

Ross disposes of Shelby 73-54; Malabar next

By BOB MARKER

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ASHLAND — Ross will face Mansfield Malabar Friday night in the Class AAA Sectional Basketball Tournament finals at Ashland College after the Little Giants dumped Shelby 73-54 Wednesday.

The Little Giants, 12-9, will face Malabar, 17-4, at approximately 8:30 p.m.

Ross suffered through its poorest night at the free throw line but offset that with 32 of 61 from the floor to knock the Whippets out of the tourney. The loss finished Shelby's season at 7-15.

Although Ross hit over .500 from the floor, Coach John Sawyer said it did not seem like one of his team's better shooting nights.

"It was more like we would hit them in spurts," he said.

The key run of Ross points came at the beginning of the final period as Shelby had trimmed Ross's 18-point second period lead to 53-46 at the end of three quarters.

The Little Giants outscored Shelby 12-4 in the first four minutes for a 65-50 lead. The run was the kiss of death for Shelby. Jim Hufford, who was not having one of his better games for Ross, helped seal the Whippets' doom a minute later.

The 6-1 Ross junior blocked two consecutive shots with both resulting in baskets as Ross rolled up a 71-50 lead with less than three minutes to play. After that, it was a battle of the subs.

The Little Giants with Greg Bender hitting 10 points in the

Tickets on sale now at Trempers

Tickets for the Ross-Mansfield Malabar sectional final basketball game are on sale now at Trempers until Friday at 2 p.m.

The game will be the second of a doubleheader Friday night at Ashland College. The first game will be Sandusky vs. Mansfield Senior at 6:30 p.m. Ross's game will start approximately a half-hour after the first contest. It will not be a split session.

Tickets are \$1.50 for students and \$2.50 for adults.

first quarter and Dan Brudzinski coming off the bench to score eight in the second quarter, held a 39-27 halftime advantage.

Bender, hitting 10 of 16 from the field, led Ross with 21 points. Dave Aschenbach had 17 points, seven assists, and a team high 11 rebounds with William Johnson scoring 14 and Brudzinski finishing with 10 for the Little

Giants. Hufford dished out four assists.

The Ross coach had his team depart from its normal zone defense by opening with a man-to-man.

"We played our good man-to-man," Sawyer chuckled. "We thought that we would do a better job on the boards against them by playing the man-to-man."

In the first half that philosophy worked as the Little Giants held a 21-10 advantage on the boards. Nine of the retrieves were off the offensive boards in the first quarter. For the game, Ross held a 48-35 rebounding edge but the Whippets had a 12-4 edge on the boards in the third quarter.

Shelby Coach Don Thallman said, "We knew that Ross could shoot the ball but I still thought we played good defense. We came back at the half and were still in the game."

"The key point for us was when we had three chances to cut the lead to less than six and did not do it."

That was at the end of the third quarter.

Shelby, which hit only 18 of 55 shots, was led by Darrell Arnold's 13 and Steve Stine with 12.

Against Malabar Sawyer said that his team would see quickness out front, a big guy who was named the player of the year in the Northwest district and possibly a man-to-man defense.

"Malabar has been a zone defense team but after they saw us shoot tonight," Sawyer said, "I am expecting the man-to-man."

Steve Martenet, 6-5 junior, was the Associated Press player of the year. The quick guys out front will be the brother combination of Melvin and David Selmon.

"We are going to have to play a good game," the Ross coach pointed out, "but I think we will be playing with more intensity Friday."