

## Ross takes first step down tourney trail

### Tight defense, solid shooting combine to lift Little Giants over Lima Shawnee in sectional

By **BOB MARKER**  
Staff writer

ADA — Ross led from start to finish to defeat Lima Shawnee 61-50 Tuesday night in the Class AAA boys sectional basketball tournament at Ohio Northern University's King-Horn Center.

The Little Giants, 10-11, combined tight man-to-man and zone defenses with a 20-of-37 shooting performance to oust the Indians, 11-10, from the tourney. Ross will play the winner of Thursday's Tiffin Columbian-Lima Senior game at approximately 2:30 p.m., Saturday, for the sectional title.

Ross's win followed top-seeded Elida's 63-40 win over Bowling Green.

"The key to the game was tempo," Ross Coach Pat McGhee said. "Even though we were ahead at the half, because of the score (Ross led 19-16), I thought Lima Shawnee had the game going the right way for them.

"In the second half, we tried to run them a bit."

Run, Ross did. Getting balanced scoring, the Little Giants ran to a 34-20 lead with 2:25 to play in the third quarter. The Ross defense held the

Indians scoreless from 6:10 until 2:21 remained. Nick Hall, Mike Wolfe and John Stierwalt had four points apiece with John Cahill scoring three and Manoah Jones two as Ross outscored Shawnee 17-11 for the quarter.

Contributing to the scoring were three assists by sophomore center Adam Bulger, who finished with five assists, seven rebounds, two blocks and a steal for Ross.

In that quarter, Cahill, assigned to cover Shawnee's leading scorer — Brian Newland — limited him to four points after Newland had scored 10 in the first half.

"Cahill was assigned to Newland," McGhee pointed out, "but we had a lot of others helping out. We made sure we knew where he (Newland) was on the floor. We felt he would get his 20 points, but we wanted to make him earn them."

Newland "earned" 24 points, six over his average, but was generally pushed out of the Indians' offense, along with his teammates. Cahill played one of his better games of the season, McGhee agreed, with his defense, 12 points and six rebounds.

The Little Giants scored the

game's first five points on Jones' jumper, a free throw by Cahill and Bulger's rebound of Cahill's miss on the second foul shot. Cahill finished with five points and Stierwalt four as Ross took a 13-10 lead after eight minutes.

The second quarter was a 6-6 stalemate as both defenses ruled.

Ross shifted into high in the third quarter and used the momentum to cruise to a 25-23 scoring advantage in the the final period. Ross was five of six in the final quarter and sank 15 of 21 free throws as Shawnee, forced to foul attempting to

catch up, committed 12 fouls.

Stierwalt, handling a wing slot and running the team from the point guard position when Jones picked up three first-half fouls, topped Ross with 21 points and grabbed seven rebounds. Jones matched Cahill with 12 points and Hall had a team-high eight rebounds to go with eight points. Newland was the only Shawnee player in double figures.

The Little Giants held a 33-32 rebounding edge and committed just eight turnovers, two more than Shawnee. Ross was 21 of 34 from the foul line while Shawnee made eight of 13 foul shots and 21 of 55 field goal attempts.