

Little Giants need fast start

By **TIM HARMON**
Staff writer

HOLLAND — Among the things Fremont Ross can do as it tries to continue on in the tournament is bottle and save its first-quarter performance in Saturday night's 77-38 sectional championship game victory over Toledo Start.

The Little Giants, 17-5, scored 27 points in the first quarter on 48 percent shooting at Springfield High School.

And Ross advances to Division I district tournament play after collecting 12 rebounds to Start's five in the first quarter, including eight rebounds on the offensive end.

Toledo Central Catholic, which is 19-2 and defeated Oregon Clay 74-53 in a sectional final last week, is the Little Giants' next foe here Thursday. The game begins at 6:30 p.m.

"It's going to be tough," Ross coach Sue Wolf said.

Wolf said the Little Giants have to avoid the kind of timid starts she has become accustomed to prior to Saturday.

"I really like them as nice kids," Wolf said. "I want them to change on the court not off it."

Cari Ritzman led four Little Giants in double figures with 19 points against Start, 6-15. Dawn Zerman added 16 to go with seven assists, Lisa Oprie had 11 points and Dena Schepflin 10.

With Zerman penetrating from on top and Ritzman from the wings, most of the Ross scoring came inside 12 feet. Erica Radeloff, who had eight rebounds, Schepflin, Emily Dowell and Michele Smith operated smoothly on the interior.

"We've been working on them getting their feet under them," Wolf said. "When they catch it, getting their feet under them before they shoot."

Ross maintained its 48 percent shooting all game, finishing 32-for-66 from the floor.

"We wanted to play zone against them and slow them down," Start coach Charlie Shumaker said. "The first four minutes we stayed with them. Then they upped the tempo."

Defense in the right place

HOLLAND — Toledo Start coach Charlie Shumaker said he looked at the scoreboard Saturday night and Fremont Ross led 14-11.

He said he looked at it again a short time later and it was 27-11.

That was the beginning of the end for the Spartans as Ross rolled to a 77-38 Division I sectional championship game victory at Springfield High School.

Hot shooting, crisp passing and solid rebounding sparked the Little Giants.

But the Ross defense had as much as anything to do with the victory.

"Everybody was picking up whoever was open," Ross coach Sue Wolf said. "That's getting better here towards the end of the season."

The Little Giants helped hold Start to 31 percent shooting (15-for-49) and also forced 21 turnovers.

"We were getting in the passing lanes," Wolf said.

Ross committed just 10 turnovers — two below Wolf's goal before the game.

—TIM HARMON

Crystal Lewis led Start with 18 points.

All that marred the game for Ross was 10-of-20 shooting at the foul line, including 5-of-12 in

the first half.

"I don't understand that," Wolf said. "We make them in practice. Against Central, we have to make them."