

# Mansfield's Williams shoots down Lady Giants' upset bid

By **TIMOTHY R. WOLFRUM**  
Sports editor

**BASCOM** — The Fremont Ross girls gained 25 points on Mansfield Senior in just three weeks.

Unfortunately for the Lady Giants and their tournament fortunes, one thing hasn't changed.

Mansfield still has star guard Canea Williams.

Williams scored 14 of her 31 points in the fourth quarter Saturday as the 10th-ranked Tygers held off a determined Ross squad, 62-49,



**R. HAMMER**

Michigan-bound guard nailed a pair of 3-pointers — one came from more than 25 feet — as the Tygers stretched a four-point lead to 14 in a three-minute span.

"She's really a nice play-

in a Division I sectional final at Hopewell-Loudon High School. The Eastern

er," Ross head coach Sue Wolf said of Williams. "She can pull up and hit the 3 from NBA range, and she strokes it. Plus, she can take it to the basket."

Junior Rachel Hammer led the Lady Giants (9-12) with 15 points and four rebounds. Stacy Hall and Kristen Hammer both scored 11 points in the final game of their careers.

Brooke Brafford added 14 points for the Tygers (20-1).

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## Ross girls end season with valiant battle against No. 10 Mansfield Sr.

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The Lady Giants were beaten 80-42 on Feb. 1 at Mansfield. But on Saturday, Ross stayed right with the Tygers for three and a half quarters.

Hall scored seven straight points in the final one minute, 15 seconds of the third quarter to get Ross within 41-35 heading into the fourth period.

When Rachel Hammer picked up a loose ball and scored on the Lady Giants' first possession of the fourth quarter, Ross trailed only 41-37.

Mansfield head coach Andrea Thompson couldn't help but think of the 2000 tournament. That year, Ross upset the eighth-ranked Tygers by 22 points after losing earlier in the season.

"Sue is an excellent coach," Thompson said. "I told them (her players), 'She's going to bring something to the table, and you guys better be ready.' ... I think they were shook up a little bit tonight.

"I'm glad we won, but you

can't always skate through games like this by playing the poor defense we played and not running the offense like we should have."

Williams responded after Hammer's bucket. She missed a trey but got a second chance after a teammate's rebound and sank her second try at a 3-pointer. After an Amanda Smith 3-pointer, Williams came up with a pair of layups and her long 3-pointer. Ross's Rachael Daugherty fouled Williams on the trey, giving Mansfield the ball back. Brafford's ensuing deuce put the Tygers up 56-42 with 4:06 to play.

Wolf said Mansfield's 29-19 rebounding advantage doomed Ross.

"We're not going to get any bigger, so we better get more physical. We've got to go get it," Wolf said.

Mansfield led 22-11 early in the second quarter Saturday and appeared ready to blow out the Lady Giants. But Ross scored 11 of the next 13 points to get within 24-22 late in the first half. The Tygers led 31-24 at halftime.

The score was 34-26 when several of the lights dimmed at Hopewell-Loudon with 4:36 to play in the third quarter. There was a 15-minute delay as the lights slowly came back on.

A Tara Ginn deuce put Mansfield up 38-26 before Hall spurred the Ross comeback late in the third quarter.

"I was real happy with the effort," Wolf said. "I thought the seniors did a great job of leading them tonight. I told Kristen, 'You've got to step up and show them this means a lot to you.' I thought she did a nice job. Stacy Hall came in and got hot, and that helped us."

Although Ross finished with a losing record, Wolf said her team responded well after starting the season 0-6. The Lady Giants turned in a 9-7 record after the poor beginning.

"I told our kids that we spotted everybody we played six games before we decided we were going to try to win a game," she said. "If you take that off, we were actually a halfway decent team."

## Bears, Raiders, Rockets chase sectional titles today

**News-Messenger reports**

Saturday's winter storm hit just in time to force the postponement of three girls basketball sectional finals.

Games involving Gibsonburg, Lakota and Oak Harbor — all scheduled for the Toledo area — were delayed until today.

Gibsonburg (13-8) will meet top-seeded Van Buren (15-5) in a Division IV sectional final at 6:30 p.m. today at Bowling Green High School. The winner will advance to the Fostoria District on Thursday to battle St. Joseph Central Catholic.

Lakota (7-13) faces Northwood (14-7) for a Division III sectional title at 8:30

p.m. today at Perrysburg High School. The winner heads to the Bowling Green District.

Top-seeded Oak Harbor (20-0) does battle with Rossford (2-19) at 6:30 p.m. today at Ottawa Hills in a Division II sectional. A victory would send the Rockets to meet Fostoria on Thursday in the Old Fort District.

Also postponed until today was the second game of the Division I sectional at Hopewell-Loudon. Findlay and Clay will meet at 7:30 p.m. today. They were scheduled to play after Fremont Ross on Saturday, but icy roads caused tournament officials to postpone the contest.