

1996-1997 Season Review

GIRLS BASKETBALL

quarter.

Young and Foos each scored 11 points and Melissa Geller added 11 in the Crimson Streaks win.

In the loss to St. Mary's, Foos led all St. Joe scorers with nine points while the Panthers Autumn Peters led all scorers with 11.

St. Joe is 1-1 on the season.

In another area game:

Fremont Ross	58
Huron	49

Fremont Ross got a 19-point,

17-rebound performance from Michele Smith and outrebounded Huron 41-25 Saturday to win its opener by a 58-49 margin.

Six different Little Giants scored in the win. Another sign of balance, coach Sue Wolf said, was the 15 combined rebounds gathered by Amy Smith and Jami Toeppe — neither of whom is over 5-foot-6.

"The kids all did a pretty good job of boxing out," Wolf said.

But not such a good job taking care of the ball. The Little Giants committed 22 turnovers and "started out a little shaky," Wolf

said.

"We turned the ball over the first couple times, then Marcy Reinbolt did a good job of settling us down," she said.

The Little Giants led 15-13 after the first quarter and built on the lead from there, outscoring Huron in each quarter. A five-point Tiger run to end the game tightened the final score.

Reinbolt joined Smith in double-figure scoring with 10. Catherine Taylor led all Huron scorers with nine.

■ **Box scores, B2**



Post-Zerman era begins at Ross

Wolf waits for new star to emerge

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

How to replace Dawn Zerman? It's been nine months since the Fremont Ross girls basketball team closed a 21-2 season.

That's nine months for head coach Sue Wolf to face the inevitable: the departure of the best point guard she's ever coached.

"I told them early no one person can replace Dawn Zerman and everybody on the team will have to pick their game up a little bit," said the 22nd-year coach.

Zerman, now at Kent State, was the only area girls player to score over 500 points in 1995-96. She averaged 21.9 points, five rebounds, five steals and three assists in her senior year. But those numbers have disappeared, along with the contributions of forward Cari Ritzman (9 ppg, 5 rpg), center Dena Schepflin (5 ppg, 5 rpg) and forward/guard Jenny Swint (2 ppg, 2 rpg).

In addition, Erica Radeloff's transfer to St. Joe and Lisa Oprie's early graduation leaves Wolf with a rather empty feeling.

"I've been in it long enough and I think someone else will step forward, I just hope we all do," said Wolf.

The inevitable spotlight will fall on senior Marcy Reinbolt, as her development as a point guard will

go a long way toward making Zerman just a purple memory.

Whether guard Jami Toeppen can recover from a stress fracture that limited her to just one cross country meet in the fall is a concern for Wolf.

Center Michele Smith backed up Schepflin last year and will look to use her six-foot frame to improve on her average of six rebounds per game.

Juniors Amy Smith and Emily Dowell offer Ross speed as forwards, while Tonya Elder and Natasha Watson will vie for playing time.

Watson, who is 5-11, Mysti Rency (5-10) and Michele Smith are Ross's only three players with considerable size, leaving the Little Giants to rely on their quickness.

"We're hoping our quickness will help us out and we'll try to get in people's faces and cause some turnovers," said Wolf, also citing defense and rebounding as other areas of concern.

But just who will emerge as the team's top dog remains to be seen.

"I've been lucky to have Courtney Cominsky and Natalie Robbins and then Dawn Zerman," said Wolf. "I guess I've been around long enough to know someone will be there or I'll use what I have."

Ross utilizes bench in blowout win

Crimson Streaks rally to defeat Mohawks; Raiders outscore Oak Harbor

News-Messenger reports

Fremont Ross's girls basketball team scored a combined 42 points in the first and third quarters of a 63-36 rout of Sandusky in the Purple Pit Saturday.

But it was the eight-point second quarter which Ross coach Sue Wolf emphasized.

"We're trying to develop a bench right now, and they got in there," Wolf said, noting that foul trouble to many starters allowed the second-team players to play. "We got a lot of people in the game."

In that bunch were Natasha

Watson and Jodi Fick, who finished with 9 and 6 points, respectively.

Ross's top scorer was Emily Dowell, who scored 18 points and grabbed nine rebounds while dishing out four assists.

"She scored nine in the third quarter, and she was hitting from the foul line and the baseline," Wolf said of the guard-forward.

Ross led 20-7 after one quarter,



DOWELL

and outscored the Streaks in each quarter to win the non-league game, its second win in as many games this season.

"I think our press hurt 'em," Wolf said. "They didn't get the ball up the floor. Our press really worked again."

Joining Dowell in double figures was Amy Smith (10 points), and Michele Smith added nine with seven rebounds and four assists. Marcy Reinbolt also had four assists for the Little Giants.

Shot selection and outside shooting percentage are areas that still need work, Wolf said.

Ross travels to Fostoria Tuesday.

Fremont St. Joe 75

Fostoria St. Wendelin 57

Four Fremont St. Joseph players scored in double figures and the Crimson Streaks hit 13 fourth-quarter foul shots to beat St. Wendelin at home Saturday.

Holly Wagner scored 18 points to lead the Streaks (1-1), who also got 14 points from Shana Young and 13 apiece from Melissa Wagner and Aimee Fultz.

"We shot really well from the floor," coach Gary Geller said. "We were down 10 points in the

second quarter ... then during the second half of the game we made a great defensive effort."

St. Joe outscored St. Wendelin 40-18 in the second half.

The Crimson Streaks go on the road to play Cardinal Stritch Tuesday.

Lakota 49

Oak Harbor 33

Renee Brickner scored 15 points and Catherine Scherer 13 as Lakota defeated Oak Harbor at Lakota Saturday.

The Raiders scored 13 points in

See RAIDERS, B2

Fremont Ross	69
Fostoria	38

Emily Dowell led 11 Fremont Ross scorers with 22 points and the Little Giants blew out Fostoria in both team's Great Lakes League opener Tuesday.

"I got everyone in, so I was pleased," coach Sue Wolf said.

Ross (3-0) outscored Fostoria 22-10 in the second quarter of the game, played on the Redmen's home floor.

Eighteen of Dowell's came from the floor, with four others coming at the line. She also led the team with nine rebounds.

Marcy Reinbolt's 12-point performance represented the only other double-digit scoring effort.

Giants' record still healthy

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

Sometimes playing well enough to win is exactly that.

Enough.

In what easily could have been interpreted as an uninspired, disinterested performance, the Fremont Ross girls basketball team, bolstered by non-related Smiths Michele (17 points, 11 rebounds) and Amy (13 points), muddled its way past Maumee, 46-35, Monday night at the Purple Pit.

The fact was, however, that the scene outside the Little Giants' locker room looked more like it came from "ER" than a basketball victory.

"We've got a lot of people right now suffering with colds and the flu and everything else," said Ross head coach Sue Wolf. "We were a little bit on the slow side."

Where's George Clooney when you need him?

As if the task of sustaining the emotional high it established in last week's win over Toledo Whitmer was not hard enough, Ross had to do it minus forward Tonya Elder and with Emily Dowell, Michele Smith, Jami Toeppel and Marcy Reinbold all reaching for the Nyquil.

"It's not that we didn't want to play," said Michele Smith. "It was just hard."

"I couldn't practice (Sunday) night because of how sick I was, and a few of them came in late (Monday), and we were all pretty sick and slow."

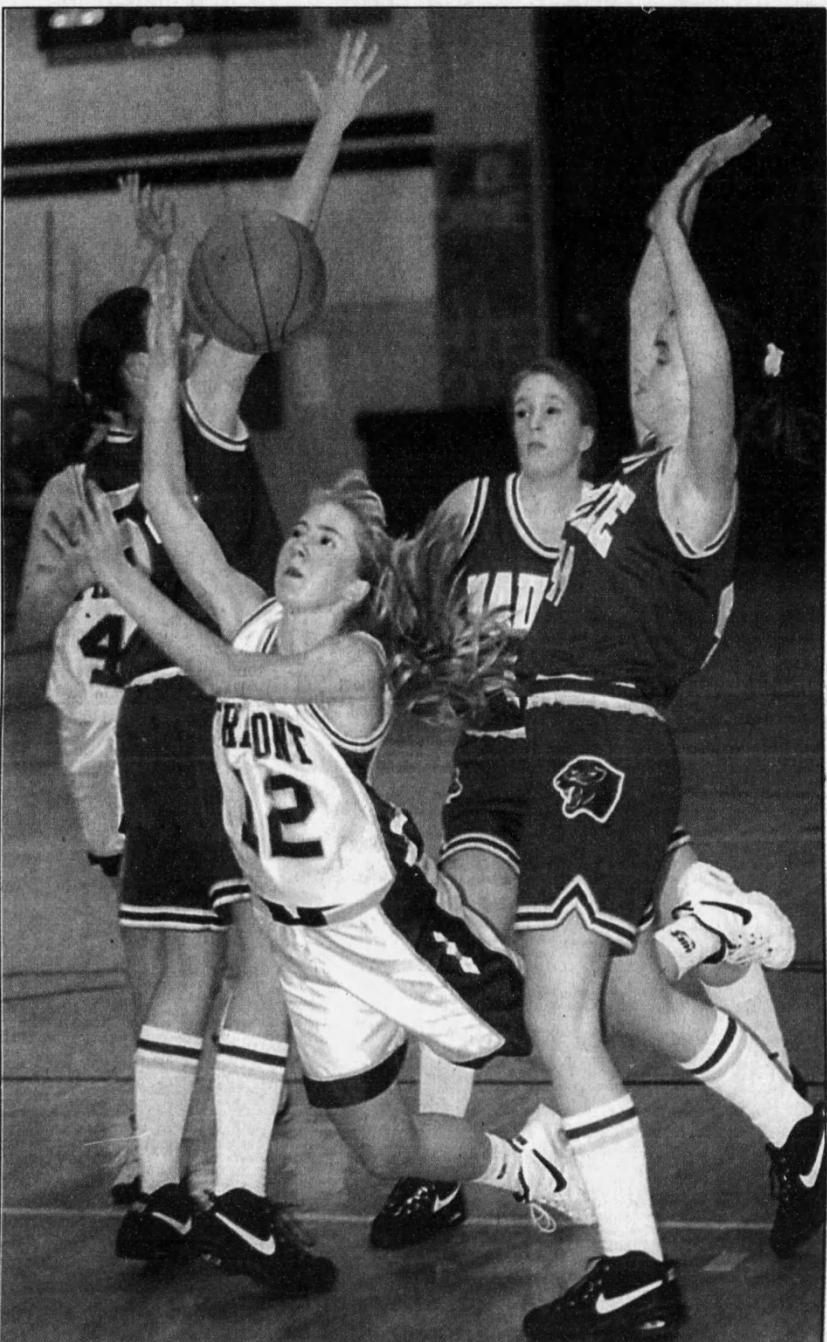
But they had enough spunk to jump out to an 8-0 lead, as Maumee committed three turnovers in the first 1:34.

After Michele Smith gave Ross a 13-7 lead with 28.5 seconds left in the first quarter, Ross endured a 2-minute, 51-second scoring drought and its press was barely a presence as Maumee tied the game at 13.

"I'm not really sure what happened," Smith said. "We were all slow, but we pushed it and got back into it."

"It looked like we ran out of gas," Wolf said.

Maumee could not sustain the



News-Messenger/Jeremy Wadsworth

AMY SMITH of Fremont Ross jumps through a host of Maumee defenders to take a shot during the third quarter of the Little Giants' win Monday in the Purple Pit.

Monday's scores

Girls basketball

Ross 46, Maumee 35
Clyde 76, Hopewell-Loudon 56
Margaretta 86, Toledo CC 53

Tonight's games

Girls basketball

St. Joe at St. Paul

Fostoria at Clyde

Cardinal Stritch at Oak Harbor
Tiffin Columbian at Bellevue

Boys basketball

Oregon Clay at Ross
Lakota at Genoa
Eastwood at Woodmore

Wrestling

Mohawk at St. Joe

Ailing Little Giants win; preserve unbeaten mark

Continued from B1

pressure and Ross regained the lead for good, as Smith converted a 3-point play with 5:35 left in the half.

"We got too excited, and I'm disappointed in that we're a senior team and instead of doing what got us to that point, we got excited and took some bad shots," said Maumee coach Marty Kalmbach, whose team has lost two in a row to dip to 3-2.

The Panthers shot just 34.3 percent from the field. Senior guard Joanie Sisco topped the team in scoring with 11 points.

Slow and deliberate with its attack throughout the night, Ross attempted just 31 shots, but hit 15 of its 18 free throws.

Michele Smith, who received four of Dowell's five assists, was a fixture beneath the boards, popping in eight of her nine shots.

"We knew they would try to get it into Michele Smith, and we tried to make an adjustment during the game, having our center (Liz Bock) play behind her and make her shoot over her, but we've never practiced that,"

Kalmbach said. "We always play in front and make them lob over us."

Amy Smith delivered Ross its largest lead of 14 points, 38-24, when she hit the back end of a pair of free throws 2:28 into the fourth quarter.

While the Little Giants weren't running wild through the streets of Fremont and screaming about their performance Monday night, they were able to take plenty of satisfaction out of being unbeaten after five games.

"It's good to know we can play a step down and still win," Michele Smith said.

"That's a tremendous start for us," Wolf said. "There's no way I expected us to start that quick and have that many wins already, so I was real happy with what we did."

LITTLE GIANTS NOTES: Ross was sporting new uniforms Monday night, but, said Wolf, "They knew if they didn't win I was taking them back." ... The Little Giants have the next four days off before hitting the road for games at Toledo Waite (Saturday) and Findlay (Tuesday). Ross's next home game is Dec. 21 vs. St. Ursula.

Smith's 16 points lead Ross to 6th win

News-Messenger reports

The Fremont Ross girls basketball team earned its sixth straight victory by pounding Toledo Waite, 55-33, Saturday.

Senior center Michele Smith

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led the Little Giants with 16 points and 11 rebounds, as nine different players contributed to the scoring column.

"We got to work on our bench a little, which we to do every chance we get," Ross coach Sue Wolf said in admiring Jodi Fick's nine points.

Ross outworked Waite on the boards, 38-26. "We were pretty strong on the inside," Wolf said.

The Little Giants also grabbed 16 steals, as Amy Smith, Jami Toeppe and Michele Smith each

had three.

Oak Harbor 73, Port Clinton 27

At Oak Harbor, it was smooth sailing for the Rockets, as Nancy Appelhans poured in 17 points and Kelli Vasill added 13 against the winless Redskins (0-6). The Rockets improve to 4-3 and now enter a stretch of 10 straight Sandusky Bay Conference games.

"I think psychologically it was a real important win," OH coach Jim Murray said. "We've got Edison next Saturday and we're getting into the heart of league play. We have to keep getting better and keep the attitude up high so we go in with confidence."

Old Fort 80, Fostoria 45

The Stockaders destroyed Fostoria in a non-league game as Bridget Seigley scored 19 points and pulled down 10 rebounds.



SEIGLEY

In improving to 4-3, Old Fort shot 32-of-77 from the field and outrebounded the Redmen 42-23.

Woodmore 63, Elmwood 33

Amy Perkins, a 5-foot-7 sophomore guard, connected on eight 3-point field goals Saturday, lifting the Wildcats to a Suburban Lakes League rout of Elmwood in Bloomdale.

Perkins' eight 3-pointers eclipsed the school single-game record of six, which she previously shared with Angie Fegley and Susan Hinkle.

Perkins finished with a game-high 26 points on 8-of-18 shooting. Teammates Alicia Gerwin had 16 points and Nicole Camper had 10.

Lakota 49, Eastwood 32

Erin Howe had 15 points and Catherine Scherger 14 as the Raiders pounded Eastwood to improve to 5-2, 3-0 SLL. Lakota put the game away by outscoring Eastwood 21-12 in the second half.

Northwood 67, Gibsonburg 48

Despite Nikki Reno's 16-point effort, the Golden Bears dropped their sixth straight game of the season and third in the SLL with a loss against the bigger Rangers.

Margaretta 55, Clyde 48

The Polar Bears won their third straight Sandusky Bay Conference game as Jennifer Lidke scored 14 points. Margaretta (3-2, 3-0 SBC) jumped out to a 12-3 lead in the game.

Jacki Swaisgood led Clyde with 14 points

Ross girls lose first game, 65-59

News-Messenger reports

Fremont Ross dug itself a 15-point first half hole against Findlay, then saw a valiant comeback fall short for its first loss of the girls basketball season.

"We stunk the floor up in the first half," Ross coach Sue Wolf said of her team, which had 16 first half turnovers. "(Findlay) used a half court trap, but we were throwing it away on our own."

The Little Giants also missed nine free throws in the 65-59 Great Lakes League loss.

After three quarters Ross trailed 54-38. But despite the poor play in the first half, Ross rallied to outscore Findlay 21-11 in the final period to close to within the six-point final margin.

"We played pretty well once we decided we could take it at them," Wolf said.

Particularly Amy Smith, who finished with 21 points. Emily Dowell added 16 and Michele Smith 15 for the Little Giants (6-1, 2-1 GLL).

Findlay, who lost earlier this season to Oregon Clay, will be among many teams, Wolf said, who could contend for the league championship.

"It's all up for grabs," said Wolf, whose team hosts St. Ursula Saturday.

Clyde 62, St. Wendelin 44

Clyde's girls basketball team

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did not shoot well Tuesday but played well enough to defeat Fostoria St. Wendelin by 18 points.

Three Fliers scored 10 points apiece — Brianne Norman, Mary Jo Hoffman and Amanda Hoffman.

"It was not as smooth as we have been," Clyde coach Ralph Hohenstein said. "We were not making shots we should be."

The Fliers shot just 38 percent from the field and 50 percent from the foul line.

The Fliers also turned the ball over 36 times.

"We would get a steal and turn it right back over with a bad pass," Hohenstein said.

Mary Jo Hoffman and Amanda Hoffman each grabbed eight rebounds as the Fliers outrebounded the Mohawks 38-22.

Angie Beier had 7 steals for Clyde.

Lexington 64, Bellevue 32

Lexington's Julie Studer scored 14 points and three teammates added at least 10 points as the Minutemen defeated Bellevue.

Erica Englund's 10 points were the most by any Redmen player, as Bellevue was limited to five points in the first quarter and six points in the third.

for the Redskins, 0-7 and 0-4 in the SBC.

In other games Saturday:

St. Ursula 62, Ross 55

Fremont Ross lost its second straight game after opening the season with six wins.

St. Ursula's Jessica Balusik scored 23 points in her team's seven-point win, which came four days after Findlay defeated Ross 65-59 in Findlay.

"The girls didn't play as well as they should have," Ross coach Sue Wolf said.

The Little Giants outscored the Arrows 19-8 in the first eight min-

utes, but allowed their opponent back in the game when St. Ursula outscored Ross 16-7 in the second quarter. The teams played even in the third quarter before St. Ursula managed the game's highest one-quarter total (20) in the final period to clinch the win.

The Ross coach did find a bright spot for her team.

"Marcy Reinbolt played a good game," Wolf said. "She had 17 points, 4 rebounds and 4 assists."

Amy Smith added 13 for the Little Giants.

See ST. JOE, B3

Little Giants can't find shooting touch

News-Messenger reports

BOWLING GREEN — Ross girls basketball coach Sue Wolf said she doesn't even know where to begin when asked how to fix her team's downslide heading into the new year.

The Little Giants, behind 22-percent shooting, suffered their third straight loss on Monday in a 51-44 setback at Bowling Green. Ross was 14-of-64 from the field while the host Bobcats converted 18-of-46 (39 percent).

Ross (6-3) had been shooting 44 percent entering the game.

"We just didn't shoot the ball well tonight," Wolf said. "When

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you get that many shots off, you have to make a few of them. We were pretty sad from the foul line (15-of-25), too."

Bowling Green (2-6) took a 32-21 lead into halftime and held on the rest of the way.

Amy Smith scored 13 points and Emily Dowell added nine for the Little Giants, who were out-rebounded 35-34. Michelle Smith had 13 rebounds and Dowell 10 for Ross, which committed 20 turnovers.

Karen Harris scored 10 points for BG.

Ross girls team ends 3-game losing streak

News-Messenger reports

Fremont Ross's girls basketball team got contributions from its bench Tuesday as the Little Giants snapped a three-game losing streak by beating Napoleon, 39-22.

Ross's defense did not allow Napoleon to score more than seven points in any of the four quarters, and took control of the game by outscoring the Wildcats 14-7 in the third quarter.

"It was a pretty big win for us, coming off a three-game losing streak," Ross coach Sue Wolf said. "We played a very controlled game. The players who came off the bench played very well, such as Natasha Watson and Jodi Fick."

Amy Smith (18 points) and Jami Toepppe (three steals) also keyed the Little Giants win.

Fliers, 'Cats both get wins on Tuesday

down the stretch when Edison chose to foul to try to get back in the game.

The Fliers forced 35 turnovers, while giving it away 30 times themselves.

Woodmore 63, Genoa 34

Woodmore, with three players in double figures, had plenty of offense but it was the Wildcats' defensive pressure that did the trick Tuesday night in a 63-34 Suburban Lakes League win over Genoa.

"Our man-to-man defense real-

week's Associated Press poll.

"I give a lot of credit to Camper," DeStazio said. "She played a really good game. She had three blocked shots and made 7 of 12 shots — just a tremendous game."

Kerry Aldrich scored 11 points and pulled down 12 rebounds for Genoa, which shot 34 percent (11-of-32) and was outrebounded 26-22.

Woodmore shot 50 percent from the field and committed just nine turnovers. The Wildcats travel to Lakota Saturday.

St. Mary's 46, Oak Harbor 43

The Rockets missed a pair of 3-point attempts in the final seven seconds in falling to 4-7 and 1-5 in the Sandusky Bay Conference.

Nancy Appelhans scored 10 points and Kelli Vasill and Laura Fetterman had eight apiece for

Ross grounds Eagles, ends three-game skid

News-Messenger reports

Three players scored in double figures to help the Fremont Ross girls basketball team put an end to a three-game losing streak with a 60-47 Great Lakes League victory over Oregon Clay (8-4, 3-2 GLL)



REINBOLT

Amy Smith and Reinbolt each had three assists, while Michele Smith pulled down 15 rebounds.

"The two seniors, Michele and Marcy, really stepped up," Ross coach Sue Wolf said. "That's the best game Michele has played in quite a while. She got back into

Michele Smith led all scorers with 17 points, including 13 in the second half. Amy Smith had 14 points and Marcy Reinbolt added 13 to help Ross improve to 8-3, 6-1 GLL.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

the scoring column. Marcy did a nice job running the floor, with only one turnover."

Eagles senior Gina Bollman topped her team with 15 points, including 9-of-9 at the foul line, while Staci Cousino had 11.

Margaretta 51, St. Mary's CC 46

At Castalia, the Polar Bears took a 21-16 halftime lead, scored 19 third-quarter points and then withstood a late Panther charge for the Sandusky Bay Conference victory.

Margaretta (7-3, 6-1 SBC) received 14 points from Sarah Lowery, who last week signed a letter of intent to play softball at Wright State University. Rachal Hamilton added 12 points and Danielle Meyer had 10.

Beth Weyer of St. Mary's (7-6, 3-5 SBC) was the game's high-scorer with 19 points.

Ross clocks foe in victory

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

There was a lot of clock-watching going on as the Fremont Ross girls basketball team blasted Fostoria, 61-25, on Parents Night at the Purple Pit Tuesday.

It took just three seconds for Amy Smith to give the Little Giants the lead for good with a free throw.

It took four minutes, 25 seconds for Fostoria to score its first points, a putback from Tamara Tucker.

It took 8:48 for Fostoria to incur a technical foul for illegally substituting Angie Kammerer, whom Fostoria failed to write on its roster. Four minutes, 57 seconds later, Fostoria finally scored its 10th point.

The above happened in the 32 minutes of misery Ross put their Great Lakes League rivals through as the Little Giants won by their widest margin of the season.

The punishment ended just before 9 p.m.

Just in time for "Frasier."

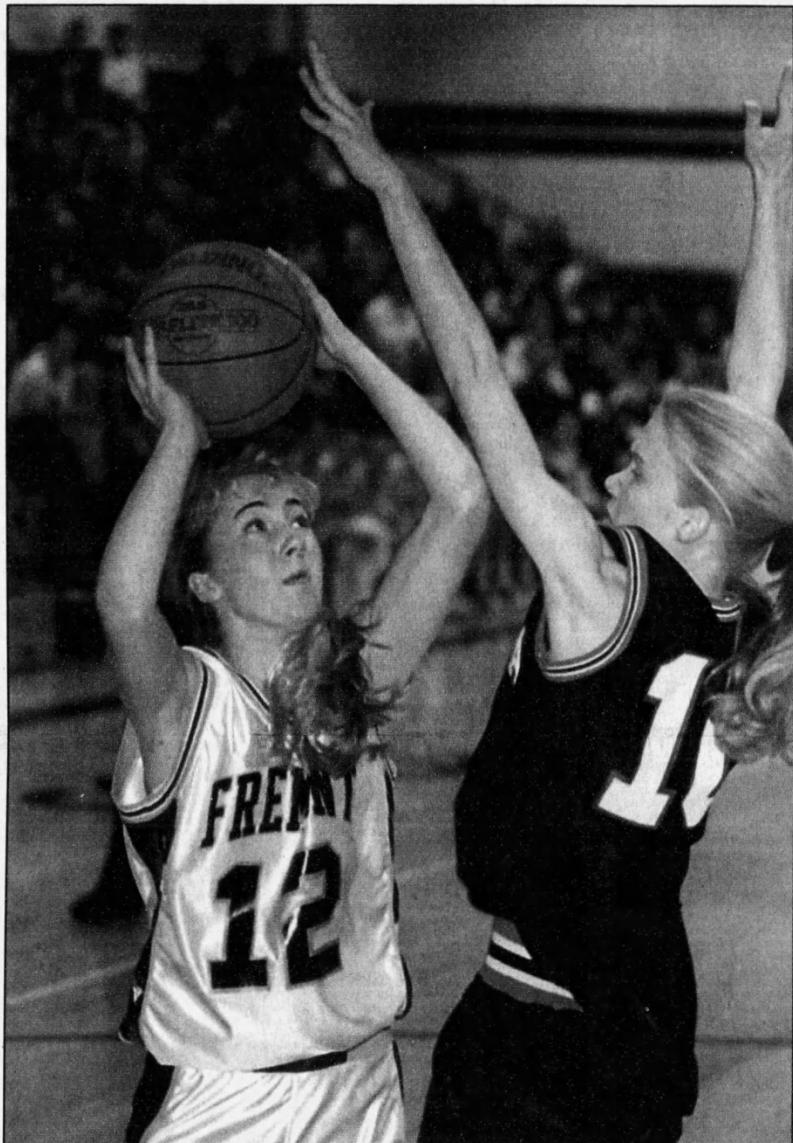
With a huge date looming Thursday at Toledo Whitmer, this was the calm before the storm for Ross.

"Just like in volleyball," said Michele Smith. "You play Fostoria and then it's sad to say, but then you play a big game. You want to play Oregon Clay and it would be nice if we could play Whitmer right after that."

But since practice makes perfect, the Little Giants (9-3, 7-1 GLL) will gladly take the 36-point blowout, as Emily Dowell (16 points), Michele Smith (13), Marcy Reinbolt (13) and Amy Smith (10) all had double figures, while the second stringers saw ample playing time.

Ross's senior stars, Michele Smith and Reinbolt, have picked a fine time to shine, with the next four games against powerful opponents (Whitmer, Sandusky, Clyde and Findlay).

In about 20 minutes of playing time, Michele Smith grabbed 12 rebounds, and Reinbolt had her second straight 13-point effort.



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

AMY SMITH of Fremont Ross prepares to shoot against Fostoria's Brittany Russell during the Little Giants' 61-25 win Tuesday at The Purple Pit. Smith scored 10 points for Ross.

"Practicing has a lot to do with it," Michele Smith said. "We've been practicing a lot and (coach Sue Wolf) has been leaving a lot up to us, so we've been taking charge even in practice."

Inserting Kammeyer proved to be a wise move for Redmen. With back-to-back 3-pointers, the junior put her team into double figures.

She and Tucker each had six points.

Fostoria, without its leading scorer Lyndsey Robinson, committed 25 turnovers and shot just 9-of-47 as it fell to 0-12, 0-6 GLL.

"We want to just work on fundamentals and establish confidence and fine-tune the offense," first-year coach Jose Hernandez said. "By the time

they're seniors, hopefully, they'll run it as well as Fremont does. It takes a while to build a program, and I'm happy with the progress so far."

The game featured some bodychecking that would have left the Detroit Red Wings envious, perhaps as residue of the teams' first meeting on Dec. 3 when Reinbolt was felled with a rib injury by a hit from Bobbie Hannigan.

Ross's Jodi Fick was the recipient of the first hard blow, as Fostoria center Jessie Sheeran barreled over Fick midway through the first quarter. Tonya Elder threw a fine hit with six seconds left in the first quarter. And Hannigan whipped down Amy Smith three minutes into the second quarter.

"They're a rough team," Wolf said. "They got after it and they play physical. You've got to get used to it, it'll be a tough game on Thursday."

"I think they were trying to hurt us on purpose," Michele Smith said. "We all thought that pretty much."

But the final pain was all Fostoria's. Again.

LITTLE GIANTS NOTES: For the first time, Fostoria is fielding a freshman team. "We're not as strong as some varsity clubs but I think it's going to pay off in a couple of years," Hernandez said. ... Michele Smith has 27 rebounds in two games and leads the team with 12.1 points per game. ... Dowell had six rebounds, and Natasha Watson added five.

Whitmer 57, Fremont Ross 43

Marcy Reinbolt and Emily Dowell scored 10 points apiece for Ross in the Great Lakes League loss to the Panthers.

The Little Giants outscored Whitmer 18-11 in the third quarter after trailing 27-17 at the half.

Ross tops rival Sandusky

News-Messenger reports

Michele Smith scored 16 points and Marcy Reinbolt had 10 points and five steals as Fremont Ross pounded Sandusky, 59-36.

The Little Giants (10-4) outscored the Blue Streaks (5-8) 14-4 in the first quarter to take the early lead and increased it each quarter.

"The bench did a much better job," Ross coach Sue Wolf said.

Erin Tuckerman scored six points after she was called up from the junior varsity team to replace injured Jamie Toeppel.

Amy Smith scored nine points and Natasha Watson added eight for Ross.

Mace Collier scored 18 points to

lead Sandusky.

Buckeye Central 58, St. Joe 40

St. Joe tied a school record by making nine 3-pointers Tuesday, but it wasn't enough against the Ohio's eighth-ranked Buckeye Central team.

The Crimson Streaks came out firing, making their first five 3-pointers and finding themselves with a 15-8 early first quarter lead.

"Buckeye Central made some defensive adjustments to their press and that hurt us. We made a lot of turnovers," St. Joe coach Gary Geller said.

By the end of the first quarter Buckeye Central had gained the lead 21-15 and led 34-22 at the half.

Clyde girls shock Fremont Ross

Fliers erase 16-point deficit to beat Ross for first time in 11 years

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

CLYDE — Here's some advice for all you aspiring coaches out there:

Threats work.

That's the route veteran Clyde girls basketball mentor Ralph Hohenstein took to light a fire under his troops against Ross Thursday night.

At the expense of Ross's worst second half of the season, the Fliers responded with their best, surmounting a 16-point deficit in 13 minutes for a 52-41 non-league victory at The Hangar.

It was the Fliers' first victory

over Ross in 11 years.

"We just got really motivated because we didn't want to lose again to those guys," said junior Amanda Hoffman, who scored 15 of her game-high 19 points in the second-half surge.

"Our coach really got us really motivated in the locker room and said we've got to do this now or never. He just told us we didn't come out very good and if we wanted to win we had to come out with everything."

Senior McKenzie Dahms, scratched from the starting lineup after struggling in Clyde's last two games (both losses), scored

12 of her 13 points in the last 12 minutes to go with six assists.

"Amanda is a heck of a defensive player and she's been looking to shoot more lately," Hohenstein said. "Mac's been our leader all year long and she's been struggling a little bit so I didn't start her, and I thought she handled it well. She came in and played pretty tough."

Hohenstein, one of the more calm, cool and collected characters of the coaching ranks, illustrated exactly what he told the Fliers after they did a free fall into a 21-13 halftime hole.

"We played with absolutely no

intensity in the first half," he said. "At halftime — and we run a lot anyway — I said, 'Girls, if you think you ran now, if you don't play better than this — I don't care about winning or losing — but if you don't play with more enthusiasm and more intensity, we're going to really do some running (today)."

"It was kind of a threat."

One that didn't work right away.

Ross scored the first eight points of the second half, capped by back-to-back layups off steals

See Fliers, B2



News-Messenger/Steven Garner
EMILY DOWELL of Fremont Ross, left, battles for a loose ball with Clyde's Brianne Norman.

Fliers respond to threats, top Ross

Continued from B1

by Marcy Reinbolt (15 points) to make it 29-13 with 5:15 left in the third quarter.

Time out. More threats.

"When we called that first timeout in the second half, I said, 'I'm giving you three minutes to come out or I'm just going to clear the bench,' " Hohenstein said. "And I'd say they responded pretty well."

Sure did.

Clyde (10-5) went on a 12-0 run as the basketball became a hot potato for the Little Giants, who committed 38 turnovers.

Hoffman scored six points in that string, including a layup off Dahms' inbounds pass with 1:27 left in the third quarter to bring Clyde within 2, 31-29.

Hoffman's free throw with one-tenth of a second left in the quarter sent the teams to the final eight minutes knotted at 32. Thirty-one seconds into the final frame, Dahms hit two free throws to complete the Fliers' comeback.

Ross (10-5) hobbled back to its feet, 42-39, on an Emily Dowell bucket with 3:16 left before Clyde finished the game on a 10-2 roll.

Clyde's finish was a mirror of Ross's start. Reinbolt had scored nine of the Little Giants' first 13 points of the game as they held Clyde scoreless for the first 5:29.

"I think Marcy scored early and was looking to score rather than looking to run the floor," Ross coach Sue Wolf said. "She's supposed to be our point guard in charge of running the offense and she didn't do that (Thursday) night."

Yet Wolf soon realized that Ross's crash-and-burn wasn't entirely because of, but rather in spite of, her point guard's effort.

"I don't think there's one person out there who I can say played a good game, not one," Wolf said.

Except for the girls in the opposite locker room.

Jacki Swaisgood added 11 points and four assists for Clyde, and Brianne Norman had six of Clyde's 23 steals.

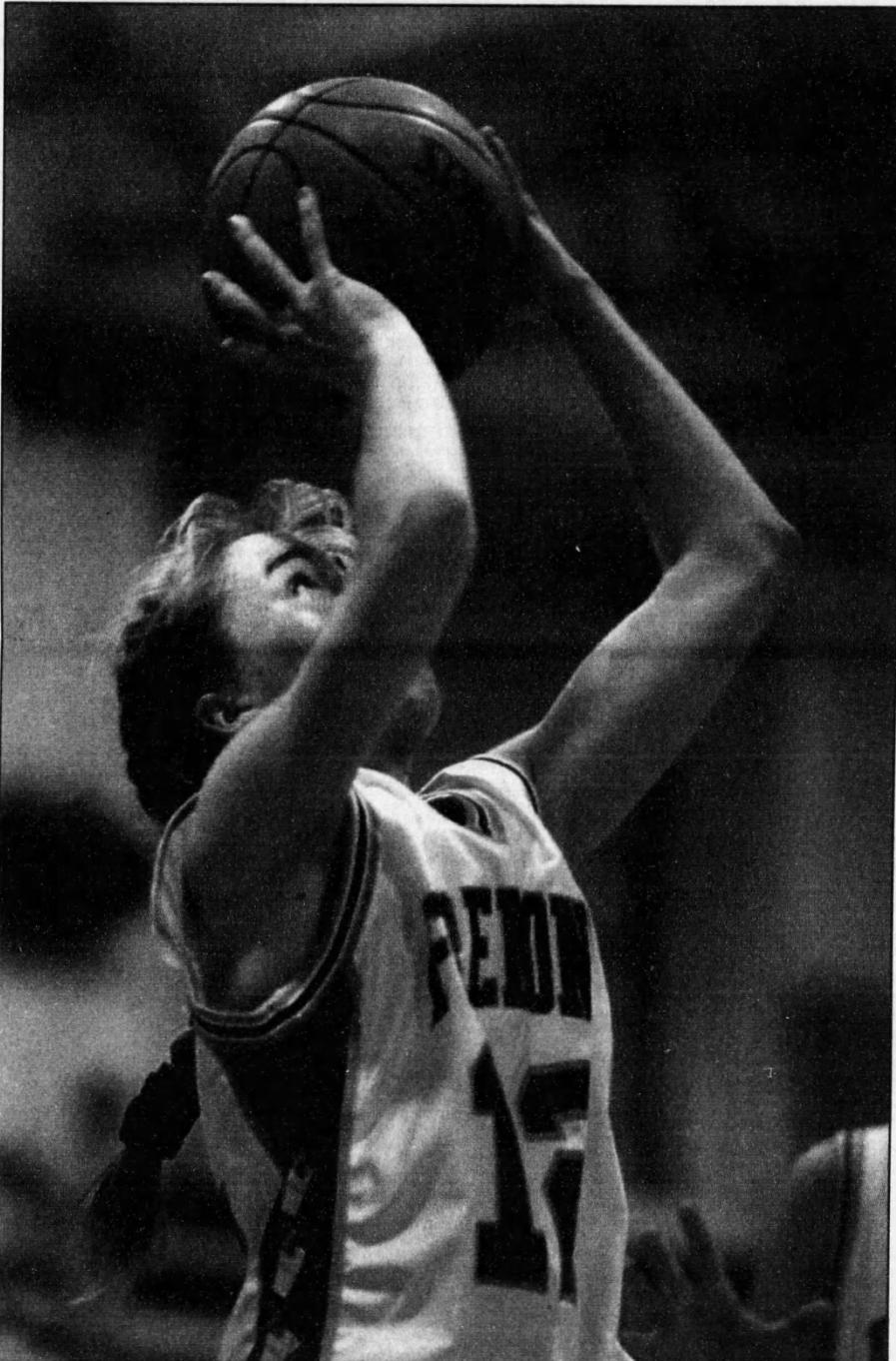
"We just wanted to win," Hoffman said. "Last year we know we got smacked by them and we just wanted to come out and do good. We were running the floor good. When we got the ball after they made their shots, we got the rebound we were running."

Good thing. Or else they would have been running some more today.

GAME NOTES: For the second straight game, Ross was without Jami Toepple, who sprained her knee last Saturday at Toledo Whitmer. Sophomore Erin Tuckerman earned her second straight varsity start. ... No other Ross player had more than seven points, and that was Michele Smith, who also had 10 rebounds. ... After shooting just 6-of-23 in the first half, Clyde was 7-of-12 in the third quarter. ... Ross made just 2-of-14 shots in the fourth quarter. ... Reinbolt left the game briefly with a knee bruise in the fourth quarter, but not before offering a "shut up!" to a Clyde heckler.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Little Giants keep pace



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

AMY SMITH goes up for the eventual game-winning basket in Fremont Ross's 47-46 Great Lakes League victory over Findlay Tuesday night at the Purple Pit. Smith finished with 19 points, 11 on free throws.

Down Trojans
to stay in race
for league title

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

A sign on Fremont Ross girls basketball coach Sue Wolf's office door reads "Within every one of us is a miracle."

The Little Giants 47-46 comeback victory over Findlay Tuesday night didn't quite qualify as any kind of godsend, but it also kept Ross from needing a miracle down the road to stay in the hunt for the Great Lakes League title.

"Every game is big, no matter what," said Amy Smith, who keyed Ross's comeback from a 15-point canyon with an 11-for-11 free throw performance and a game-high 19 points.

Emily Dowell scored nine of her 14 points in the second half.

The second quarter has been a major stumbling block for Ross all season. It's the only quarter opponents have cumulatively outscored the Little Giants (192-171), and Findlay, 65-59 winners on Dec. 17, took full advantage in the Purple Pit.

Instead of improving their record to 11-5, 6-2 GLL, the Little Giants looked like they were headed for a repeat of last Thursday's Clyde disaster as they snoozed through the second quarter and were outscored 18-2.

"I don't know why we're doing that other than the fact that we get out of what we know how to do," said Ross coach Sue Wolf. "We get out of our offense and start taking shots we shouldn't be taking. We need to stay in it and attack better."

The Trojans (10-5, 3-4 GLL) did all the attacking in the first

Tuesday
Ross47
Findlay46
Next Monday
Ross at Port Clinton 7:30 p.m.

See LITTLE GIANTS, B3

Little Giants rally for GLL win

Continued from B1

half, scoring the first 17 points and hitting 8-of-11 shots in the second period to carry a 30-17 lead into halftime.

Coming off the bench, sophomore Samantha Williams inflicted most of the damage, scoring nine of her team-high 13 points in the 17-point run. Williams finished with six rebounds.

"We were playing a lot of up tempo and pushing and getting a lot of shots," said Findlay coach Bill Lobb.

Karissa Conley started the second half by hitting a layup to give Findlay a 32-17 lead before Ross went on a 15-3 surge.

With the momentum pendulum already swinging toward Ross, Amy Smith grabbed one of her three steals at halfcourt and made a 3-point play out of it to bring Ross within 33-27.

After a Findlay time out, Smith continued her personal romp with a pullup jumper and a pair of free throws as Ross closed within one.

With her favorite move, the Trojans' Beth Thallman (10 points) hit a jumper moving from right to left before Smith nailed a shot from the top of the key.

A Conley free throw kept Findlay up 36-35 heading into the final quarter.

Ross had several chances to break away early in the quarter



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

MICHELE SMITH (45) receives a hug from Ross teammate Mysti Recny after the Little Giants' victory over Findlay.

but missed six of its first eight free throw shots, Smith hitting the only two.

Meanwhile Jessica Lawson, who had eight points and six assists, gave Findlay a 6-point lead with 3:01 left with two freebies.

Dowell converted a Smith post feed to make it 42-39, and with 1:51 left, Marcy Reinbolt scored her only points of the game with a shot from the right wing.

Smith's 10th and 11th free throws gave Ross a 43-42 lead before Ashley Marsman regained the Findlay lead with an off-

sive putback.

Guess who put Ross ahead to stay?

Smith, a 5-foot-6 junior, made a post move with 46 seconds left to make it 45-44, and Dowell hit two freies with 19.5 seconds left. That made a Lawson bucket with 2.9 seconds left moot.

"(Smith) did a good job and Emily Dowell played well," Wolf said. "We needed that because they're both capable of playing basketball like that every game. That's what I expect out of them every game and they know that."

The loss was Findlay's fourth

in the league, leaving Ross, Toledo Whitmer and Oregon Clay — all with two losses, to duke it out in the season's final 16 days.

"That's a real big victory for us," Wolf said. "After the way we played at Clyde, we needed to come back. We started out shaky but they got together as a team and won it as a team."

LITTLE GIANTS NOTES: Smith increased her team-leading free throw percentage to 87.5 percent.... Michele Smith led Ross with 11 rebounds, while Natasha Watson came off the bench to grab six.

Girls Basketball

Ross 59, Port Clinton 12

FREMONT ROSS — Amy Smith 5-0-12, Marcy Reinbolt 2-5-10, Erin Tucker-man 1-0-2, Emily Dowell 3-0-6, Jodi Fick 3-0-6, Natasha Watson 2-4-8, Mysti Rec-ny 1-0-2, Michele Smith 5-3-13. Totals 22-12-59.

PORT CLINTON — Amy Blatt 1-0-3, Lacy Wadsworth 1-0-2, Erin Rickel 1-1-3, Sara Harman 2-0-5. Totals 5-1-12.

Fremont Ross 19 13 14 12 — 59
Port Clinton 4 4 4 0 — 12

3-PT FGs — Ross (A. Smith 2, Rein-bolt), Port Clinton (Blatt). RECORDS — Ross 12-5; Port Clinton 0-17.

Ross survives Napoleon's Fremont finale

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

When the Napoleon girls basketball team's bus pulled out of Fremont Ross's North Street parking lot Thursday night, you could almost feel the collective sigh of relief bellowing from the Little Giants' locker room.

Only twice has Ross been held under 40 points this season, and both times, including Thursday's offensively-challenged 35-31 win at the Purple Pit, the Wildcats' defense was to blame.

But luckily for the Little Giants, Napoleon is going the independent route next school year, making room for Sandusky to join the ranks of the Great Lakes League.

See ya, Wildcats. Good-bye. Good riddance. And don't let the door hit you in the numbers on the way out.



WOLF

"To come and see a run-and-gun, high-scoring game, we can't beat them at that. And that's what we do best is make teams play ugly," said Napoleon coach Gregg Merrill, whose team dipped to 5-11, 2-7 GLL.

The victory sets the stage for Ross's showdown at Oregon Clay next Thursday. Whitmer (15-4, 7-2 GLL) clobbered the Eagles, 60-31, Thursday night, pushing Clay (13-6, 6-3) out of the first-place tie. Whitmer plays at Fostoria in its final league game.

Thursday
Fremont Ross 35
Napoleon 31

Saturday
Magnificat at
Fremont Ross

"The Clay game is a super-important one," said Ross coach Sue Wolf, whose team is now 13-5, 7-2 GLL.

Ross's Michele Smith scored 16 points, including 10 in the first half, to lead all scorers. Her two free throws with 6.3 seconds left

sealed the victory.

Amy Smith had just four points but five assists, and Marcy Reinbolt (7 points) had four dishes.

"You know you're not going to score a lot of points against Napoleon because they play a zone. It slows the game down, and I know we shot poorly," said Wolf, whose team shot 13-of-39 but passed up numerous quality looks.

"We played poorly, that's basically what you can say. We

See ROSS, B3

Ross defense clamping opponents

Continued from B1

played poorly and won. That's good."

Amy Aschemeier led Napoleon with 11 points, while Katherine Updegraff paced its floor game with four assists.

For the second straight game, Ross's own defense was worthy of merit. The Little Giants, who have given up just 43 points in two games this week, limited Napoleon to three in the first quarter.

But after calling a timeout 56 seconds into the second quarter, the Wildcats went on an 11-0 run to tie the game at 14 on an Updegraff free throw.

"We dug a deep hole and did a heck of a job (to come back)," Merrill said.

But Updegraff missed her next three freebies and Michele Smith cranked out a three-point play to put Ross back ahead for good.

The ugliness finally paid off for Napoleon, which found itself within 32-31 with 1:12 left in the game after Sarah Wiechers' third-effort putback. Reinbolt hit the front end of a 1-and-1 with 58 seconds left before Napoleon was hit with a 5-second violation on its next possession.

But errant free throws by Amy and Michele Smith set the stage for a Napoleon rush that went for naught. Shots by Aschemeier and Cary Kolbe went awry before Michele Smith grabbed one of her nine total.

"When Amy (Aschemeier) shot that one from the corner, I

thought it was going dead center and it was going in," Merrill said.

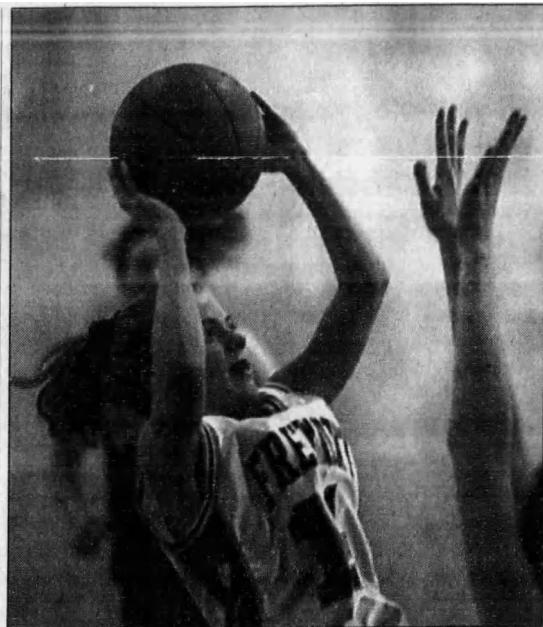
But alas, it missed its mark, as 59 of Napoleon's last 69 3-point attempts have, and Ross ended the series with a six-game winning streak.

"That's a well-coached team and we're going to miss playing them," Merrill said. "I've been coaching here four years and their athletes are competitive and they're great sportsmen. It's fun, I'm going to miss competing against Fremont Ross."

Wolf returned the complimentary volley.

"It's been a good contest," she said. "They're a class school."

But notice, she didn't say she'll actually *miss* playing the Wildcats.



News-Messenger/Steven Garner

FREMONT ROSS'S Marcy Reinbolt puts up a shot against Rocky River Magnificat Saturday.

Magnificat magnificent at Ross

News-Messenger reports

Fourth-ranked Rocky River Magnificat used big first- and third-quarter runs and a strong bench Saturday to hand Fremont Ross its worst loss of the season, 70-45, at the Purple Pitt.

Magnificat (17-3) went on a 10-0 run in the first quarter and went up 20-10 entering the second quarter.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

"In two of the quarters we played with them," Ross coach Sue Wolf said, admitting that Magnificat was "12 to 15 points" better.

After outscoring Ross 17-13 in the second quarter, Magnificat went on a 17-8 run in the third quarter to put the game out of reach.

"It would have helped if we could have made some foul shots," Wolf said.

Ross hit just 10-of-25 free throws, compared to 12-of-13 for Magnificat.

Magnificat senior Brianne Kenneally scored 18 points to lead 10 different scorers, while Ross got 15 points from Amy Smith.

Ross repeats as champ

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

OREGON — Adversity has stared the Fremont Ross girls basketball team in the face from the very beginning of the Little Giants' pre-season workouts.

And with good reason.

When the star of the show, Dawn Zerman, took her act to another galaxy, questions abounded: Who could pick up the scoring slack? Who could shoot from the perimeter? Who could take the steering wheel of a team that was a flashy Lamborghini among plastic toy Tonka trucks a year ago?

But just like no one will win the Daytona 500 this weekend by completing only 49% miles, Ross endured the season-long Great Lakes League race, found the answers to its questions and stood in the Winner's Circle Thursday night, beating Oregon Clay, 51-47, to become the proud owner of its second straight league championship and third in

Thursday
Ross 51
Clay 47

Tuesday
Fremont Ross vs. Ashland
Div. I Sectional at Willard
6:30 p.m.

the last four years.

Unlike 1995-96, the Little Giants (14-6, 8-2 GLL) will have to share the honors this year with Toledo Whitmer. But half a trophy is better than what most prognosticators gave Ross back in November.

"It feels great. It's a great accomplishment," said senior Marcy Reinbolt, whose fast-break layup with 15.8 seconds left ignited the Ross crowd's "GLL" chants.

Ross led from start to finish. Clay tied the game at 30 late in the third quarter, but Ross hit the bull's eye on six of its eight fourth-quarter free throws to stay on top.

Junior Amy Smith withstood a jammed finger to lead Ross with 16 points, 11 in the first half, and classmate Emily Dowell had 12 points, five assists and four steals as the Little Giants became the fourth girls team at Ross to win the GLL this school year.

"We always try to work hard and we worked hard in practice this week to accomplish this GLL championship and this is what

See LITTLE GIANTS, B3

The News-Messenger, Fremont, Ohio, Friday, February 14, 1997

Little Giants win league

Continued from B1

"we've wanted," said Reinbolt, who had nine points, four rebounds and two assists. "This was one of our team goals this season and it's what we really wanted to come out with."

You got the feeling things were going almost too well back in December, when the Little Giants were reeling off six straight wins to start the season. The early death toll included Sandusky Bay Conference winner Huron, soon-to-be-even-more-hated rival Sandusky and Whitmer.

But when most teams were hitting their strides, the Little Giants hit the skids. Jolly Ol' St. Nick stuffed three straight vacation losses in Ross's stockings, and those started an up-and-down second half that included a gut-check defeat at Clyde and a Round 2 setback at Whitmer.

The Little Giants came into the final league contest having lost four of their last six on the road. They were also coming off their worst loss of the season against ninth-ranked Rocky River Magnificat and were without guard Jami Toeppel (knee) for the seventh straight game.

But Ross proved a long time ago it should not be counted out.

"I said if everybody stepped up their game instead of one person

trying to do it that we had a chance to win this," coach Sue Wolf, whose vocal cords were certainly in championship form throughout the game, said outside of a jubilant locker room. "My thoughts dropped a little bit when Jami Toeppel got hurt (at Whitmer Jan. 18) because we rely on her so much for defense, but we had a couple of people step up and play well, and that's what a team's all about."

Emotions ran high for the Eagles, whose seniors Beth Kohler and Stacie Cousins were honored with a ceremony prior to their final game at the Nest. The tears had barely dried when sophomore Erin Tuckerman gave Ross a 12-2 lead with a 12-foot jumper with 3:43 left in the first quarter.

In the second quarter, senior Michele Smith, who had 11 rebounds and five points, turned an offensive putback into a 3-point play to give Ross its biggest lead of the night, 21-9.

"I knew they were going to be aggressive and hard, and I just had to get the rebounds because I knew that was going to be the decision in the game," Smith said.

"The biggest thing is we just got outbattled on the boards," said Clay coach Roger Achter, whose team finished 13-7, 6-4 GLL.

Sophomore guard Jodi Har-

rington, who kept the Eagles in the game all night with 13 points and five assists, hit a 3-pointer to bring Clay within 25-18 heading into halftime.

But like the second half of the season, this one was a little rocky.

Down 30-25 with 3:14 left in the third quarter, Clay used a free throw by Miller, aopup jumper from Harrington and a Miller finger roll to knot the game at 30.

Yet the scoreboard, ergo the momentum, never shifted in the Eagles' favor.

"I thought we had a chance when we tied it up and I was hoping if we would have held them we could get back into a zone and make them shoot from the outside," Achter said.

Ross patiently ran its offense

in the second half, scoring eight of its nine field goals from less than five feet.

Dowell, who has averaged 10.0

points per game, worked a pick-and-roll with Amy Smith to get Ross back up, 32-30, and junior Natasha Watson, the heir apparent to Michele Smith in the paint, had a 3-point play 30 seconds later to make it 35-30.

Meg Beshalske, who had had three blocks, made two free throws with 2:16 left in the game to bring Clay within 45-42, but Reinbolt and Tuckerman, who had stepped into Toeppel's vacated position in very solid fashion,



News-Messenger/Steven Garner

FREMONT ROSS coach Sue Wolf urges her team to play smart during its final timeout Thursday at Clay.

hit clutch charity shots with under a minute left.

In a microcosm of the first 19 games, many faces filled many roles Thursday.

"Amy Smith and Emily Dowell are great players and then having Erin Tuckerman step up like she did, that was awesome," Reinbolt said. "For a sophomore JV player to step in like that and

play a starting role, she's really stepped up her game."

The same can be said of the entire team.

And that's what makes champions.

LITTLE GIANTS NOTES: The hoopsters' championship victory adds to the list of girls winners started by the cross country contingent. ... Ross outrebounded Clay, 26-19. ... The Ross junior varsity team (10-10, 5-5 GLL) set the stage for the night's excitement, winning 61-57 in overtime against Clay, which entered 16-4.



News-Messenger/Steven Garner

EMILY DOWELL of Fremont Ross goes toward the basket Thursday during the Little Giants' 51-47 win at Oregon Clay. Ross's win, along with Whitmer's win at Fostoria, left the two squads as co-Great Lakes League champs.

SPORTS B3

All-Great Lakes League Team

FIRST TEAM

Jessica Vierlboeck, Sr. Whitmer
Tiffany Bennett, Jr. Whitmer
Stacie Cousino, Sr. Clay
Jessica Lawson, Soph. Findlay
Michele Smith, Sr. Fremont Ross
Amy Smith, Jr. Fremont Ross

SECOND TEAM

Gina Bollman, Jr. Clay
Elizabeth Edinger, Jr. Whitmer
Amy Aschemeier, Sr. Napoleon
Beth Thallman, Sr. Findlay
Emily Dowell, Jr. Fremont Ross

HONORABLE MENTION

Ashley Marshman Sr. Napoleon; Tracy Deeter, Sr. Napoleon; Lyndsey Robinson, Soph. Fostoria; Kyle Gibson, Jr. Whitmer; Lisa Grudzinski, Sr. Whitmer; Katherine Updegraff, Jr. Napoleon; Rachel Barlow, Sr. Napoleon; Jodi Harrington, Soph. Clay; Megan Beshalske, Fresh. Clay; **Marcy Reinbolt, Sr. Fremont Ross; Jami Toepppe, Jr. Fremont Ross.**

PLAYER OF THE YEAR: Jessica Vierlboeck, Whitmer

COACH OF THE YEAR: **Sue Wolf, Fremont Ross**

Northwest All-District Girls

COLUMBUS (AP) — The 1996-97 Associated Press Northwest All-District high school girls basketball team as selected by a media panel from the district, with high school, height, grade and scoring average):

DIVISION I

FIRST TEAM: Jocelyn Pelasky, Mansfield Madison, 6-foot-0, Senior, 20.6 points per game; Shala Crawford, Mansfield Senior, 6-4, Sr., 15.7; Ericka Haney, Tol. Cent. Cath., 6-1, Jr., 16.2; Jessica Viertlboeck, Tol. Whitmer, 5-9, Sr., 17.5; Mahogany Green, Tol. Bowsher, 5-7, Sr., 16.9.

SECOND TEAM: Marce Collier, Sandusky, 5-10, Sr., 13.7; Megan Pease, Mansfield Madison, 6-2, Soph., 11.5; Katie Stedcke, Sylvania Southview, 5-8, Sr., 10.3; Bridget Donovan, Tol. Notre Dame, 5-9, Jr., 18.5; Tomi Gernert, Tiffin Columbian, 5-8, Jr., 17.2.

THIRD TEAM: Michele Smith, Fremont Ross, 6-1, Sr., 11.7; Stephanie Weber, Ashland, 5-11 Sr., 15.9; Jessica Lawson, Findlay, 5-5, Soph., 14.1; Jenny Nance, Sylvania Southview, 5-11, Sr., 15.6; Tequila Huntley, Tol. Rogers, 5-9, Jr., 14.5.

Players of the year: Jocelyn Pelasky, Mansfield Madison; Ericka Haney, Tol. Cent. Cath.

Coach of the year: Bill Lobb, Findlay.

AREA SPECIAL MENTION

Amy Smith, Fremont Ross.

Awards^N

Ross Winter Sports Awards

Girls Basketball

Captains Award: Tony Elder, Marcy Reinbolt, Michele Smith

Most Valuable Player: Michele Smith

Most Improved Player: Tonya Elder

Best Defensive Player: Marcy Reinbolt

Most Assists: Marcy Reinbolt

Most Rebounds: Michele Smith

Best Foul Shooters: Emily Dowell, Amy Smith

Boys Basketball

Captain Award: Sam Root, Derrick Hershey, Harry Liggins

Most Valuable Player: Sam Root

Most Improved Player: Edmund Peters

Best Defensive Player: Rob Liggins

Most Assists: Sam Root

Most Rebounds: Derrick Hershey

Best Foul Shooter: Kevin Mosser