

Fort Defiance JV's Comeback Falls Short to Staunton in District Tournament Finals, 58 - 44

The Fort Defiance JV team fell behind by 22 to the Staunton Storm in the Shenandoah District JV Tournament Finals then rallied to cut the deficit to single digits before Staunton pulled away in the final minutes, 58 - 44. Staunton finished the season 21 - 0, 13 - 0 in the District while Fort finished at 15 - 8, 11 - 3 in the District. All three of Fort's losses were to Staunton.

This one might have gone the other way but turnover and after turnover doomed the visitors. There were twenty possessions that Fort was unable to get a shot due to its ball handling, including several in the opening minutes when Staunton raced out to a 7 - 0 lead before FDHS took its first shot. As always, Staunton played an aggressive man-to-man defense which Fort had trouble with. Complicating matters is that the officiating only became strict in the fourth quarter, long after Fort had fallen well behind.

Staunton also dominated the boards with its big lineup that had eight sophomores and seven freshmen on the team. To Fort's credit, after digging a deep hole in the second quarter the Indians climbed back to make the game very competitive in the fourth quarter.

Isaac Marshall's two free throws were the first scores for Fort. Staunton took advantage of a turnover and scored again, making the score 9 - 2 with 3:43 to go in the first quarter. After a Staunton free throw, Tripp Hanger hit a three pointer to bring the score to 10 - 5. Staunton then got two field goals, a foul shot, and a three pointer to extend their lead to 18 - 5 at the end of the quarter.

The Storm continued their onslaught in the second quarter. After Tripp hit another long three pointer, Staunton scored eight unanswered points to go up 26 - 8. Rhylan Martin got a jumper to fall in the lane but the Storm responded with two straight treys to build their largest lead of the night at 32 - 10. From there, the Indians started creeping back into the game. Tripp got three points on a drive and a foul. The Storm then got a deuce to go up 34 - 13 before Carter Berry ended the half's scoring with a drive for two.

The third was the best quarter of the game for FDHS. Isaac hit a three from the top of the key. After a Staunton score, Jasigh Ransome, Carter, and Evan Braun scored to get the Indians closer at 36 - 24. Staunton got a three pointer to fall but Evan and Carter both scored again for Fort. Staunton got a free throw making the score 40 - 28 but Gus Gutshall, who had been plagued with foul trouble earlier in the game, came through with a jumper in the paint so the Indians closed to 40 - 30 at the end of the quarter.

Staunton increased their lead to 42 - 30 to open the fourth quarter. Evan hit one of two free throws with 5:15 to go in the game. Then Gus was fouled and he hit both ends of the one-and-one to close the gap to single digits at 42 - 33. Staunton got a field goal to go up 44 - 33 then Jasigh hit one of two free throws to make the point difference ten. Staunton got a field goal and free throw to make the score 47 - 34 then Evan swished a three pointer leaving the gap at ten again. Staunton got a field goal but Jasigh shook loose for a three pointer to bring Fort back to a

single digit deficit at 49 - 40 with 1:42 to go. Unfortunately, Fort had to foul and Staunton hit its free throws in the final two minutes. FDHS was able to get two free throws from Evan and a late field goal from Carter but Staunton held on for a 58 - 44 win.

Evan led the Indians with 10 points. Tripp had nine, Carter eight, Jasigh six, Isaac five, Gus four, and Rhylan two.

Fort's Box Score:

Name	2 Pt Goals	3 Pt Goals	Free Throws	Total
Jasigh Ransome	1	1	1-2	6
Tripp Hanger	1	2	1-1	9
Isaac Marshall	0	1	2-2	5
Gus Gutshall	1	0	2-3	4
Evan Braun	2	1	3-4	10
Rhylan Martin	1	0	0-0	2
Carter Berry	4	0	0-0	8
TOTAL	10	5	9-12	44