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## Ross falls to Madison

*BY JEFF ARENZ*  
*Sports Writer*

WILLARD -- Two factors caused the downfall of the Fremont Ross Little Giants in a Division I boys basketball sectional final Friday at Willard.

Mansfield Madison (19-2) outscored Ross 27-9 from 3-point territory and held a 21-15 edge in second-chance points en route to an 80-56 victory.

"We knew that Madison was the more physical team with great team play at both ends of the floor," Ross coach Mark Gedeon said. "For them to come out and shoot the basketball the way they did, it took our soul away."

The Rams, who were 9-of-19 (47 percent) from beyond the arc, drained the first nine long-range bombs of the game. Jordan Mottayaw knocked down four of his six 3-pointers in the first quarter, when Madison raced to a 24-10 lead.

The Little Giants were 3-of-19 from 3-point land, including an 0-of-11 effort in the first 16 minutes.

Mottayaw ended up with a game-high 23 points for the Rams, who will play Mansfield Senior in a district final March 12. Jacob Burghard added 14 points and 10 rebounds, while Joey Wareham chipped in 14 points and 6 rebounds.

"He's their best offensive player," Gedeon said of Mottayaw. "He was the top senior in terms of all-district votes. He's just a very well-rounded player."

The Little Giants, who trailed 51-18 at the half, allowed the Rams to take a 15-0 edge in second-chance points. Madison had the upper hand in first half rebounds 29-11, including caroms at the offensive end 11-2.

"Our No. 1 concern was, 'Could we win the battle in the paint,'" Gedeon said. "For us to have a chance, we had to keep them outside (of the paint) in the 16-to-19 foot range. But they totally dominated."

Madison coach Dave Rickert used rebounding as motivation for the Rams.

"It was our plan to go to the boards hard," Rickert said. "And after we crashed them hard in the first half, and that gave us a huge edge."

Madison collected a 46-40 advantage in rebounding in the game. Stephen Carnicom grabbed 7 rebounds to top the Little Giants. Carnicom, starting swingman for Ross, played against Madison two days after twisting his ankle in a Division I sectional semifinal game against Sandusky on Tuesday at Willard.

Mottayaw and Burghard each drained a pair of second-quarter 3-pointers during Madison's 17-2 run

to begin the period that led to the Rams' 44-14 edge.

"We wanted to come out and attack early, but those 3-pointers could have gone either way," Rickert said. "Fortunately for us, they fell in."

Kenny Penn led Ross (11-11) with 21 points, 13 of which came during the final 16 minutes. Jordan Jones, who made the Little Giants' first 3-pointer with 1:10 left in the third quarter, ended up with 9 points.

With 5:50 left in the third quarter, the Rams took their biggest lead (60-20) until Andrew House scored consecutive baskets for Ross.

House finished with 8 points and 5 rebounds for the Little Giants.

Ross was at a slight disadvantage in shooting, finishing 21-of-57 (36 percent) from the field. Madison was 28-of-64 (44 percent) in comparison.

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Madison's Delvonta Cheatham drives in between Kenny Penn and Andrew House of Fremont Ross Friday night in the division I sectional finals at Willard High School. (Daniel Melograna | Gannett News Service)