). RECORDS — Whitmer 6-2, 5-0 GLL; Ross 4-5, 3-3 GLL.

Ross JV 63, Whitmer 54

FREMONT ROSS — Rob Ritzman 3-5-11, Andrew Diller 2-4-8, Juan Vela 4-3-11, Drew Root 7-1-16, Mike Leaver 3-0-6, Matt Martel 1-0-2, Tyson Liggins 4-1-9. Totals 24-14-63.

WHITMER — Burroughs 1-3-5, Wagner 3-0-6, Kurdziel 6-13-26, Corino 1-0-2, Veres 2-0-4, Barnswell 4-3-11. Totals

Ross	16	15	14	18	—	63
Whitmer	13	10	14	17	—	54

3-PT FGs — FR, Root; TW, Kurdziel. RECORDS — Whitmer 6-2, Ross 7-0.

Little Giants gang up to stop Redmen

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

The Fremont Ross boys basketball team once again witnessed a marquee player lighting up the scoreboard for 30 points.

But despite watching Fostoria's Rich Newsome become the third opponent to do so Friday night, the Little Giants will gladly take their own scoring-by-committee routine any time.

Ross got double figures from four players and scoring from 9-of-10 players on its roster to take a 74-67 Great Lakes victory before a packed Purple Pit.

The Little Giants could have mailed in their fourth straight loss when leading scorer Derrick Hershey suffered a gruesome knee injury in the first quarter. Instead, Ross used that setback as a rallying point.

"(The win) really shows us that we're not a one-person team. We have 10 people that dress and 10 people that can play," said Kevin Mosser, who along with Sam Root (five assists) had 10 points apiece behind the 11-point efforts of Edmund Peters and Rob Liggins.

Ross coach Mark Gedeon acknowledged it was his team's first complete 32-minute effort of the season. The Little Giants took an immediate lead on Kurt Snyder's jump shot 42 seconds into the game and went on a 13-2 run at the end of the first half to go up 32-21, and they never let the Redmen close the gap to less than three points thereafter.

In doing so, Ross (5-5, 4-3 GLL) snapped Fostoria's four-game winning streak.

"They definitely played harder than we did, no doubt about that," said Fostoria coach Jim Rutter, whose team is now 5-3, 1-3 GLL.

The Little Giants passed their short-term test of playing without Hershey, but the long-term effects of a collision between the

Friday

Fremont Ross	74
Fostoria	67

Next Friday

Bedford at Fremont Ross
6 p.m. JV start

6-foot-3 senior forward and a host of Fostoria players late in the first quarter are yet unknown.

Leo Frierson hit a layup to make it 19-17 2:42 into the second quarter, but Mosser and Liggins combined for 10 points in the ensuing 13-2, with a Liggins inside chip giving Ross its biggest lead of the night, 32-21. Only a John Rivera 3-pointer kept Fostoria within 32-24 at half-time.

"They just played more aggressive than us (Friday) night," Newsome said. "They got a lot of offensive rebounds and we didn't get that many. If we would have crashed the boards a little harder the game would have been different."

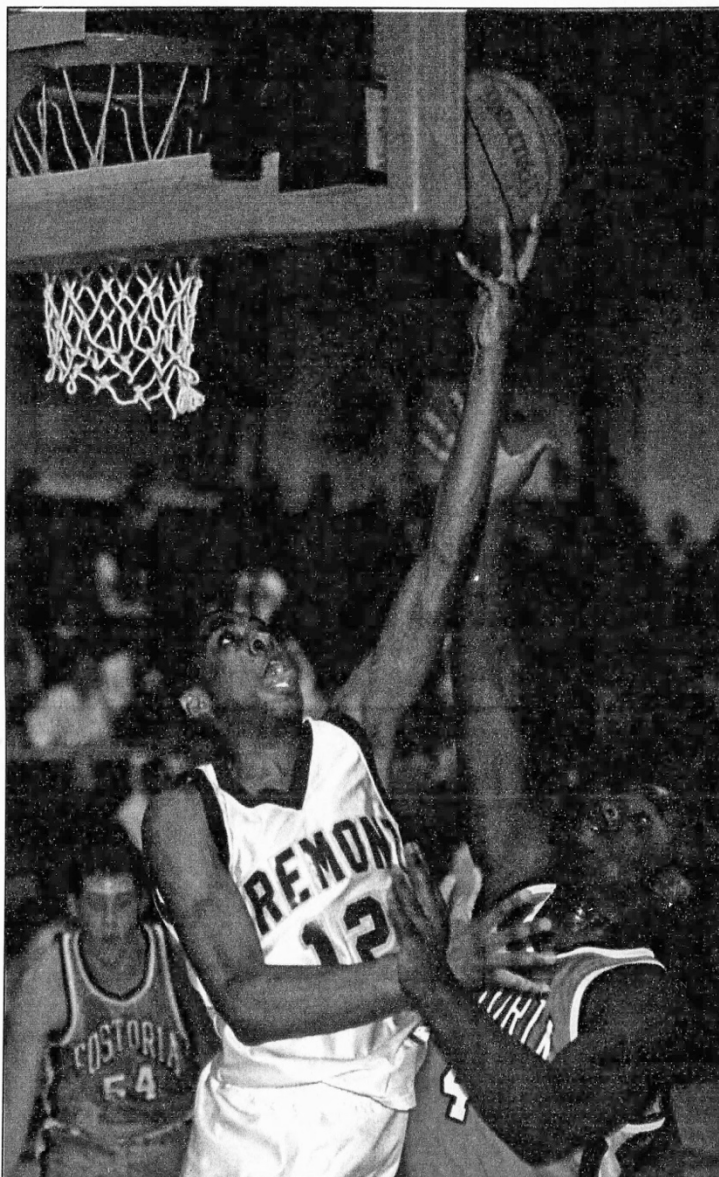
A slipping and sliding Newsome took matters into his own hands, scoring 11 third-quarter points, including a spin-o-rama with 19 seconds left to make it 47-43.

"We were trying to get him to shoot more outside than inside," Mosser said. "We knew he likes to drive. We didn't worry about him a whole lot, but we just tried to keep him outside to try to contain him."

John Overberg hit a 3-pointer at the buzzer to give Ross a 50-43 lead heading into the final quarter.

Newsome scored his 30th point with a pair of free throws with three minutes left before Ross went into a delay offense to chew up time.

Ross put itself in the driver's seat by hitting 21 of its first 25 free throws, but allowed the game to tighten up by missing



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

See ROSS, B2

JOELL HEIDELBURG puts up a shot against Fostoria's Leo Frierson in the first half of the Little Giants' win Friday.

Ross snaps losing streak

Continued from B1

6-of-13 freebies in the last 1:46.

The Little Giants also effectively neutralized the combined 12 feet, 9 inches of mass represented by Fostoria's Malcolm Robinson and Jeremy Young, holding Young to four points and Robinson to eight (six on free throws).

"We had nine other leaders," Ross coach Mark Gedeon said. "Everybody who came off the bench stepped it up."

LITTLE GIANTS NOTES: Newsome's 30-point barrage came on the heels of Whitmers' Floyd Campbell's 38-point outburst last week. Napoleon's Louis Green scored 35 Dec. 13. ... Reggie Jones (9 points) led Ross with eight rebounds. ... Joell Heidelberg had eight points, but his most riveting play was a block on a Lerone Martin 3-point attempt in the third quarter.

High Schools

Boys Basketball

Ross 74, Fostoria 67

FOSTORIA — Leo Frierson 4-0-8, Dustin Miller 1-0-2, Rich Newsome 12-6-30, Seth Brandeberry 2-0-4, Ryan Freshour 1-2-4, Malcolm Robinson 1-6-8, Jeremy Young 1-2-4. Totals 24-17-67.

FREMONT ROSS — Sam Root 2-6-10, Joell Heidelberg 2-4-8, John Overberg 3-0-8, Kurt Snyder 2-0-5, Reggie Jones 4-1-9, Edmund Peters 2-7-11, Rob Liggins 5-1-11, Derrick Hershey 0-2-2, Kevin Mosser 2-6-10. Totals 22-27-74.

Fostoria	10	14	19	24	—	67
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Ross	13	19	18	24	—	74
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3-PT FGs — Fostoria 2-9 (Newsome 0-1, Brandeberry 0-1, Martin 0-1, Riverga 2-6), Ross 3-9 (Root 0-1, Heidelberg 0-1, Overberg 2-4, Snyder 1-2, Jones 0-1). TEAM REBOUNDS — Fostoria 33 (Newsome 8), Ross 32 (Jones 8). TOTAL FOULS — Fostoria 24, Ross 20. FOULED OUT — Peters, Mosser. TURNOVERS — Fostoria 20, Ross 13. RECORDS — Fostoria 5-3, 1-3 GLL; Ross 5-5, 4-3 GLL.

Ross JV 49, Fostoria 47

FOSTORIA — Lamphoun Lata 2-0-4, Ryan Gerritsen 4-4-12, Robert Scott 8-4-20, Cory Echelberry 2-0-5, Dustin Miller 0-2-2, Greg Fleming 2-0-4. Totals 18-10-47.

FREMONT ROSS — Robb Ritzman 4-0-9, Mack Cole 2-0-4, Juan Vela 4-0-10, Drew Root 2-0-5, Mike Weaver 5-0-10, Matt Martel 2-0-4, Tyson Liggins 3-1-7. Totals 22-1-49.

Fostoria	12	8	15	12	—	47
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Ross	16	16	7	10	—	49
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3-PT FGs — F, Echelberry; FR, Ritzman, Vela, Root.

RECORD — Fremont Ross 8-0.

Liggins fills void as Ross blasts Bedford



By **MICHAEL BOSI**
Staff writer

A soft touch can go a long way in the rock 'em, sock 'em battles under the basketball hoop.

That advice was not lost on Fremont Ross's Rob Liggins, as he became the latest Little Giant to step into the limelight by scoring a team-high 16 points and handling a tough defensive assignment admirably in an 82-64 Great Lakes League victory over Bedford Friday night.

"(Coach Mark Gedeon) told me to step up, he wanted me to step my game up," Liggins said following his second straight double-figure effort.

With its fifth GLL victory, Ross (6-5, 5-2 GLL) keeps pace in the league, trailing Whitmer and Napoleon, who each have one loss.

Bedford, at 3-8, 1-5 GLL, slipped a little deeper into the league cellar.

The win also springboards the Little Giants into tonight's match at Toledo St. Francis, the top-ranked Division I team in Ohio.

Friday	
Fremont Ross	82
Bedford	64

Tonight

Ross at Toledo St. Francis
6:30 JV

"(Friday night) was the big game for us," Gedeon said. "Tomorrow's another challenge for us against the top team in the state, but if our kids execute and play our style of basketball, you never know what can happen."

Scoring Ross's first six points, Liggins, a 6-foot-3 senior, wasted little time making the Purple Pit crowd forget that the team's leading scorer, Derrick Hershey, was in layman's clothes on the sidelines.

Liggins scored just two points in the second quarter, but part of that may have been because the man he was defending, 6-3 Chad Clay, began to head up.

Clay had nine second-quarter points and a 14-point first half as Bedford led 38-36 at the intermission. He finished with a game-high 18 points and 10 rebounds.

Liggins' only hoop of the third quarter was his biggest, a conversion of a post feed from Sam Root (14 points, 4 assists, 7 steals) and a free throw to put Ross up for good, 39-38.

Ross outscored Bedford, 17-8, in the third quarter, with the help of six spirited points from Reggie Jones.

The Little Giants laid it on thick in the final eight minutes, beginning with John Overberg's 3-pointer 24 seconds into the frame that gave Ross a 56-46 lead.

Overberg, who suffered a bruised foot during practice this week, hit all three of his 3-point attempts and finished 4-for-7 from beyond the arc for all of his points.

"Everybody has their own idea of what to do and they go out and do it," the senior guard said. "I'm expected to do that."

"It was nice to see him in the flow again," Gedeon said. "Maybe the foot injury's a little

See **LIGGINS**, B2

Liggins lifts Ross

Continued from B1

bit of a blessing because he had to take a couple of days off and he got to concentrate on his stroke."

Bedford called timeout with 6:23 left and regained some footing as Clay, Matthew Blanks and Joe Albring hit consecutive baskets to cut the lead to 61-56.

But Gedeon called his own timeout and Liggins fastbreak layup launched a 21-8 run that closed the game. Of Liggins' seven buckets, none was from more than five feet out, and all were scored with authority.

"I'm playing better than what I was. I just shoot the ball a little softer," he said.

Liggins fared best against Clay in the fourth quarter, allowing the GLL's seventh leading scorer to hit just 2-of-5 attempts.

"I just had to play on top of him because he wanted to spin to the middle every time," Liggins said.

Ross scored the game's final 10 points, capped by a crowd-pleasing Joell Heidelberg-to-Jones alley-oop. Jones was among the week's visitors to the training room, as he was hobbled by a sprained ankle.

"The ankle's better," Gedeon said. "I think the last play showed that a little bit."

LITTLE GIANTS NOTES: Kevin Mosser also finished with his second straight double-figure performance, with 10 points. ... Sophomore Drew Diller and junior Matt Martel dressed for their first varsity games but did not see playing time. ... Without Hershey, Ross fielded a starting five that entered the game averaging a combined 27.9 points per game.

High Schools

Boys Basketball

Ross 82, Bedford 64

BEDFORD — Blake Flessner 6-0-12, Matthew Banks 2-5-9, Joe Albring 2-2-6, Chad Clay 7-4-18, Scott Schutt 1-0-2, Clark Main 0-2-2, Matt Tippin 3-1-7, Chris Forrey 2-2-8. Totals 23-16-64.

FREMONT ROSS — Sam Root 4-5-14, Joell Heidelberg 2-0-4, John Overberg 4-0-12, Harry Liggins 2-3-7, Kurt Snyder 2-0-5, Reggie Jones 4-0-8, Edmund Peters 2-2-6, Rob Liggins 7-2-16, Kevin Mosser 4-2-10. Totals 31-14-82.

Bedford 19 19 8 18 — 64

Fremont Ross 21 15 17 29 — 82

3-PT FGs — Bedford 2-8 (Flessner 0-1, Clay 0-1, Forrey 2-6), Ross 6-15 (Root 1-4, Oberberg 4-7, Snyder 1-4).

TURNOVERS — Bedford 20, Ross 9.

REBOUNDS — Bedford 31 (Clay 10),

Ross 29 (Mosser 7). TOTAL FOULS —

Bedford 19, Ross 17. FOULED OUT —

Forrey. TEAM RECORDS — Bedford 3-

8, 1-5 GLL; Ross 6-5, 5-2 GLL.

Ross JV 76, Bedford 33

BEDFORD — Justin Kitzmiller 0-1-1, Nick Weaver 2-4-8, Chad Funk 2-1-5, James McKinney 1-5-7, Matt Wintersteen 1-0-, Tony Nicol 1-3-5, Patrick Gill 2-1-5. Totals 9-15-33.

FREMONT ROSS — Robb Ritzman 4-0-9, Mack Cole 2-0-5, Drew Diller 4-3-11, Juan Vela 8-3-20, Drew Root 1-0-3, Mike Weaver 3-0-6, Matt Martel 1-0-2, Tyson Liggins 8-2-18, Frank Kaiser 0-2-2. Totals 31-10-76.

Bedford 7 12 5 9 — 33

Fremont Ross 20 11 29 16 — 76

3-PT FGs — FR, Ritzman, Cole, Vela, Root.

Little Giants nearly knock off No. 1

Top-ranked Knights need 42 points from star to offset Ross's balanced attack

By **MICHAEL BOSI**
Staff writer

TOLEDO — There were no surprises for the Fremont Ross boys basketball team Saturday night at St. Francis.

The Little Giants knew they were up against the top-ranked Division I team in Ohio. They knew of 6-foot-4 guard Robierre Cullars' magical scoring touch. They knew of the talent possessed by monstrous forwards Zach McClellan and Rick Fox. They knew, too, that they would be playing in the Knights' final home game of the season before

Saturday	
Toledo St. Francis	73
Fremont Ross	69
Friday	
Napoleon at Fremont Ross	
6:15 JV	

a sellout crowd.

And now the Little Giants know they are capable of playing with the best — but also that bringing out a career-best effort from the best player on the state's best team is living a little too dangerously.

The Knights needed a career-high 42-point effort from Cullars

to suppress an electrified but Derrick Hershey-less Ross charge, 73-69, in front of their own standing-room-only Parents Night crowd.

Wait. Perhaps the loss was a surprise.

"We all played our hearts out. ... We expected no less than a victory," said Ross's Ed Peters, whose 12 points made him one of four Little Giants in double figures. "Even though they were No. 1 in the state, we were not intimidated at all."

With the exception of a loss at Toledo Waite, the lineup of



ROOT

place in Erie Shore Conference), Olmsted Falls (ranked 14th in Div. II) and now the Knights have made the Little Giants victims.

But St. Francis will be the first to admit deriving no joy from being the king of the hill.

Ross's defeats reads like a Who's Who of Ohio Basketball. Napoleon and Whitner (tied for first place in the Great Lakes League), Sandusky (second

"We don't like it," said Cullars, who also had four assists. "It's like making us marked men."

Cullars found the mark early and often Saturday, hitting his first three shots (all 3-pointers), 9-of-16 2-point attempts and 6-of-7 trifectas.

"I hit the first one and I got the feeling and I think I was in a zone," said Cullars, the only Knight in double figures. "It was a big night for me, I felt like I could make it any time I could shoot it."

See ROSS, B3

Ross nearly upends Toledo St. Francis

Continued from B1

Cullars scored 13 points in the first quarter, six in the second, 12 in the third and 11 in the final frame.

"The first two (3-pointers) he had real nice looks on," Ross coach Mark Gedeon said. "He was able to set his feet and stroke it because we were a little late getting to him. But after that he earned everything else he got."

The Knights (12-1) looked like they were going to make purple pretzels out of Ross after taking a 27-16 first-quarter lead.

But that's before Ross's sharpshooters came to life.

The Little Giants outscored St. Francis — and Cullars — 15-5 to start the second quarter on the strength of one of John Overberg's four 3-pointers, six of Rob Liggins' 14 points, four from Peters and a pair from Sam Root (team-high 15 points, seven assists).

"Fremont was taking care of our man-to-man pretty well so we had to switch zones on them a few times," McClellan said. "They were still hitting the 3's and they were in a zone."

Peters whipped the Purple Pit on Wheels to a frenzied state when he brought Ross within 1, 32-31, with an easy layup off a fine Kurt Snyder post feed with 3:33 left in the half.

Peters also tied the game at 35 at halftime, as he scored off a baseline toss from Joell Heidelberg, forcing St. Francis to call a timeout during which a fiery Cullars proceeded to lay a verbal assault on his teammates.

"(At halftime) we were ready to come out the second half and do the same as the first half. We were thinking about winning the second half," Peters said.

The visitors' side noise reached a deafening level when Snyder gave Ross a 44-41 lead — its only one of the night — with a 3-pointer from the left wing 3:19 into the third quarter.

But after Liggins tied the game at 46, St. Francis went on a 10-0 run — including a riveting Keith

Cuda-to-McClellan alley-oop — to regain complete control heading into the fourth quarter.

A 1-3-1 zone defense worked wonders for the Knights, who did not allow Ross another 3-pointer until the final 2:27. But having his offensive machine run a zone defense worked St. Francis coach Joe Suboticki into a mini-maelstrom.

"I expect extreme pressure, fullcourt defense, run and jump, unselfish offensively, running some offense, all of that stuff," said Suboticki. "They made us — they actually made us — play a zone defense the whole second half in order to win the game. You've got to give all the credit to (Ross), to tell you the truth. They made us do things we don't like to do."

"They're 6-6? And they come into our gym and we've got to resort all that to win by four points? And we're supposed to be No. 1?"

As far as Gedeon was concerned, his troops held that honor — at least for Saturday night.

"That we can go to somebody else's gym and lose to the No. 1 team by four points," Gedeon said, "says something about us."

Sure does.

LITTLE GIANTS NOTES: Fox left the game after the first quarter with a sprained left ankle. ... Overberg has had two straight games with four 3-pointers. ... Cullars leads the City League with 23.6 points per game. ... St. Francis scored 14 points off its 16 offensive rebounds.

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Basketball

High School Boys

St. Francis 73, Ross 69

FREMONT ROSS — Sam Root 6-2-15, John Overberg 4-0-12, Harry Liggins 1-0-2, Kurt Snyder 1-1-3, Ed Peters 5-2-12, Rob Liggins 6-2-14, Kevin Mosser 2-2-6. Totals 27-9-69.

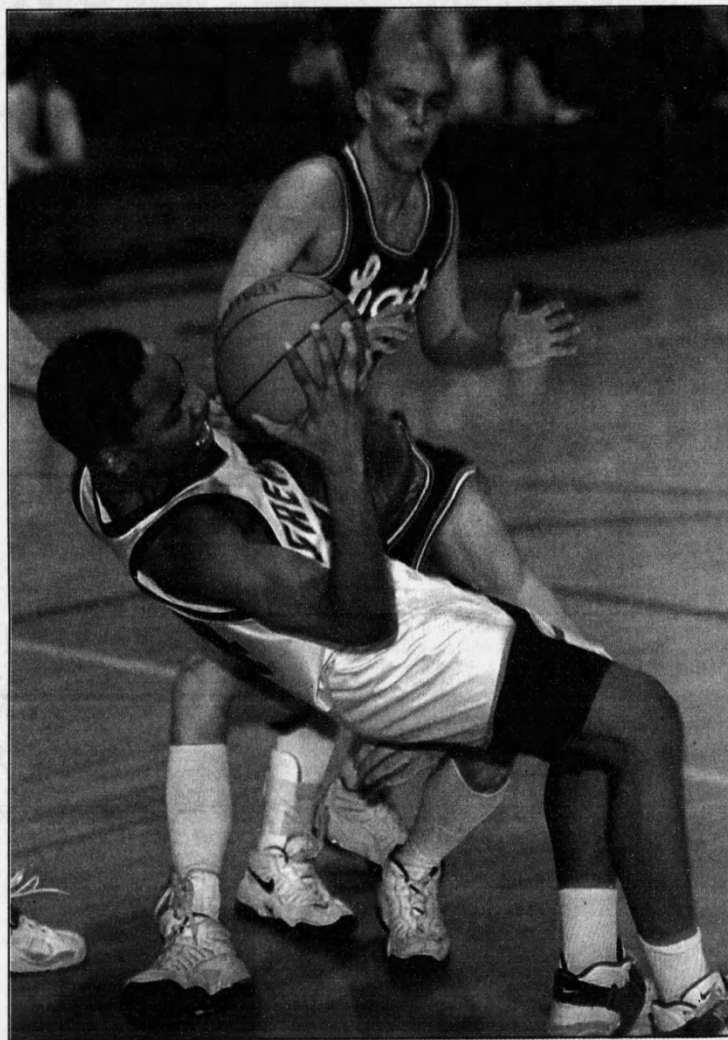
TOLEDO ST. FRANCIS — Keith Cuda 2-0-4, Armondo Burton 2-1-6, Nick Talent 1-1-3, Rick Fox 2-0-4, Zach McClellan 2-4-8, David Ryan 1-0-2, Robierre Cullars 15-6-42, Tony Abbott 2-0-4. Totals 27-12-73.

Fremont Ross 18 19 11 23 — 69

St. Francis 27 8 19 19 — 73

3-PT FGs — Ross 6-17 (Root 1-4, Overberg 4-7, Harry Liggins 0-1, Snyder 1-4, Peters 0-1), St. Francis 7-10 (Burton 1-3, Cullars 6-7). TEAM REBOUNDS — St. Francis 28 (McClellan 10), Ross 25 (Root 5, R. Liggins 5). TOTAL FOULS — Ross 19, St. Francis 11. TEAM RECORDS — Ross 6-6, St. Francis 12-1.

Ross rallies to beat Napoleon



ED PETERS of Fremont Ross falls down after grabbing a rebound from Napoleon's Kevin Good during the first half Friday at The Purple Pitt. The Little Giants mounted a second-half surge for a 76-68.

Liggins quarterback's Little Giants' charge

By **MICHAEL BOSI**
Staff writer

Now you can call them The Comeback Kids.

For a while, they were merely The Comatose Kids.

The Fremont Ross boys basketball team spotted Napoleon a 13-point lead before hopping on the saddle of the Derrick Hershey and Harry Liggins Express to mount a second-half surge and beat the Wildcats, 76-68.

Hershey, returning from a two-game

absence with a knee sprain, scored 20 points, including 14 in the second half, as Ross neutralized another superhuman effort by Napoleon's Louis Green, who made 34 points seem easy.

Liggins quarterbacked the offense as if he had a helmet and shoulder pads on, shaking off a bloodied lip and dishing off seven assists, five in the second half.

The key Great Lakes League victory puts the Little Giants (7-6, 6-2 GLL) in a tie for second place with Napoleon (8-4, 4-2 GLL).

Toledo Whitmer, needing overtime to beat Clay Friday, is still atop the standings with one loss.

"It's pretty important to us to show people in our league and in Northwest Ohio that we can beat the good teams and show that we're a pretty good team and get us some respect," Liggins said.

Near upsets against Sandusky earlier in the season and against Toledo St. Francis last Saturday ended in valiant but futile comeback attempts, but this time the Little Giants put the finishing touches on a rally.

"We got off to an absolutely lousy start, but it's nice to climb the hill and get over the top," Ross coach Mark Gedeon said. "Once we got over the top, our

Friday
Fremont Ross76
Napoleon68

Tonight
Tiffin Columbian at Ross
8:15 p.m. JV

kids relaxed and we executed."

The Little Giants failed to score on its first five possessions and muddled through a first-quarter struggle that they haven't experienced since ... well, since last Saturday. Only a John Overberg 3-pointer and a Joell Heidelberg layup in the last 5.5 seconds trimmed Napoleon's lead to 19-11.

Through the teams played a nearly even second quarter, Napoleon claimed its largest lead of the night, 33-20, when Mike Limbird hit a 3-pointer with 3:41 left in the half.

That's when the Ross rally began to blossom.

The Little Giants finished the half on a 9-2 roll to make it 36-29 at halftime.

"The end of the second quarter and the end of the first quarter was our demise," said Napoleon coach Walt Behrman. "We had comfortable leads and we made poor decisions."

The Purple Pit crowd — most of them toting purple "Keep Bucci AD" signs in support of their besieged athletic director Art Bucci — erupted when Ross whittled away at the lead in the third quarter and finally tied the game, 41-41, on another of Overberg's four 3-pointers with 1:54 left in the third quarter.

"Basically, all 10 of us came out and did it. In the past (comeback attempts), it was just everyone doing one thing and not as a team effort," said Liggins, Ross's pseudo-designated contribute-in-places-other-than-the-statbook man.

The teams traded baskets and a Green 3-point play helped

LITTLE GIANTS, B2

Little Giants force second-place tie

Continued from B1

Napoleon to a 49-48 lead after three quarters.

When a player of Green's caliber scores 15 points in the fourth quarter, as the 6-foot-5 forward did, it would usually mean lights out for Ross.

Not this time.

"We expected him to get his points, but at the same time we had to concentrate on doing things to shut down the rest of the team and concentrate on what we had to do," Liggins said.

After Liggins gave Ross a 52-49 lead, Green turned in another 3-point play to tie it at 52 with 6:24 left.

Fourteen seconds later, Liggins dished off to Overberg to let his fellow senior hit his third trifecta and put Ross up for good, 55-52.

Led by Hershey, who erased any notions that his knee injury slowed him by diving across the floor on occasion, Ross's post players (including Ed Peters and Kevin Mosser) combined for 13 points in the fourth quarter to neutralize Napoleon's Green giant.

Overberg hit his fourth 3-pointer with 4:57 left, and Napoleon never came closer than four points thereafter.

At the final buzzer, it was the Wildcats who were The Comatose Kids.

LITTLE GIANTS NOTES: Only five Napoleon players appeared in the scoring column, with Limbird scoring 14 points and Ross Durham getting 10. Durham also had nine rebounds, while Green had 11. ... Sam Root had nine assists. ... Said Bucci of his support signs, distributor unknown: "Parents or kids made them. I came in this morning and there was one sitting on my desk." ... Rob Liggins and Root each saw their double-figure scoring streaks end at three games. ... Overberg has gone three straight games with four 3-pointers.

High Schools

Boys Basketball

Ross 76, Napoleon 68

NAPOLEON — Brian Bostelman 2-0-4, Mike Limbir 5-3-14, Todd Kurse 3-0-6, Ross Durham 5-0-10, Louis Green 13-4-34. Totals 28-7-68.

FREMONT ROSS — Sam Root 1-5-7, Joell Heidelberg 2-0-4, John Overberg 4-2-14, Harry Liggins 2-0-5, Kurt Snyder 3-1-9, Edmund Peters 2-2-6, Rob Liggins 2-0-4, Derrick Hershey 9-2-20, Kevin Mosser 2-3-7. Totals 27-15-76.

Napoleon 19 17 13 19 — 68

Fremont Ross 11 18 19 26 — 76

3-PT FGs — Napoleon 5-22 (Bostelman 0-2, Good 0-5, Limbird 1-7, Rathge 0-1, Green 4-8), Ross 7-14 (Root 0-1, Overberg 4-7, Liggins 1-1, Snyder 2-5).

TURNOVERS — Napoleon 15, Ross 11.

REBOUNDS — Napoleon 35 (Green 11), Ross 20 (Mosser 5). TOTAL FOULS

— Napoleon 23, Ross 17. FOULED OUT

— Kruse. RECORDS — Napoleon 8-4,

4-2 GLL; Ross 7-6, 6-2 GLL.

JV RESULT — Ross 71, Napoleon 57

Little Giants surge past Columbian

News-Messenger reports

After scoring an exciting comeback victory over Napoleon Friday, the Fremont Ross boys basketball team earned a weekend sweep by beating Tiffin Columbian, 84-74, Saturday night at the Purple Pit.

"For us, this was still an important game because it makes a statement in the sectionals for us," Ross coach Mark Gedeon said.

Derrick Hershey continued to show no ill effects from his knee injury by leading the Little Giants (8-6) with 19 points and seven rebounds. "He's definitely feeling better," Gedeon said.

After a frustrating game (four fouls) against Napoleon, Joell Heidelberg responded with a 14-point effort, and Kevin Mosser added 10 for Ross.

The Tornados (6-4) had a 7-4 lead when Ross exploded for a 17-0 run en route to a 21-9 first-



HEIDELBURG

quarter lead.

Columbian turned in a spirited second quarter, scoring 29 points and coming within 44-38 on Eric Slosser's desperation 3-pointer at the

halftime buzzer.

John Overberg's 3-point shooting was essential to Ross's halftime edge. The senior guard nailed all three of his triples in the first half.

Kaene Runion led all scorers with 22 points and he also had a game-high 14 rebounds.

St. Joe 81, St. Mary's 73

The Panthers sent St. Joe to the foul line 40 times and paid for it, as the Crimson Streaks hit 30 of the charity shots in their non-league victory.

St. Joe (10-4), which wedged into a four-way tie in the Midland Athletic League Friday night, received 21 points from

BOYS BASKETBALL

Brandon Durnwald and 18 from Nick Haynes.

Scott Reineck added 13 points and nine rebounds, and Phil Nieset had 11 points and seven assists.

"We had eight guys contribute Saturday night and that was the best part of the whole weekend," St. Joe coach Mike Gabel said. "Friday night Tommy (Kerr) was sick and Brady Busold took his place, and last night all eight regulars had pretty solid games."

"It has not been a one- or two-man show."

St. Mary's (4-11) was led by Tim Lutz's 22 points.

The Panthers closed the gap to 76-73 with under a minute left but St. Joe had control of the foul line.

"That was excellent," Gabel said. "There were some clutch free throws at the end and I'm very pleased with that."

Ashland 78, Clyde 48

Ashland jumped to a 20-8 lead after one quarter and never looked back, riding the combined 37-point effort from Greg Hower (19 points) and Andy Platt (18).

Greg Robinson and Colin Bennett each had nine points for Clyde (7-8), which did not have a player reach double figures and lost its third straight.

Springfield 80, Oak Harbor 47

The Rockets slipped into a 27-6 hole after the first quarter and Matt Doyle made sure they didn't climb out of it, scoring a game-high 24 points.

Chris Mossing added 13 points for the 11-2 Blue Devils.

Oak Harbor (5-9) was led by Craig Jess's nine points, while Chris Rygalski contributed eight.

Liberty-Benton 56, Old Fort 49

The Stockaders fell prey to Liberty-Benton's Steve Burgel's 21-point effort to fall in their non-league game.

Old Fort struggled at the free

throw line, hitting just half of their 16 shots, while the Eagles hit 17 of their 24 attempts.

Liberty-Benton claimed an insurmountable lead with a 14-9 second quarter to lead 23-17 at halftime.

Drew Mihahle scored 16 points and Jeremy Saums added 10 for the Eagles. Phil Riehm led Old Fort with 17 points, including 12 in the fourth quarter.

Woodmore 79, at Lakota 41

The Wildcats blasted their Suburban Lakes League rivals as Frank Lucki's 14 points led 11 different scorers for Woodmore (7-5, 6-3 SLL) in a makeup game in Kansas.

Lucki also nailed four 3-pointers.

Odin Hale drew top scorer honors for the Raiders (1-12, 0-10 SLL), with 11 points.

Woodmore easily won the rebounding battle, 41-20, as Dan Avers (9 points) grabbed 12 rebounds and Andy Rippke (7 points) had 10.

Boys Basketball

Ross 84, Tiffin Columbian 74

TIFFIN COLUMBIAN — Zirger 5-0-12, David Losey 5-0-14, Kaene Runion 8-6-22, Chris Hill 6-2-14, Eric Slosser 2-0-6. Totals 29-8-74.

FREMONT ROSS — Sam Root 0-3-3, Joell Heidelberg 6-2-14, John Overberg 3-0-9, Harry Liggins 1-1-3, Kurt Snyder 3-0-7, Reggie Jones 2-0-5, Ed Peters 3-0-6, Rob Liggins 4-0-8, Derrick Hershey 8-3-19, Kevin Mosser 4-2-10. Totals 34-11-84.

Columbian	9	29	17	19	—	74
Ross	21	23	21	19	—	84

3-PT FGs — Columbian (Zirger 2, Losey 4, Slosser 2); Ross (Overberg 3, Snyder 1, R. Jones 1). REBOUNDS — Columbian 29 (Runion 14); Ross 26 (Hershey 7). TURNOVERS — Columbian 14, Ross 14. RECORDS — Columbian 6-4, Ross 8-6.

JV RESULT — Ross 67, Columbian 51.

Heidelberg provides spark for Little Giants

News-Messenger reports

Ross sophomore Joell Heidelberg scored 22 points and snatched 7 steals as the Little Giants won a Great Lakes League game at Oregon Clay, 73-64.

The win kept the Little Giants (9-6, 7-2 GLL) just a half-game back of Toledo Whitmer, which beat Napoleon 53-52 Friday. Ross hosts Whitmer Feb. 11 in a game that could decide the conference champion.

"It's exciting," coach Mark Gedeon said. "It's been a while since Fremont Ross basketball

Friday	
Fremont Ross	73
Oregon Clay	64
Next Friday	
Fremont Ross at Findlay	
6:30 p.m. JV	

has been this close."

Clay threatened to spoil Ross's recent success early Friday as the Eagles took a seven-point lead in the second quarter. Ryan Huguely (23 points) hit seven 3-pointers to keep the Little Giants from taking over.

But eventually — behind Heidelberg's defensive work — Ross

pulled ahead.

"Joell Heidelberg gave us a great spark," Gedeon said. "He had three of his seven steals in the second quarter as he was able to put his own individual pressure on them."

"He was by far the quickest player on the floor and his defensive intensity really lifted everybody," Gedeon said.

Ross's 20-point second quarter allowed it to take a 32-28 halftime lead, which was pushed to 51-43 after three quarters.

"Joell hit a couple of real nice pull-up jumpers in the third quar-



HEIDELBURG

Eagles had fouled enough to put Ross in the bonus and force the Little Giants to the line.

With 1:08 left, Huguely hit the last of his 3-pointers to close the game to 64-60. It would be the

ter," Gedeon said of the 5-foot-9 guard.

In the fourth quarter the Little Giants spread the floor and were able to run one minute, 36 seconds off the clock before the

closest Clay would get the rest of the way.

"We had just enough to stay an arm's length ahead," Gedeon said. Ross connected on 8-of-14 free throw attempts in the final period.

Derrick Hershey scored 13 points and grabbed eight rebounds for Ross, and teammates Kurt Snyder and Sam Root each scored 10 points. Brian Tobias had 12 points and a game-high 12 rebounds for Clay.

Friday's win was the Little Giants' sixth straight, going back to the Jan. 3 setback at Whitmer.

High Schools

Boys Basketball

Fremont Ross 73, Clay 64

FREMONT ROSS — Sam Root 4-2-10, Joell Heidelberg 9-4-22, John Overberg 0-2-2, Kurt Snyder 4-2-10, Reggie Jones 2-0-4, Edmund Peters 1-0-2, Rob Liggins 2-0-4, Derrick Hershey 5-3-13, Kevin Mosser 2-2-6. Totals 29-15-73.

OREGON CLAY — Justin Romano 1-0-2, Mike Henneman 6-3-15, Tom Clay 4-4-12, Ryan Hugueley 8-0-23, Brian Tobias 2-8-12. Totals 21-15-64.

Fremont Ross 12 20 19 22 — 73

Oregon Clay 16 12 15 21 — 64

3 PT GOALS—Clay 7 (Hugueley 7). REBOUNDS—Clay 33 (Tobias 12), Ross 24 (Hershey 8). TURNOVERS Ross 8, Clay 16.

Records: Ross 9-6, 7-2 GLL, Clay 3-5, 6-8 GLL.

Ross JV 53, Clay 40

ROSS—Rob Ritzman 4-1-11, Mack Cole 2-0-4, Andrew Diller 1-2-4, Jorel Heidelberg 2-0-4, Juan Vela 4-0-10, Mike Weaver 3-1-7, Matt Martel 5-0-10, Tyson Liggins 1-1-3. Totals 22-5-53.

CLAY—Miller 4-0-8, Pirwitz 0-2-2, Palmer 1-1-3, Warnke 6-2-14, Besgrove 3-1-7, Morris 1-0-2, Rizo 1-0-2, Shiffert 1-0-2. Totals 17-6-40.

Ross 14 11 10 18 — 53

Clay 10 6 10 14 — 40

3-PT GOALS—Ross 4 (Ritzman 2, Vela 2). REBOUNDS—Ross (Mack Cole 5).

Record: Ross 12-1

Ross win sets up big matchup

By **MICHAEL BOSI**
Staff writer

FINDLAY — Let the good times roll.

Playing with an all-out fervor not seen since Eisenhower was in the Oval Office, the Buckeye League was *en vogue* and Elvis was still in the building, the Fremont Ross boys basketball team paved the way for its most meaningful game since 1954 with a 62-47 victory over Findlay Friday night.



SNYDER

Ross (10-6, 8-2 GLL), winners of six of its last seven games, outscored Findlay 17-5 in the third quarter to set up Tuesday's Great Lakes League showdown with Toledo Whitmer.

A victory over the Panthers will force a first-place tie. Ross has two GLL games left, while Whitmer, which was idle Friday night, has three remaining.

"Life has a lot of meaning for Fremont Ross basketball in the month of February, something that we haven't been able to say for a long time," said Ross coach

Mark Gedeon, whose current popularity would probably win him a mayor's race in this town of sugar beets, frozen brown rivers and besieged athletic directors.

Joell Heidelberg scored 14 points and had four assists, Kurt Snyder had 13 points and Harry Liggins swiped six of the Little Giants' 13 steals as they unleashed a defensive fury on the Trojans.

"Right now we feel really good, but it'll make us feel really better if we can beat Whitmer Tuesday," said Heidelberg, who has averaged 16.7 points in Ross's last three games.

"I think we're carrying a little bit of history. I don't know when the last time was that we won games like this back to back. Usually Fremont Ross isn't known for basketball, it's really known for football. I hope this year we can make it known for basketball."

Snyder had the hot hand for the Little Giants in the first quarter, hitting his first three shots, two 3-pointers, as Ross climbed to an 8-3 lead.

But Findlay (6-9, 3-6 GLL) held Ross in check through the rest of the first half, in part because

Friday

Fremont Ross62
Findlay47

Tuesday

Toledo Whitmer
at Fremont Ross
6 p.m. JV

they were able to establish an inside game via junior Mark Wilson's 6-foot-6 frame.

Wilson, who clashed with Kevin Mosser in the paint for most of the night, had seven of his team-high 10 points in the first quarter.

"We just didn't have the crispness (in the first half) that we're used to our team playing with," Gedeon said. "Thank goodness Kurt Snyder was able to get off to the start he did and Joell Heidelberg was able to give us a little bit of spark."

The Trojans led 27-25 when Ed Peters got away with a very-near-goaltending block on a P.J. Martinez layup.

Trojans coach Jerry Snodgrass exhausted his vocal cords arguing into the halftime intermission — to no avail — and thereafter the Snod Squad relinquished its momentum.

See ROSS, B4

Ross ready for GLL showdown

Continued from B1

"Truthfully, the game turned after that," Snodgrass said. "The goaltending call didn't cost us the game, but we have young kids and we didn't do a very good job of playing through that."

Heidelberg put Ross ahead, 29-27, with a pair of free throws with 2.6 seconds left in the half.

Heidelberg, who had a career-high 22 points last week against Clay, has gradually gained confidence as his sophomore year has worn on.

"He's had three straight outstanding ballgames for us, and it's nice that a sophomore at this point in the year is stepping his game up and improving daily," Gedeon said. "It's exciting, too, because he gives us another weapon offensively as well as defensively."

After Martinez finished a fast break a minute into the third quarter, Ross went on a 13-0 run to take a 42-29 lead.

Sam Root, who had four assists, began the string by hitting two free throws to put Ross up, 31-29, and the senior guard capped the rally with a layup courtesy of a Derrick Hershey steal.

The Little Giants gambled at times by triple-teaming the ball-carrier, but it paid off as Findlay committed nine of its 22 turnovers in the third quarter.

At one point, Findlay failed to make a shot on seven straight possessions.

"We knew they weren't the greatest ballhandlers in the world, so if we put pressure on them, we could take the ball away and create offense," Liggins said.

Ross never gave up its double-figure lead in the fourth quarter, and all that was left was the obligatory Reggie Jones dunk, which the Fremont roadies received with 5:27 left.

Less than a half hour after the game, a handful of Ross players — sandwiches in one hand, basketballs in the other — returned the court as if to get an early start on their Whitmer preparations.

"We're really excited right now. The kids are excited, the fans are excited and I'm excited," beamed Gedeon. "It's a special feeling."

So strike up the band. "Make Room for Daddy" old television fans. And pop in some old Marlon Brando or Grace Kelly flicks. There's more basketball to be played.

This time, it's for real.

High Schools Boys Basketball

Fremont Ross 62, Findlay 47

FREMONT ROSS — Sam Root 3-2-6, Joell Heidelberg 6-2-14, John Overberg 1-0-2, Harry Liggins 1-0-2, Kurt Snyder 5-0-13, Reggie Jones 2-0-4, Rob Liggins 2-0-4, Derrick Hershey 3-3-9, Kevin Mosser 1-0-2, Juan Vela 1-0-2, Tyson Liggins 1-0-2. Totals 26-7-62.

FINDLAY — Nick Patterson 0-1-1, Dave Buck 1-0-2, P.J. Martinez 5-0-10, Kurt Lindamodd 1-0-2, Kevin Cox 1-0-2, Shaun Ball 2-1-5, Benji Ballmer 3-2-9, Mark Wilson 6-2-14, David Bills 1-0-2. Totals 20-6-47.

Fremont Ross	17	12	17	14	—	62
Findlay	16	11	5	15	—	47

3-PT FGs — Ross 4-12 (Root 0-1, Overberg 0-3, Snyder 3-7, Hershey 0-1), Findlay 1-7 (Barnes 0-1, Watson 0-2, Patterson 0-1, Buck 0-1, Ballmer 1-2). REBOUNDS — Ross 24 (Heidelberg 8), Findlay 27 (Wilson 8). TURNOVERS — Ross 10, Findlay 22. TOTAL FOULS — Ross 13, Findlay 14. TEAM RECORDS — Ross 10-6, 8-2 GLL; Findlay 6-9, 3-6 GLL.

Ross JV 65, Findlay 45

FREMONT ROSS — Robb Ritzman 3-0-6, Mack Cole 2-2-6, Drew Diller 2-0-4, Jorel Heidelberg 2-2-7, Juan Vela 6-0-13, Drew Root 5-0-10, Mike Weaver 3-0-6, Matt Martel 2-0-4, Tyson Liggins 4-0-8, Frank Kaiser 0-1-1. Totals 29-5-65.

FINDLAY — Doug Barnes 5-3-13, Wes Hahn 3-0-6, Andy Crom 1-0-3, Jason Wenner 2-1-5, Adam Cavallero 1-2-5, Ryan Truax 3-1-7, Kyle Summers 1-0-2, Matt Wolery 1-0-2, Jason Householder 1-0-2. Totals 18-7-45.

Fremont Ross	16	9	12	16	—	65
Findlay	8	15	5	13	—	45

3-PT FGs — Ross, Heidelberg, Vela; Findlay, Crom, Cavallero. RECORD — Ross 13-1, 10-0 GLL.

Ross takes aim at Whitmer, history

Panthers stand atop GLL standings despite near-upsets at Napoleon, Clay

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

The schools and faces are the same. Only the season's changed.

Four months ago, Harry Liggins and Sam Root and their Fremont Ross football friends needed a victory over Toledo Whitmer to have a chance for the Great Lakes League championship.

Here we are. It's winter in the Midwest. And guess who the Ross boys basketball team needs to contend with for the GLL crown?

On Oct. 25, the footballers took a thrilling overtime victory at Whitmer. Tuesday night at the Purple Pit, the Little Giants will find out if they can tackle the Panthers on the hardwood.

"They're big rivals in every sport and whenever we get a chance to beat them, it excites us — especially with a title on the line," Liggins said after Ross downed Findlay Friday night.

A victory Tuesday would put the Little Giants (10-6, 8-2 GLL), whose final league game is against Fostoria, in position to

earn their first league title since 1954.

Whitmer (12-4, 7-1 GLL) has one game in hand on Ross, with league games remaining against Bedford and Findlay.

"They've struggled their last two (GLL) games," Ross coach Mark Gedeon said. "Anything can happen, and plus we have the security of the Purple Pit, too. It's a game we want to see as many people there as possible so we can make it as tough on Whitmer as possible."

The Panthers have used at

least three of their nine kitty cat lives, most recently surviving Perrysburg, 90-87, Saturday night on Andy Boyd's 3-pointer with 10 seconds left.

"They've been living on the edge a little lately," Gedeon said.

Boyd also helped Whitmer survive Napoleon, 53-52, with a 3-pointer with 7 seconds left.

And then there was the Panthers' game at Clay.

Tuesday's game would have broken a GLL tie for first place had Oregon Clay beaten Whitmer Jan. 24. The game has since been

reviewed by league commissioner Larry Morrison.

According to Morrison, this is what took place: The Eagles and Panthers were tied with no time on the clock in regulation when Clay's Ben Tobias was fouled in the act of shooting. Whitmer coach Bruce Smith and a player ran onto the floor to protest the call, and the player reportedly threw the ball into the crowd. No technical fouls were assessed.

As Tobias was shooting, a

See WHITMER, B3

Whitmer 'living on the edge'

Continued from B1

Whitmer fan came onto the floor level and banged a megaphone on the floor from underneath the basket. Tobias missed both shots and the Eagles lost 75-64 in overtime.

"I did review the tape and I met with one of the officials," said Morrison, who sent a written report to the athletic directors and coaches at both schools.

"There's no way you can go back and change that situation," Morrison said of the Whitmer-Clay outcome, "but we can make the adults in that situation see what they can do to prevent that in the future."

The situation Ross is most concerned with is that of junior Floyd Campbell, who burned the Little G's for 38 points Jan. 3 and is averaging 20.4 points per game.

Boyd boosted his season average to 14.3 ppg with a 34-point outburst against Perrysburg, and point guard Jake Lyons is toting an 11.4 ppg mark.

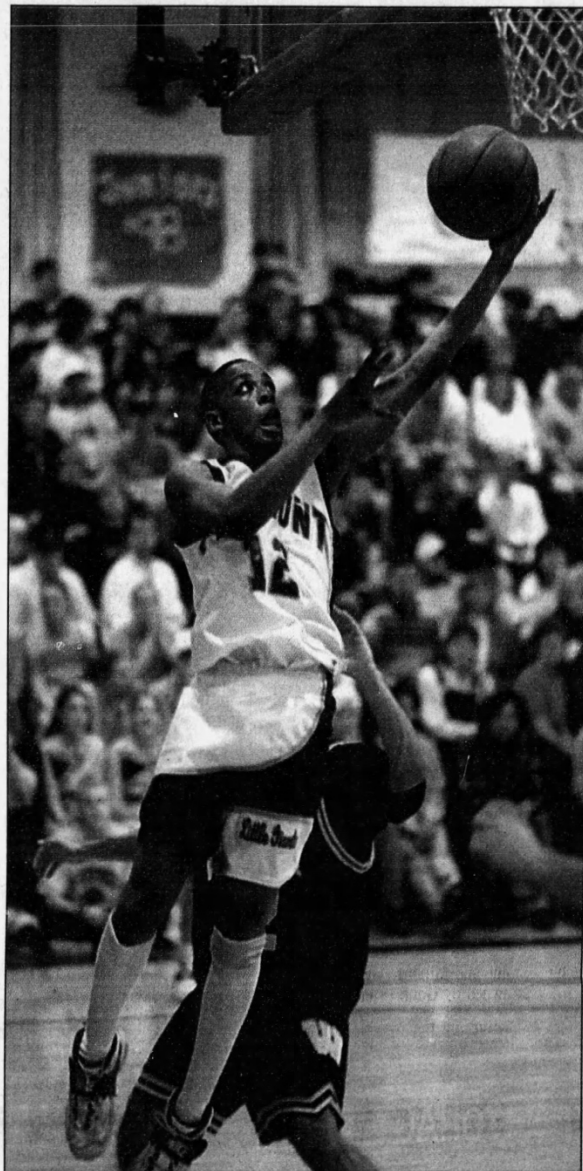
"We need to do a good job of limiting (Campbell's) easy baskets and making sure that Jake Lyons cannot break us down," Gedeon said. "Andy Boyd has been stepping up his offense a lot and is able to play both inside and outside. We need to do a good job on those people as well."

Ross has been seeking a consistent scoring threat to complement Derrick Hershey's 19 ppg. The latest hero has been sophomore Joell Heidelberg, who has 16.7 ppg in Ross's last three wins.

Whitmer denies Ross title hopes

JOELL HEIDELBURG of Fremont Ross sneaks past Toledo Whitmer's Jake Lyons on his way to the basket during the first half Tuesday night at the Purple Pitt. Heidelberg finished with 16 points, but the Panthers defeated the Little Giants 78-73 to stay atop the Great Lakes League standings.

News-Messenger/
Steven Garner



Panthers use second-half spurt to stay on top of GLL standings

By **MICHAEL BOSI**
Staff writer

Toledo Whitmer had the Fremont Ross basketball team right where it wanted by halftime Tuesday night:

■ Ross led by nine points, 43-34, at the intermission;

■ The Little Giants were shooting the lights out, 73 percent to be exact;

■ And a suffocatingly sold-out Purple Pit crowd was poised to sacrifice the Panthers to the Great Lakes League gods.

But this is the adversity Whitmer has come to know and love, and the Panthers, behind a second-half rally and Floyd Campbell's 23 points, took a 78-73 victory to open up a two-game lead over Ross for first place.

"I think (the players) are probably getting a little more used to it than I am," Whitmer coach Bruce Smith said.

"It's a difficult league and there's some well-balanced teams in the upper echelon of the league. You go on the road and you've got to be prepared to play well.

"I'm really proud of our team because we could have mailed it in at halftime, down 9 with 1,500 people ready to rip our heads off. We kept our composure and proved that basketball is a 32-minute game, because they won the first 16 minutes hands-down and we won the second 16 minutes."

And so it goes for the Panthers (13-4, 8-1 GLL), who did not need a last-second 3-pointer from Andy Boyd (à la its last game at Perrysburg) or an opponent's controversial missed free throw (like the near-riotous ending at Oregon Clay Jan. 24). Instead, Whitmer clamped down on defense and shot from the hip with its numerous weapons.

Campbell, who had 10 of Whitmer's 18 rebounds, set the pace with 17 second-half points. Boyd, a sure-fire Division 1 safety in football, barreled his way to 20 points. Jake Lyons had 12 points and seven assists. And Chad Baxter scored 10 key points and had four assists off the bench.

Whitmer threw the total pack-

Tuesday

Toledo Whitmer78
Fremont Ross73

Friday

Fremont Ross at Fostoria
6:30 p.m. JV

age at Ross.

Now, the Little Giants (10-7, 8-3 GLL) must hope that the loss is a gift-wrapped blessing in disguise.

"It might help us a little bit," said Derrick Hershey, who had 16 points along with Joell Heidelberg. "It might help some people realize what they have to do to step their game up a little bit, and it's going to be a challenge of who wants to be part of this team by picking up their game."

The outside shot was Whitmer's best friend, as the Panthers nailed eight 3-pointers. One of Lyons' two triples kept Whitmer within 21-19 at the end of a don't-blink first quarter.

Heidelberg began and ended the second-quarter scoring, giving Ross its seemingly comfy 43-34 lead at halftime.

"I was really pumped up," Heidelberg said.

Kevin Mosser gave Ross its biggest lead of the night, 45-34, 1:35 into the third quarter before Campbell went on a personal 7-0 run as the Panthers hung in at 49-41.

Boyd hit a 3-pointer from the left corner to make it 51-47, and with 36.3 seconds left Lyons brought Whitmer within 2 points, 55-53, heading into the final frame.

Boyd put his team ahead to stay with a 3-point play 1:13 into the fourth, and Ross could not stop the bleeding, as Whitmer hit 16 of its 21 free throws down the stretch.

"We expect him to do those things. He has to, he's one of our better players," Smith said. "The good thing about him is the bigger the game, the better he plays."

What was arguably the biggest game for Ross in the last four decades boiled down to X's and O's.

See **WHITMER, B3**

Whitmer takes advantage of Ross defense

Continued from B1

"We just didn't play fundamental defense," Hershey said. "We lost our focus totally and we made an effort to come back, it just didn't happen."

"It was our defense," Ross coach Mark Gedeon agreed. "Defense wins championships, and the second half we didn't

play championship-caliber defense."

Ross's outside shooting went cold in the second half, as the Little Giants failed to make a 3-pointer on just four attempts.

"That's one of the things that we need to open up the middle," Gedeon said. "It goes back to defensive intensity and denying the wings on the floor. That takes

away two parts of our offense: it takes away our 3-point shooting and that takes away our post entries as well."

And it all but took away any hopes of a championship.

LITTLE GIANTS NOTES: Whitmer has three GLL games remaining (vs. Bedford, Fostoria and Findlay), while Ross closes its league schedule Friday at

Fostoria. ... Campbell was a bull in a china shop in the fourth quarter, charging into John Overberg's lip with 2:36 left and moments later barreling into the bleachers and shaking up Ross's Michele Smith. ... Ross students Jason Hillier and pianist Lawrence Ray put forth a riveting rendition of the national anthem.

Boys basketball

Whitmer 78, Ross 73

TOLEDO WHITMER — Floyd Campbell 7-8-23, Chuck Isom 2-2-6, Jake Lyons 3-4-12, Andy Boyd 7-4-20, Chad Baxter 3-2-10, Charles Moses 0-2-2, Dave Rodriguez 1-0-2, Jason Marsh 1-0-3. Totals 24-22-78.

FREMONT ROSS — Sam Root 5-0-10, Joel Heidelberg 7-2-16, John Overberg 2-2-8, Harry Liggins 2-0-4, Ed Peters 3-1-8, Derrick Hershey 6-4-16. Totals 30-10-73.

Whitmer	19	15	19	25	—	78
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Ross	21	22	12	20	—	73
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3-PT FGs — Whitmer 8-16 (Campbell 1-1, Isom 0-1, Lyons 2-6, Boyd 2-3, Baxter 2-3, Moses 0-1, Marsh 1-1), Ross 3-10 (Root 0-1, Overberg 2-4, Snyder 0-2, R. Jones 0-2, Peters 1-1). REBOUNDS — Whitmer 18 (Campbell 10), Ross 27 (Hershey 8). TURNOVERS — Whitmer 4, Ross 9. TOTAL FOULS — Whitmer 19, Ross 23. RECORDS — Whitmer 13-4, 8-1 GLL; Ross 10-7, 8-3 GLL.

Boys basketball

DIVISION I

FIRST TEAM

Dubrey Black, Mansfield Sr. (6-3, Sr., 17.4 ppg), Justin Larrick, Madison (6-3, Jr., 18.2 ppg), Derrick Hershey, Fremont Ross (6-3, Sr., 19 ppg), Greg Hower, Ashland (6-5, Sr., 14 ppg), Bobby Crabb, Sandusky (6-0, Sr., 15 ppg).

SECOND TEAM

Jamarcus Hampton, Sandusky (5-8, Jr.), Chris Hill, Tiffin Columbian (6-3, Sr.), Andy Wigton, Mansfield Madison (6-5, Sr.), Sam Root, Fremont Ross (6-0, Sr.), Marquis Sykes, Mansfield Senior (5-10, Soph.), Tim Bright, Ashland (5-8, Sr.).

HONORABLE MENTION

Andy Platt, Ashland; Dave Losey, Tiffin Columbian; Mark Plank, Madison; Quinn Redding and Orlando Williamson, Sandusky; Antwayn Reynolds, Mansfield Senior.

COACH OF YEAR—Mark Gedeon, Fremont Ross

Overberg hits winner for Ross

News-Messenger reports

John Overberg banked in an eight-foot jump shot with less than a second to play Friday as



OVERBERG

Fremont Ross won its final Great Lakes League game, 67-66, at Fostoria.

Overberg's heroics came after the Redmen got two free throws from Richard New-some with 19 seconds left and then denied many of Ross's other options on the offensive end.

"We tried to get something inside to Derrick Hershey," Fremont Ross coach Mark Gedeon said of the closing moments. "But they did a good job of denying the ball to the wings.

"John got the ball at top key, drove to the left and hit an eight-footer off glass ... he had three guys around him."

With 0.3 seconds remaining, the Redmen tried a long pass to

See LITTLE GIANTS, B3

Little Giants win in closing seconds at Fostoria

Continued from B1

Newsome, but it was intercepted by Ross's Sam Root.

"This was just a game of streaks," Gedeon said. "They went up 14-3 in the first couple minutes."

Each team won two of the quarters, and none of the quarters were decided by less than nine points.

Fostoria led 50-40 at one point in the second half, but the Little Giants rallied behind Overberg, who scored seven of Ross's final

11 points, including the game-winner. He finished with 14 points.

Fostoria's John Rivera scored 20 points, nine coming off three 3-point shots.

Ross hosts Port Clinton tonight for Parents' Night.

Basketball

High School Boys

Ross 67, Fostoria 66

FREMONT ROSS—Sam Root 3-0-6, Joell Heidelberg 3-3-9, John Overberg 5-1-14, Harry 1-0-2, Kurt Snyder 3-0-7, Reggie Jones 1-0-2, Edmund Peters 3-2-8, Derrick Hershey 7-1-15, Kevin Mosser 2-0-4. Totals 28-7-67.

FOSTORIA—Leo Frierson 4-3-11, Richard Newsome 4-5-14, Lerone Martin 2-0-4, Seth Brandenberry 0-1-1, John Rivera 8-1-20, Malcolm Robinson 4-4-12, Jeremy Young 2-0-4. Totals 24-14-66.

Fremont Ross	8	20	15	24	—	67
Fostoria	19	7	25	15	—	66

3 PT GOALS—Ross 4 (Overberg 3, Snyder), Fostoria 4 (Rivera 3, Newsome). REBOUNDS—Ross 29 (Heidelberg 5, Jones 5), Fostoria 29 (Young 10). TURNOVERS—Ross 18, Fostoria 16.

Records: Ross 11-7, 9-3 GLL, Fostoria 8-9, 3-7 GLL.

Fostoria JV 57, Ross 53

ROSS—Rob Ritzman 3-3-10, Mack Cole 1-0-2, Andrew Diller 1-0-2, Jorel Heidelberg 2-0-4, Juan Vela 1-0-2, Mike Weaver 3-2-8, Matt Martel 4-0-8, Tyson Liggins 8-1-17. Totals 23-6-53.

FOSTORIA—Scott 5-3-13, Mendoza 4-1-9, Gerritson 2-4-8, Wagner 1-1-3, Miller 1-0-2, Echelberry 1-4-6, Shaw 4-1-11, Fleming 2-1-5. Totals 21-14-57.

Fremont Ross	12	13	16	12	—	53
Fostoria	15	16	14	12	—	57

Record: 14-2, 11-1

Little Giants rout PC

News-Messenger reports

Fremont Ross used a 25-3 first-half spurt to take control against Port Clinton Saturday at the Purple Pitt, then cruised to a 94-89 win.

The victory came 24 hours after Ross (12-7) beat Fostoria on John Overberg's bank shot with less than a second remaining.

"I was happy to see us still come out with the energy level defensively,"

said Ross coach Mark Gedeon, whose team led 11-7 when he turned to full-court pressure defense.

The Little Giants scored 14 straight points in the first quarter and reached the 50-point mark in the second quarter while Port Clinton had scored just 12.

"It was the fact that our kids were much quicker than they were," Gedeon said.

The Little Giants then fed off their defensive success as they shot the ball well and made the extra pass when necessary, Gedeon said.

Ross slowed the ball down in the third quarter and was able to beat the Redskins at that style as well, outscoring the Redskins 21-9.

Five Little Giants finished with double-figure scoring efforts. Overberg led the way with 16, followed by Derrick Hershey (13), Kevin Mosser (12), Ed Peters (10) and Rob Liggins (10).

Ted Ruppert led Port Clinton with 12 points.

Ross hosts Toledo Bowsher Friday.

Tourney time

Girls basketball sectional tournaments start today. See Page B2 for pairings.

Boys basketball

Ross 94, Port Clinton 49

PORT CLINTON—R.J. Basil 2-6-11, Collin Kaufman 1-2-4, Andy Linkous 1-2-4, Ryan Dubsky 2-1-5, Franco Monetti 1-0-2, Justin Whiting 4-0-8, Dan Goode 1-1-3, Ted Rupert 5-2-12. totals 17-14-49.

ROSS—Sam Root 1-1-3, Joell Heidelberg 2-4-9, John Overberg 6-0-16, Juan Vela 1-2-4, Harry Liggins 2-3-7, Kurt Snyder 2-0-5, Reggie Jones 1-2-4, Edmund Peters 3-4-10, Matt Martel 0-1-1, Rob Liggins 3-4-10, Derrick Hershey 3-7-13, Kevin Mosser 4-4-12. totals 28-32-94.

Port Clinton	8	6	9	26	—	49
Ross	25	29	21	19	—	94

3—PT FG's—Port Clinton (Basil 1), Ross (Heidelberg 1, Overberg 4, Snyder 1).

Records: Port Clinton 5-14, 3-10 SBC, Ross 12-7, 9-3 SLL.

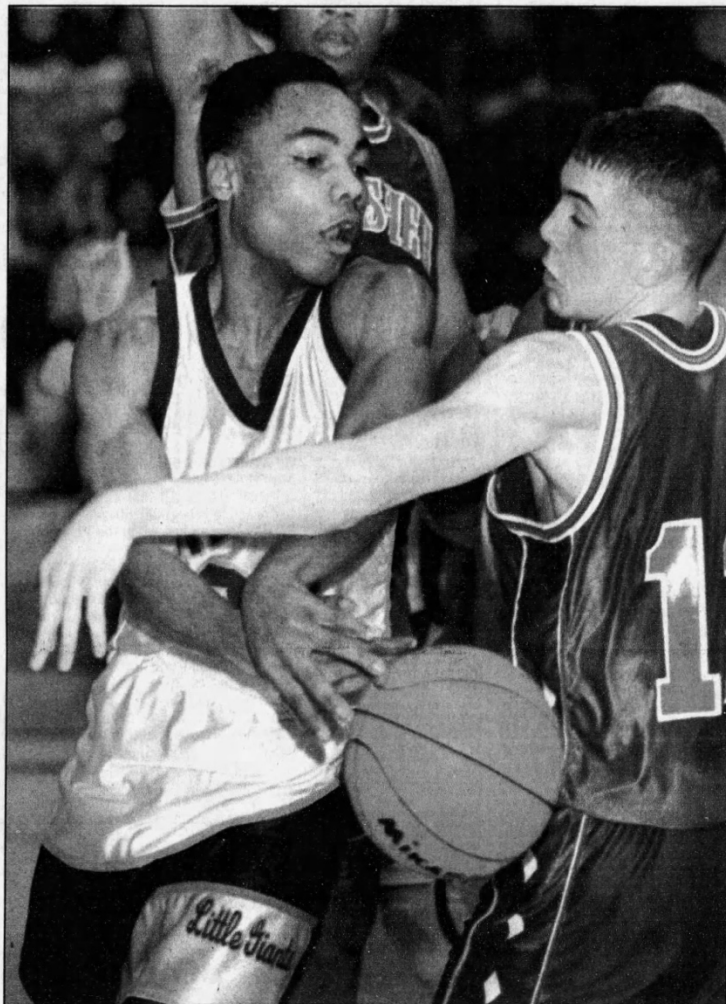
Ross JV 91, Port Clinton 51

PORT CLINTON—Rhode 1-0-3, Spriggs 3-0-7, Limestahl 1-0-2, Hill 3-5-11, Hunter 3-0-6, Webster 2-0-4, Holmes 1-0-2, Retter 4-0-8, Basinger 3-2-8. Totals 21-7-51.

ROSS—Rob Ritzman 1-0-5, Mack Cole 3-4-11, Andrew Diller 3-3-9, Jorell 7-5-19, Juan Vela 2-1-5, Drew Root 4-2-11, Mike Weaver 7-1-16, Matt Martel 4-3-11, Tyson Liggins 1-0-2, Frank Kaiser 1-0-2. Totals 34-19-91.

Port Clinton	13	11	6	21	—	51
Ross	24	19	29	19	—	91

Records: Ross 15-2, P. Clinton 5-14.



ED PETERS of Fremont Ross passes behind the back of Toledo Bowsher's Dan Taylor during the second quarter Friday.

News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

Ross seniors leave Pit on winning note

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

It was Senior Night at the Purple Pit Friday, so the prevailing feeling expectedly was one of closure. But Fremont Ross showed exactly why these days should be considered ones of new beginnings for its boys basketball program.

When the Little Giants' eight seniors take a trip down memory lane, they'll surely remember Friday night's 83-45 thumping they laid on Toledo Bowsher.

But they'll also remember their 13 regular-season victories, the most since 1984-85. They'll remember scoring more points than any other Ross team, 1,462, an average of 73.1 per game. And they'll remember the nine Great Lakes League victories that brought them the closest they've been to a league title since 1954.

And with the Division I sectional tournament staring them down the throat, the Little Giants are willing to put those rosy thoughts on hold for now.

It's time to start the second season.

Ross, which have been in a tournament frame of mind since losing to Whitmer Feb. 11, will begin its postseason quest Friday at Willard against the survivor of Tuesday's Tiffin Columbian-Sandusky game.

"We're excited because we've come a long way," said senior Ed Peters.

"We can still accomplish more than we what we have, but we've gotten a few of our goals. We're

Friday	
Fremont Ross	83
Toledo Bowsher	45

Next Friday	
Division I Sectional at Willard	
Sandusky/Tiffin Columbian winner	
vs. No. 2 seed Fremont Ross	
8:30 p.m.	

on the right pace now for tournament time."

Team defense has been the battle cry for Ross (13-7). The 45 points allowed Friday night was the Little Giants' season low.

"Like coach (Mark) Gedeon says all the time, we've got to play championship defense," senior Derrick Hershey said.

The seeds of Ross's victory may have been planted Thursday night, when Bowsher, losers of eight of its last nine, was an 82-50 victim against Rogers in the City League consolation finals.

The snowball to oblivion continued for the Rebels (5-14) when Justin Fisher, their all-time leading scorer, never returned Friday night after suffering a mild left ankle sprain.

The lone bright spot for Bowsher was the second of Fisher's four points, a free throw 2:15 into the game that made him the school's first 1,000-point scorer.

"Obviously losing Justin, that just really puts a monkey wrench in the whole thing," said Rebels coach Dave Ross.

Three Little Giants hands helped twist that wrench even tighter with double-figure scoring

See ROSS SENIORS, B4

Ross seniors enjoy finale

Continued from B1

efforts. Derrick Hershey led Ross with 15 points, Joell Heidelberg had 12 (two 3-pointers) and Kevin Mosser had 10.

Unofficially, Ross shot a season-best 35-for-55 (63.6 percent) and limited Bowsher to a 17-for-48 performance (35.4 percent).

"We shot the ball really well," Gedeon said.

The same cannot be said for Bowsher's ballhandling. The Rebels committed 23 turnovers, while Ross had 12.

Dan Taylor had four 3-pointers for the Rebels and led the team with 14 points.

Ross entered the third quarter with a 30-19 lead, and stuck the fork in Bowsher with 1:53 left in the third, when Heidelberg followed Reggie Jones bucket-and-foul combo with a 3-pointer to give Ross a 16-point lead, 46-30.

Bowsher's frustration boiled over when Brian Lavoy earned a

technical foul for slapping the backboard after a goaltending call with 1:31 left in the third quarter.

An 8-0 run in the third minute of the fourth quarter pushed Ross's lead to 28 points, 66-38, and allowed Gedeon to bring his seniors off the floor one by one to standing ovations.

"It was great," said senior Sam Root. "For the fans here, it's so exciting playing for them."

It also allowed four junior varsity regulars to see some action, and Robb Ritzman became Ross's 13th entry in the scoring column with a jump shot as time expired.

On the sidelines, eight sets of senior hands clapped and cheered in unison — the same way they've played on the floor this season.

"These guys have been with me for three years and these guys are family," Gedeon said. "You develop a very special bond. I'd be lying if I said I did-

n't feel a little weird coming into this gym knowing it would be the last time I'd have these guys playing for me."

It won't be.

They'd like to stick around for a while longer.

"We definitely have some goals for the tournament, and this is a step in the right direction," senior Harry Liggins said. "We want to obviously win our first couple of games and get to the Toledo regionals."

LITTLE GIANTS NOTES: The Ross players on the floor congratulated Fisher, who was icing his foot on the bench, when his 1,000-point accomplishment was announced. ... The Little Giants finished the season having yielded 66.7 ppg. ... Hershey led the team in scoring from start to finish, and enters the tournament with an 18.1 ppg clip. ... Ross girls coach Sue Wolf was named Great Lakes League Coach of the Year.

High Schools

Boys Basketball

Ross 83, Bowsher 45

TOLEDO BOWSHER — Cory Reynolds 2-0-4, Dan Taylor 4-1-14, Keith Triplett 1-0-2, Justin Fisher 1-2-4, Brian Lavoy 1-1-3, Mike Merles 4-0-8, Tyrone Byers 3-0-6. Totals 17-6-45.

FREMONT ROSS — Sam Root 2-0-4, Joell Heidelberg 5-0-12, John Overberg 0-2-2, Harry Liggins 2-0-4, Kurt Snyder 2-0-6, Reggie Jones 3-3-9, Ed Peters 3-2-8, Rob Liggins 3-0-6, Derrick Hershey 7-1-15, Kevin Mosser 5-0-10, Juan Vela 1-0-3, Robb Ritzman 1-0-2, Matt Martel 1-0-2. Totals 35-8-83.

Tol. Bowsher 13 6 14 12 — 45

Fremont Ross 15 15 24 29 — 83

3-PT FGs — Bowsher 4-16 (Reynolds 0-4, Taylor 4-9, Laggar 0-1, Lee 0-1, Walter 0-1), Ross 5-16 (Root 0-3, Heidelberg 2-3, Overberg 0-4, H. Liggins 0-1, Snyder 2-4, Vela 1-1).

REBOUNDS — Bowsher 23 (Taylor 5), Ross 36 (Mosser 7, Hershey 7).

TURNOVERS — Bowsher 23, Ross 12.

TOTAL FOULS — Bowsher 15, Ross 13.

RECORDS — Bowsher 5-14, Ross 13-7.

Ross JV 64, Bowsher 52

TOLEDO BOWSHER — Jamie Perin 3-2-9, Chad Lowe 2-0-6, Shawn Canady 4-0-8, Shane Hager 6-0-14, Richardson 2-0-6, Andrew Jones 3-0-6. Totals 22-2-52.

ROSS — Robb Ritzman 3-2-9, Mack Cole 1-0-2, Drew Diller 3-2-8, Jorel Heidelberg 1-0-2, Juan Vela 5-0-11, Drew Root 6-0-13, Matt Martel 3-1-7, Tyson Liggins 4-2-10. Totals 27-7-64.

Tol. Bowsher 16 14 9 13 — 52

Fremont Ross 27 9 11 15 — 64

3-PT FGs — Bowsher, Lowe 2, Hager 2, Richardson 2; Ross, Ritzman, Vela, Root. RECORD — Ross 16-2.

Hershey helps East top West

News-Messenger reports

FOSTORIA — Fremont Ross senior Derrick Hershey ended his high school basketball career with a bang Sunday night.

Hershey, a 6-foot-3 forward, scored a game-high 17 points and was named the most valuable player in leading the East to a 90-86 victory over the West in the Continental Cablevision All-Star Game

at Fostoria High School.

BASKETBALL

"Derrick was able to get a lot of easy shots and good looks at the basket," said Ross coach Mark Gedeon, who helped coach the East squad.

"It was nice to see a collection of seniors go out and have fun and have a chance to compete with each other instead of against each other like they have their whole career."

Other area players on the East team included Sam Root of Ross, Andrew Cruz and Lucas Cantu of Old Fort, Phil Nieset of Fremont St. Joseph Central Catholic, Mike Jividen of Gibsonburg and Brent Weyant of Bettsville.

Weyant, a 5-9 guard who averaged more than 22 points a game during the regular season, was named the Player of the Year by the Fostoria Athletic Boosters.

Joell Heidelberg of Ross won the Super Sophomore Award, given by the Fostoria Boosters.

The East girls all-stars beat the West, 69-65, in overtime.

St. Joe coach Gary Geller helped coach the East team.

Mandi Coldiron, a 5-4 guard from Carey High School, scored four of the East's seven points in overtime and was named player of the game. Coldiron scored 18 points to lead all scorers.

Marcy Reinbolt scored 11 points and Ross teammate Michele Smith added six for the East squad. Old Fort's Jenny Magers and Chrissie Cole, also playing for the East squad, scored 13 and two points, respectively.

"Jenny Magers came off the bench and sparked us, scoring 11 points in the first half," said Geller, who also coached in the game in 1989. "She got us back in the ballgame. Between her and Marcy Reinbolt and Mandi Coldiron, I think we controlled the tempo."

GLL All-League Teams

Boys

First Team: Tom Clay, Clay, Jr., Jake Lyons, Whitmer, Sr., Louis Green, Napoleon, Sr., Ross Durham, Napoleon, Jr., Derrick Hershey, Fremont, Sr.

Second Team: Andy Boyd, Whitmer, Sr., Ryan Huguely, Clay, Sr., David Buck, Findlay, Sr., Mike Limbird, Napoleon, Sr., Sam Root, Fremont, Sr.

Honorable Mention: Bedford: Blake Flessner, Sr., Chad Clay, Jr.; Clay: Ben Tobias, So., Ron Henneman, Jr.; Findlay: Mark Wilson, Jr., PJ Martinez, Sr.; Fostoria: Richard Newsome, Sr., Malcolm Robinson, Sr.; Fremont: Joell Heidelberg, So.; Napoleon: Todd Kruse, Sr., Kevin Good, Sr.; Whitmer: Chad Baxter, Sr., Chuck Isom, Jr.

Ross star dominates SBC

Hershey scores 20 in all-star win

By MARK GRIFFIN
Staff writer

SANDUSKY — Fremont Ross senior Derrick Hershey continues to haul in the hardware in this, the twilight of his high school basketball career.

Hershey scored 16 of his 20 points in the first half Wednesday night, leading the Area All-Stars to a 126-93 victory over the Sandusky Bay Conference All-Stars to gain Most Valuable Player honors in the Wendy's-WLEC All-Star Classic XIV at St. Mary's Central Catholic High School.

None of Hershey's nine baskets — some following nifty passes from Ross teammate Sam Root — came from more than five feet. It's been like that all season, said Hershey, who was also the MVP at the Continental Cablevision All-Star Game March 16 at Fostoria High School.

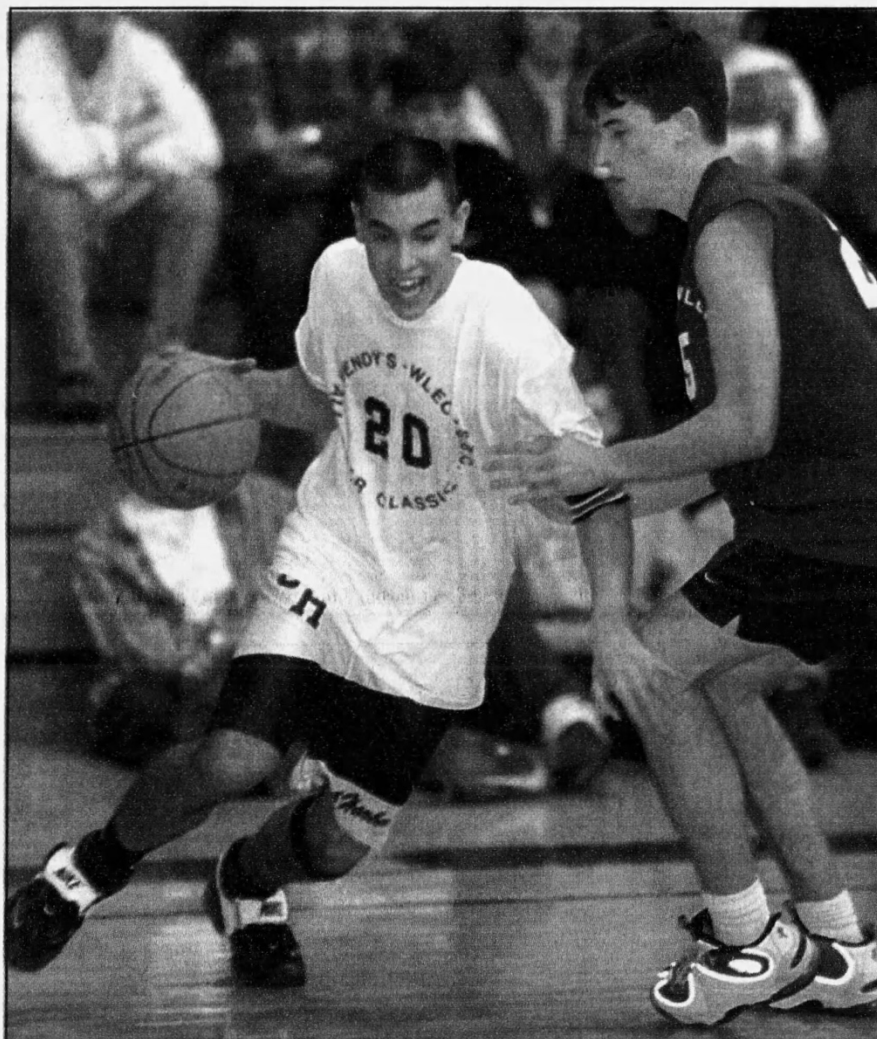
"I'm going to miss playing with Sam because he always gets me the ball when I need it," Hershey said. "During the season, Sam pretty much drives and passes it into me and I get an easy layup."

Chad Cramer of Bellevue scored 21 points and Brandon Durnwald of Fremont St. Joseph Central Catholic added 13 for the Area team.

Root was held to one free throw, but his teammates more than picked up the slack. The Area All-Stars, who raced to a comfortable 71-41 halftime lead, shot 50 percent (50-of-100) from the field.

The Area's final point total was just two points shy of the Wendy's-WLEC All-Star Classic record, set by the SBC in 1993. The SBC All-Stars still lead the series at 8-6.

"We were expecting a lot of running, no defense, shoot when you get the ball," Hershey said. "That's the style we like."



News-Messenger/Daryn Slover

SHAUN WARGOWSKY of Oak Harbor, playing for the Sandusky Bay Conference All-Stars, drives on Danbury's Josh Uhinck, a member of the Area All-Stars, during the first half of the Wendy's-WLEC All-Star Classic XIV Wednesday night at St. Mary's Central Catholic High School in Sandusky.

We tried playing defense, but it's an all-star game so you really don't play defense.

"We passed the ball around really well, which really surprised me. Half of our team never even came to our practices. We were supposed to have three (practices) but I had to work every day. I didn't know any of the guys on my team, except Sam."

The Area All-Stars got 16

points apiece from Craig Jess of Oak Harbor and Dante Shipp of Perkins. Margaretta's Bob Day scored six points and Oak Harbor's Shaun Wargowsky added two for the SBC team, which shot 42 percent (37-of-87) from the field.

"We knew we'd be in a mismatch unless we shot the ball well, and we did not shoot the ball well," said Huron's Dino Caporini, who coached the SBC team.

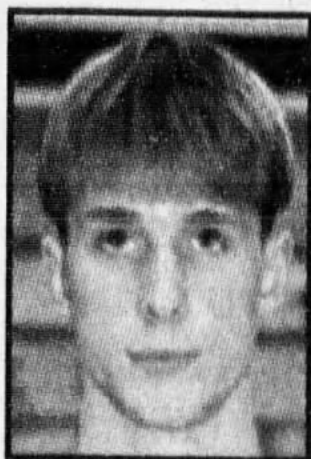
Winning the game, Jess said, wasn't necessarily the most important thing on anyone's mind.

"They're (Area All-Stars) good — you've got to give it to them," Jess said. "I just wanted to come out and have fun and play with the guys from the league that we played against during the season."

■ Ross girls team up, B2

Hershey wins place on all-state team

Following in his brother's footsteps, **Derrick Hershey** of Fremont Ross was named to the Division I



HERSHEY

All-Ohio First Team All-Academic Team, Little Giants basketball coach **Mark Gedeon** announced.

Hershey, who will study at the University of Toledo, received the

award for maintaining a 4.1 grade point average, making him one of the top seven individuals to excel on the floor and in the classroom.

Doug Hershey, who graduated from Ross in 1996, was named to the all-academic team last year. He also attends Toledo.

The Hersheys are the sons of **Bill** and **Mary Hershey**.