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Whitmer latest TCL team to rudely greet Little Giants

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TOLEDO -- The Fremont Ross boys basketball team is getting no love from its soon to be home -- the Toledo City League.

Ross dropped its third-straight contest Tuesday, losing 65-41 to Whitmer in non-league play.

It was the Little Giants second consecutive loss to a City League opponent as they dropped an 80-42 decision to Start on Saturday. Ross is 1-2 against its future league this season, with its lone victory coming Dec. 5 (83-76 OT) over Waite.

Ross will join the TCL during the 2011-12 academic year.

Dareon Jones led the Panthers (2-1) with 10 points. Whitmer had seven players finish with six or more points.

Luke Hickey added nine off the bench for Whitmer as it dominated from start to finish against an undersized Ross (1-5) team.

Kenny Penn had a game-high 14 for the Little Giants.

"We knew (Whitmer) is the biggest team in the city," Little Giants coach Mark Gedeon said. "They're very physical, very aggressive and we're the Little Giants for a reason.

"We've got to make sure we're doing things we're capable of doing against that physical play."

Right from the start, the Panthers established their inside game, scoring four quick points in the paint as part of an early 10-4 lead. Whitmer scored a total of eight points in the paint in the first 8 minutes and 14 in the first half to eight for Ross.

A 3-pointer by Jake Hiestand brought the Little Giants within three (10-7) with 3:28 left in the opening quarter. But that was as close as Ross would ever be.

The run came from the smaller Little Giants penetrating to the basket and drawing defenders for open looks on jumpers.

"That's part of the style of this team," Gedeon said. "We know we have to have a lot of five around zero, four around one-type of sets and we need to be successful both penetrating to the basket, but also being able to kick it out and knock down some outside shots too."

The Panthers went on a 9-0 run to lead 19-7 after one and out-scored Ross 13-7 in the second quarter to lead 32-18 at halftime.

"(Whitmer) needed to get the ball inside, which it established early," Gedeon said. "Fourteen of their first 16 points were either paint shots or free throws, which is part of their game. Obviously, they're a good free throw shooting team -- shooting 92 percent from the line."

Whitmer finished the game making 13-for-14 free throws while Ross finished 14-for-19 (73 percent).

The Little Giants never got closer than 12 in the second half, ending the game 13-for-48 from the field. The Panthers finished 24-for-51 (47 percent) and won the rebound battle 30-23.
