

Little Giants can't counter Findlay, Jauert

By BOB MARKER
Staff writer

BASCOM — Begging didn't pay off for Findlay girls basketball coach Bill Lobb but his insistence did.

Findlay's Amy Jauert scored 19 of her 23 points in the second half in the Trojans' 51-45 victory over Fremont Ross Thursday night in the Division I district girls basketball tournament at Hopewell-Loudon High School.

"She's a great player," Lobb said about Jauert, who will attend Cleveland State next fall, "but when you've got to **Division I** beg a player to shoot the ball...we kept saying the whole first half 'Shoot the ball, Amy,' but she wanted to give it up and throw the nice pass."

At halftime, Lobb got his message across to Jauert.

"We encouraged her a lot," Lobb said, "and I think she got the point."

Findlay (14-6) will face Lima Senior in the finals Saturday. Lima defeated Tiffin Columbian 44-33 in the first game Thursday.

It was the second consecutive year that Findlay has defeated Ross (15-6) in the district semifinals.

Content to pass off, Jauert made 2 of 7 shots in the first half. She began driving to the basket in the second half and made 11 of 15 free throws, including 8-of-12 in the fourth quarter.

Ross coach Sue Wolf was pointed in her explanation of how her team handled Jauert.

"We did some dumb things," Wolf said.

While Lobb got Jauert fired up offensively, the Trojan defense was a constant.

"Basically," Wolf said, "they knew all they had to stop was Dawn (Zerman) and Natalie (Robbins), and that is what they did."

Zerman finished with 14 points. After making 10 of 10 free throws in a sectional finals win over Mansfield, Zerman had her problems against the Trojans, missing 7 of 10.

Robbins scored 13 points.

In the first half, Findlay mixed a man-to-man defense with a zone. The Trojans stayed mainly with the zone in the second half.

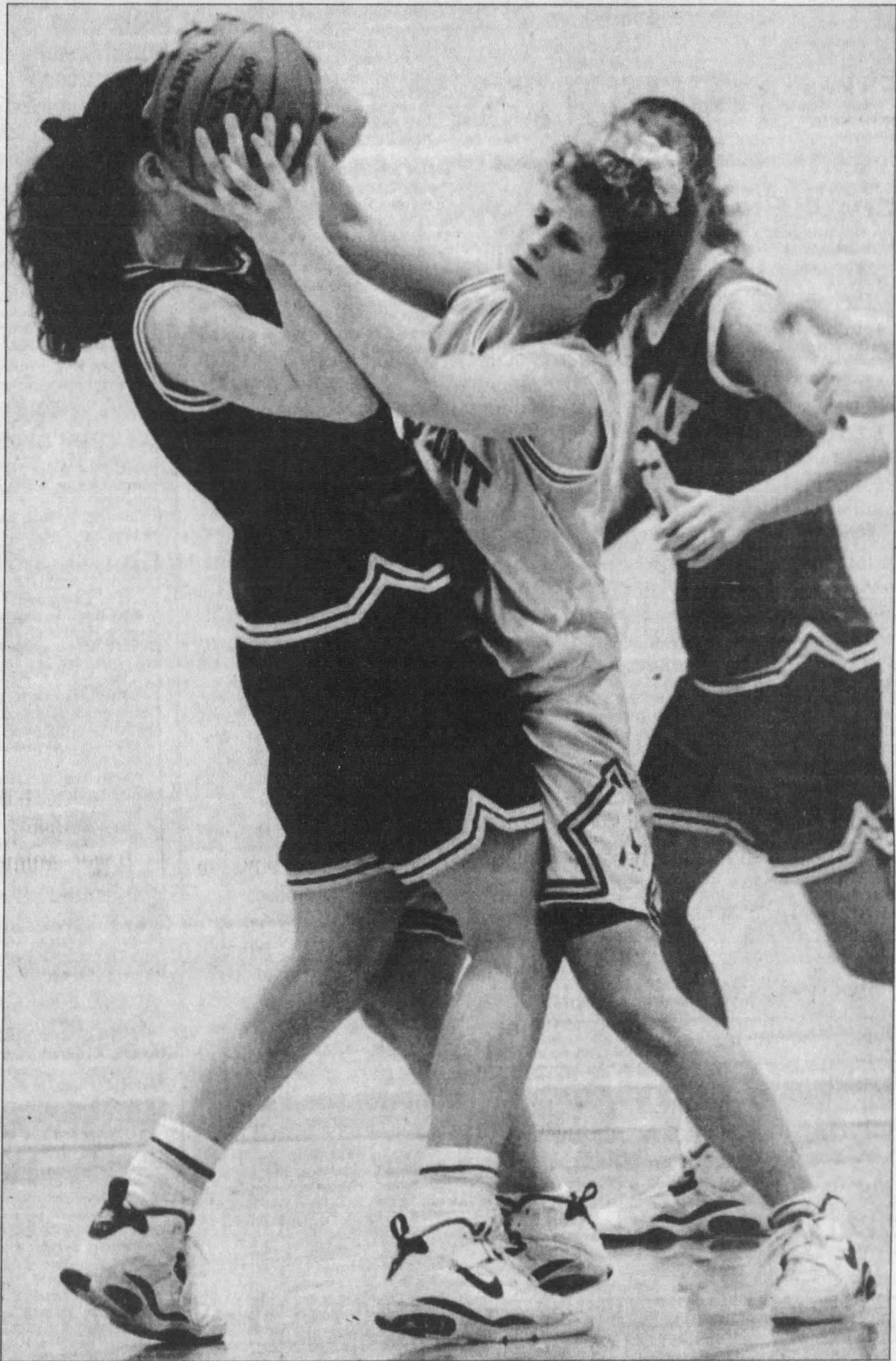
"We have no inside game and they know it," Wolf said.

Lobb said: "Those two you have to guard. The last time we played (a 56-52 Ross win Dec. 11), their inside game was not effective and this time it was not effective."

Findlay's Julie Niekamp, a 5-foot-11 sophomore, scored seven straight points in the third quarter as the Trojans pulled away from an 18-17 halftime lead to a 31-21 lead with two minutes left in the third period.

The Little Giants got no closer than six the remainder of the game.

"If we want to be a contender, we have to have an inside player," Wolf said. "We have some players capable of filling the bill, but they are going to have to put in hours of practice this summer."



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

NATALIE ROBBINS (right) of Fremont Ross battles Findlay's Jenn Wenner for control of the basketball during a girls Division I district

tournament game at Hopewell-Loudon High School in Bascom Thursday night. The Trojans defeated the Little Giants 51-45.

Willard comes from behind to beat Bellevue

News-Messenger reports

MILAN — One of the top teams in the girls Division II basketball tournament was nearly eliminated Thursday night.

Bellevue led at halftime, and Willard was in foul **Division II** trouble but the Crimson Flashes prevailed 58-47 in the district tournament at Edison High School.

The Redmen (14-8) led 27-22 at the half. Willard (22-1) outscored Bellevue 15-4 in the third quarter.

The Crimson Flashes will meet Lexington in the district championship game Saturday night. The Minutemen beat Vermilion 56-49 in the other semifinal Thursday.

Christie Borgia scored 22 points for Bellevue, which outscored Willard 14-9 in the second quarter. Wendy Kutz added 10 points for the Redmen. Adrienne Santoro and Lori Zeiber each made a 3-point shot.

Lori Peddicord and Genni McFarland scored 18 and 14 points for the Crimson Flashes, respectively.