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A community event

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SJCC-Ross basketball night helps local charities

FREMONT -- Community pride and support were overflowing inside the Purple Pit at Fremont Ross High School on Friday.

As the Fremont Ross and St. Joseph Central Catholic boys and girls basketball teams scrimmaged, about \$2,500 was raised for Liberty Center, Parker's Purpose and the United Way of Sandusky County during an OHSAA Foundation doubleheader sponsored by Fricker's.

"We know that we raised several thousand dollars for three great Fremont charities," Little Giants boys basketball coach Mark Gedeon said. "That was the focus of the night."

SJCC athletics director Gary Geller agreed.

"It was a great atmosphere with great community spirit and both teams played really hard," Geller said.

Gedeon said several ideas were used to raise money Friday, when the bleachers at the Purple Pit were filled to capacity by fans of the Little Giants and Crimson Streaks. Even the bands of both schools took turns playing musical selections.

"We had a 50/50, a halfcourt challenge and there were some donation boxes out there," Gedeon said. "But for both schools to come together, we had people on both sides who donated time and made an extra effort to make this night happen. It doesn't happen because of one person ... it was a community effort."

Former Ross post player Victoria Logan had her name drawn from 57 entries to take one shot from the midcourt stripe. When she stepped on the hardwood, Logan's attempt clanked off the iron and bounded away.

In action on the court, Ross and SJCC played to a split.

The Crimson Streaks won the girls game 38-31 by outscoring the Little Giants 16-6 in the final quarter. Ross led 25-22 through three before SJCC sophomore Taylor Flick and senior Jessica Molyet took over. They combined to score 11 fourth-quarter points as Flick had game-highs in points (nine) and rebounds (11) while Molyet added eight points and eight rebounds.

"Taylor is going to be a player because she works so hard at both ends of the floor and it's going to very hard to keep her out of the lineup," said Geller, who is also the Crimson Streaks girls basketball coach. "I was impressed with freshman Kristin Sessler, too. It would help a lot to get Molyet in double-figure in both categories (points and rebounds)."

Morgan Welty, Alex Ferguson and Alyssa Palmer all scored six points for the Little Giants, who received eight rebounds from Alexis Chapman and seven more from Welty.

The Little Giants posted a 62-32 victory in the boys game by pressuring the Crimson Streaks into committing more than 25 turnovers. Ross led 26-16 at halftime before using a 17-2 third-quarter run to take control.

Garrett Walker's layup 2 minutes after halftime was the only basket SJCC tallied during the Little Giants' barrage. Shunnar Gamble (11 points) put an exclamation point on the third quarter by blocking a shot, stealing the ball and dunking it during a fastbreak with 26 second left in the period.

Ross point guard Kenny Penn scored 11 of his game-high 15 points during the final eight minutes. Terrence Hill reached double figures with 10 points and Matt Price added eight more.

"For our kids, playing in an atmosphere like tonight was good for them," said new Crimson Streaks boys basketball coach Jonathon Will. "We talk about how we want to build a program and we want support from our SJCC community and we want to play in front of hostile environments, like this."

Walker and Mike Fox led SJCC with five points.



Ross guard Skylar Reffner drives past the SJCC defense during Friday's OHSAA Foundation game at Ross. (Jonathon Bird | News-Messenger)