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Giants to meet Streaks

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Fremont schools get together in benefit game

COLUMBUS -- UGive and the OHSAA Foundation are teaming up again to help Ohio schools make a difference in their communities through the Foundation Service Week in basketball, which will take place from Nov. 19-Dec. 5.

High school basketball teams across Ohio, including the boys and girls teams from Fremont Ross and St. Joseph Central Catholic, will encourage students to volunteer in their communities during this time. The team that achieves the highest percentage of school participation will be recognized at a Cleveland Cavaliers game and meet with NBA superstar Shaquille O'Neal.

On Friday at the Purple Pit, the Little Giants and Crimson Streaks will play each other during a boys-girls exhibition doubleheader. Tip-off for the girls contest is at 6 p.m. The boys game will follow at about 7:30 p.m.

"The state initiated this last year and we wanted to do something like this, but there was a snag in the scheduling," said St. Joseph Central Catholic athletics director and girls basketball coach Gary Geller. "(Former Fremont Ross girls basketball coach) Sue (Wolf) and I wanted to do it. Then, (former SJCC boys basketball coach) Mike Gabel got on board. But (Fremont Ross boys basketball coach) Mark Gedeon had already filled his scrimmage schedule and he wanted to honor the commitments that he had made. So, we let it fall by the wayside."

Fremont Ross athletics Art Bucci agreed.

"I think it's great to have to great schools and four great programs getting together in a great community for a great charity," Bucci said. "This isn't about who wins or who loses. It's about having fun and raising money for a good cause."

Friday's girls basketball game is not the first meeting between Ross and SJCC. Geller said the Crimson Streaks have scrimmaged against the Little Giants, under the guidance of legendary coach Sue Wolf, since the early 1980s.

As for meetings between the Ross and SJCC boys basketball teams, Geller confirmed that his records show the Little Giants and Crimson Streaks played each other in regular-season contests in the 1930s.

"We do so many things where we're working separately, we just thought it would be nice to have an event where we're working together for a common cause," Geller said.

Ohio High School Athletic Association Commissioner Dan Ross praised the OHSAA Foundation's agreement with UGive, making these exhibitions possible.

"The Foundation's partnership with UGive made this opportunity possible for our student-athletes and we are most appreciative of their continued support of our community service initiative," Ross said.

UGive is a non-profit organization on a mission to catalyze, excite and empower the next generation of volunteers. We make philanthropy relevant to students, guiding them to give their time and talents to build communities. Their goal is to create lifelong givers. UGive is 100 percent free for students, schools and charities.

To learn more, visit UGive.org.

The OHSAA Foundation is a non-profit organization with a mission to provide scholarship, leadership and service opportunities for Ohio's student-athletes. To learn more, visit www.ohsaafoundation.org.



Ross guard Kenny Penn dribbles past Lima Senior's Danyel Walton last season at Fremont Ross. This year's Little Giants will play an Ohio High School Athletic Association Foundation game Friday against St. Joseph Central Catholic. The girls varsity teams start the action at 6 p.m., with the boys following. (News-Messenger file photo)