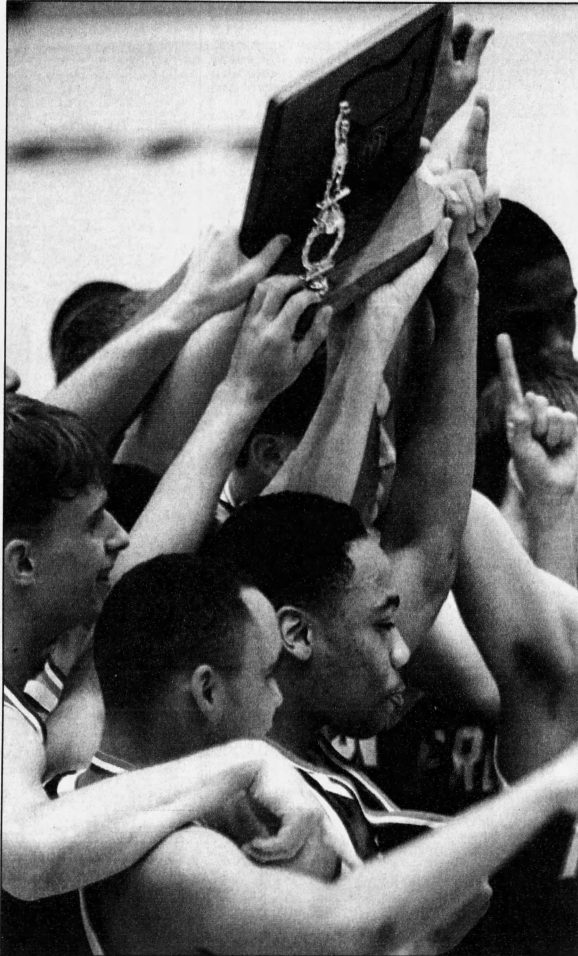


Little Giants are district champions



FREMONT ROSS players celebrate the team's district championship Saturday at Bowling Green State University.

Heidelberg hits key 3 in overtime

By BRIAN SPIESS
Sports editor

BOWLING GREEN — Mansfield Senior's Marquis Sykes threatened to tear the hearts out of Fremont Ross players and their fans Saturday when he hit a last-second 3-point shot to force overtime.

The Little Giants had a similar reply.

Joell Heidelberg, who like Sykes is a 5-foot-9 sophomore, nailed a 3-point shot with 1:55 left in overtime to give Ross the lead for good in a 73-68 Division I district championship game at Anderson Arena.

"That was a big shot for a sophomore to hit. He stepped up big time," said Ross senior Derrick Hershey, who led the Little Giants with 22 points.

"That was the one that put us over the hump," Ross coach Mark Gedeon said of Heidelberg's shot. "You can't call him a sophomore either. That's a veteran play."

Ross (16-7) will play the state's No. 2 team, Lakewood St. Edward (22-1), in the regional semifinals at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday at Savage Hall.

It wasn't just a sharp shot from Heidelberg that got Ross its ticket to Toledo. The Little Giants' defense limited Mansfield's leading scorer, Dubrey Black, to nine points. And the offense was able to handle the Tygers' pressure to earn the win.

"They held their composure, they were patient," Mansfield coach Gregg Collins said.



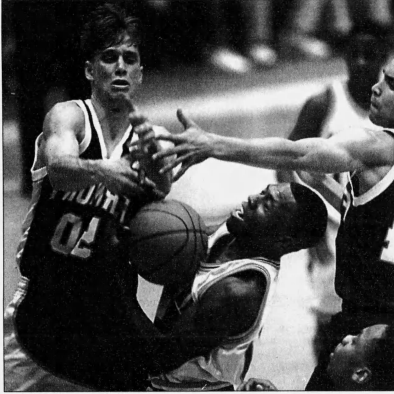
HEIDELBURG

Saturday
Ross (OT) ...73
Mansfield...68

Wednesday

Fremont Ross
vs. Lakewood
St. Edward in
Division I regional
semifinal at
Savage Hall
6:30 p.m.

See ROSS OUTDUELS, B2



DERRICK HERSHBY of Rose battles Manville's DeGrawn in a rebound Saturday.

Ross outduels Manville in OT

Continued from B1

...below and we get real comfortable at the offensive end which is a credit to their defense," Collins said.

Ross led by as many as six points in the first quarter, then built a 5-point lead in the different times during the game as a result of ending Manville's season at 12-9.

Ross appeared on its way to defeating Hill with a conventional 23-minute game when Hershby hit two free throws with 48 seconds left in regulation to give Ross a 27-23 lead. But Manville's Rick Upchurch hit a jump shot and the Tigers called a timeout with 38.3 left.

Ross came to a 34-29 advantage. When Ross was whittled for a 3-second call with 28 seconds left, the Tigers had an opportunity to tie.

Upchurch missed his second shot, but Manville's left rimmed out, but Manville's Anthony Reynolds was fouled while going for the offensive rebound. He made two free throws with 13.7 seconds left to close the gap to one point.

Ross's Sam Root was fouled after catching the inbounds pass and after a Manville timeout, hit two free throws to push the lead back to three points at 39-36.

Then Upcher hit the spot of the game. Manville's point guard dribbled Ross's Root back into the key and Upcher's shot hit the rim and the shot went in. He made it in the air long enough to complete clutch and seal the shot with 0.4 left in the game.

"That was a great individual play... we were assuming him all the way down the floor," Gibson said.

The Rose fans who made the 23-mile trip to Parkview were really disappointed but inside the building Gibson was receiving a different message.

"I told them I said that was a great individual play but now we got to play four more minutes of basketball on this floor against this type of competition."

And the Giants had an edge. Back on an all-Northwest Ohio first-team selection had picked up his fifth and final foul when he reached in against Hershby to stop the clock with 48 seconds remaining.

Manville started the overtime score tied when DeGrawn Butler made two free throws for a 41-39 lead.

On the ensuing possession, Root hit after 32 years at BGSU.

LITTLE GIANTS NOTE: Ross scored at least one point on each possession in overtime... Kevin Moore, Root and Hershby combined to shoot 11-of-13 from the free throw line in the fourth quarter as Ross did not make a foul shot... Rose coach Mark Gibson left Root... was in earlier surroundings Saturday, saying Brown up with his father David Gibson teaching at the minor city. David Gibson will retire this year.

...for a 36-33 lead.

When Hershby missed his second attempt with 43 seconds to play in the overtime, Ed Peters got enough of the ball to force a jump ball. The possession started with the Giants.

Ross threw the inbounds pass to Peters, who missed the jump ball but Root, who at 6-0 had a key tip during the game, grabbed it in for a 36-33 lead.

DeGrawn Lattrell raced down court and hit a 3-pointer for Manville, which immediately called a timeout at the 32-4 mark. Root was fouled on the inbounds and made one of two free throws for his 13th point of the game to give Ross a 37-36 lead.

Upcher went for the again but this time his 3-pointer was off the mark and Hershby grabbed the defensive rebound. He was fouled with 3 seconds left and made both to give the little giants the final margin of victory, 39-38.

LITTLE GIANTS NOTE: Ross scored at least one point on each possession in overtime... Kevin Moore, Root and Hershby combined to shoot 11-of-13 from the free throw line in the fourth quarter as Ross did not make a foul shot... Rose coach Mark Gibson left Root... was in earlier surroundings Saturday, saying Brown up with his father David Gibson teaching at the minor city. David Gibson will retire this year.