

# Ross

## season

## ends

By **CRAIG SNYDER**

Staff correspondent

WILLARD — Opportunity knocked often at Ashland's door Tuesday night and the Arrows were more than glad to welcome it in to close out Fremont Ross 61-53 in the Division I sectional tournament here.

We gave them a lot of second touches after stopping their first shots," Ross coach Bruce Brown said. "Our game plan was to give them one shot and one shot only."

Ashland, 14-7, outrebounded the Little Giants 34-23.

Three of the Arrows' 10 offensive rebounds came at critical points in the fourth quarter as the Little Giants, 4-17, mounted a charge after falling behind 49-43 early in the period.

Doug Hershey's two free throws and layup cut Ashland's lead to 49-47 with 6:10 remaining, but Jeff Gierhart's miss was put back by Craig Starkey to put the Arrows up 51-47 with 5:20 to play.

Geoff Berger's layup on a feed from Gary Rakes made it 51-49, but a Gierhart jumper in the key, a Ross turnover, and a layup by Jeff Honaker stretched the Arrows' lead to 55-49 and the Little Giants called time out with 4:12 left.

"We cut the lead down to two and we didn't get into the offensive set we wanted," Brown said. "That was the critical possession when we turned it over trying to jam it inside and Jon's (Minich) pass went off Shane's (Moran) hand. When we needed them, we just couldn't string together three or four solid possessions."

A layup by Hershey and his ensuing steal led to a basket by Chad Root as the Little Giants cut it to 55-53 with 3:00 to play.

But a short jumper by Starkey, a blocked shot by Starkey at the other end and a putback by Jake Stickney raised the Arrows' lead to 59-53 with 1:40 remaining.

Starkey's offensive rebound after Gierhart's missed free throw with 44 seconds to play was one more opportunity for the Arrows.

"We really needed someone to step up, both offensively and defensively," Ashland coach Jody Peters said. "I'm just thankful (Starkey) was able to do that down the stretch."

Starkey paced the Arrows with 13 points and 10 rebounds.

Hershey led the Little Giants with 15 points and eight rebounds. Minich added 11 points.