

Ross advances to sectional final

By BOB MARKER

Staff writer

NORWALK — Fremont Ross went to the beauty shoppe just in time to salvage a 42-22 girls Division I sectional basketball tournament win over Columbian Tuesday night.

Ross, 14-7, will take on Mansfield Senior at approximately 3 p.m. Saturday in the sectional finals.

"It was ugly," Ross coach Sue Wolf admitted, "but we'll take the win. After all, a win is a win is a win."

"Uh huh" on both counts.

It was very ugly in the first half as Ross

and Columbian took turns kicking the ball away. Neither team could penetrate the other's defense and good shooting was a non-existent luxury.

Ross led 4-3 after one quarter and 11-10, almost by default, at the half. The Little Giants survived 14 first-half turnovers and 5-of-17 shooting. Columbian was better on the turnovers with eight but 2-of-17 shooting took away the effect of a 1-3-1 defense that was baffling Ross.

With 6-foot-1 Melanie Sears at the point of the zone, the Little Giants could hardly see over, let alone pass the ball over the Columbian freshman.

"We tried to go over her instead of going right at her," Wolf explained.

After her beautification speech at half-time, that changed.

"We started to go at her and then drop the ball off inside," Wolf said, "and that allowed us to attack it (zone) a little better."

In the first 2:15 of the second half, Ross nearly doubled its score, racing to a 20-10 lead. A pair of layups by Andrea McGee, a 3-point play by Cortney Cominsky and a Cominsky jumper from the right side put Ross up by 10 with 5:45 remaining in the quarter.

It was another three minutes before Natalie Robbins and Cominsky hit back-to-back buckets for a 24-11 lead. The Little Giants finished the quarter with a 4-2 *burst* for a 28-12 lead.

It was all over except for sighs of relief. Columbian was 1-of-11 shooting in the third quarter and Ross 8-of-11.

In the final quarter, the Ross lead grew to 40-19.

Ross, 14-7, made 17-of-45 shots and 8-of-11 free throws. Columbian was 6-of-39 and 10-of-15. The Little Giants outrebounded the Tornados 43-25 but had 23 turnovers, three more than Columbian.