

Strasburg Rams hand Fort Defiance Indians second straight loss, 58 - 52

The Strasburg Rams, playing in only their second game of the season after earlier games were postponed due to their football team advancing to the state finals, defeated the Fort Defiance Indians 58 – 52 in the Ram Hardwood Classic held at Strasburg High School. It was the second bad game in the row for FDHS. After coming back from a slow first half to take the lead early in the second half, 34 – 28, Fort's poor shooting again doomed them. In the second half alone, FD made only two of twenty three point shots attempted and only five of eighteen foul shots. Strasburg's Gavin Dellinger scorched the Indians' zone, hitting five of his seven three pointers in the second half, enabling the Rams to pull away in the fourth quarter.

Fort made only 8 of its 42 three point attempts for the game and 8 of 22 from the charity stripe. Furthermore, they had sixteen turnovers in a game they could have won. Strasburg did a good job of clogging the lane so the Fort guards found nothing but congestion whenever they tried to drive into the lane. Fort didn't get a single two point field goal in the game until there was 1:37 to go in the second quarter. Jasigh Ransome had a good game, making five three pointers for 15 points, the only Indian scoring in double figures.

Strasburg opened the game with a trey but Rhyland Martin answered with the same for Fort. Fort briefly took a lead when Evan Braun made one of two free throws. After a Strasburg two pointer, Rhyland again connected from beyond the arc which tied the score at 7's. Fort then fell asleep on offense as Strasburg scored the next eight points to go up 15 – 7 before Bradley made one of two free throws to close out the scoring in the quarter. As many as six times in the quarter, Strasburg beat the Fort press and got easy layups.

Evan made a three pointer to start the second quarter but again Strasburg beat the press and went up 17 – 11. A Dellinger three pointer gave them a 20 – 11 before Jasigh hit the first of his three successive three pointers which tied the game at 20's. Dellinger again hit for the Rams before Bradley Hebb scored in close to bring the Indians within one at 23 – 22. But, another Ram three pointer gave the home team a 26 – 22 lead with 44.2 seconds to go in the quarter. Carter Berry then took a nice pass from Tripp Hanger and scored near the end of the quarter leaving the score Strasburg 26, Fort Defiance 24 at the break.

Gio Armendariz Cruz finally got one of his shots to fall to open the second half. His two free throws gave Fort the lead with 7:05 to go. Bradley then scored on a drive, was fouled, and converted his free throw to put the Indians up 31 – 26. After a Strasburg basket, Jasigh banged home another trey and Fort had its biggest lead at 34 – 28. It took only two possessions and two shots for Strasburg to tie the score, though at 34's with 5:32 to go. Elijah Pultz snared an offensive rebound and was fouled with the putback, but he couldn't convert on either of his foul shots. Bradley likewise missed a pair after Strasburg had scored to take the lead but Connor Batten tipped in the miss to knot the score at 36 – 36. After a Strasburg deuce, Evan Braun scored in the paint to tie it again at 38 – 38. Dellinger then broke Fort's back with three straight three pointers while all Fort could muster was a single foul shot by Gio, leaving the score 47 – 39 in favor of the Rams at the end of the third quarter.

Fort tried to get back in the game at the start of the fourth quarter. Elijah got two on a putback and Gio likewise scored after an offensive rebound. Rhyland was fouled attempting a three pointer but was able to convert only one of his three free throws. Elijah again turned an offensive rebound into two points and Fort was down only 48 – 46 midway in the quarter. After two Strasburg foul shots, Bradley’s drive made the score 50 – 48 with 3:17 to go. Another Dellinger three pointer put Strasburg up by five, 53 – 48 before Jasigh answered with his fifth three pointer of the game with 2:30 to go. Down the stretch, though, the only scoring Fort was able to come up with was a single foul shot by Gio as Strasburg held on for a 58 – 52 win.

Jasigh’s 15 points led the Indians while Dellinger had 27 for the Rams.

Grandfather’s notes: Gus didn’t score though I believe he snared four rebounds. He hustled and had zero turnovers. It is increasingly hard to watch him work to get open only to have his teammates not see him then launch poor shots, especially from beyond the three point arc. His best chance at touching the ball continues to be on offensive rebounds.

Fort’s record fell to 5 - 2 on the season. The next game in the Ram Hardwood Classic is tomorrow, Saturday, December 28, against Page County.

Here’s Fort’s box score:

Name	2 Pt Goals	3 Pt Goals	Free Throws	Total
John Whetzel	0	0	0-0	0
Bradley Hebb	3	0	2-5	8
Jasigh Ransome	0	5	0-0	15
Gio Armendariz Cruz	2	0	4-6	8
Miguel Uribe	0	0	0-0	0
Evan Braun	1	1	1-2	6
Carter Berry	1	0	0-0	2
Rhylan Martin	0	2	1-3	7
Elijah Pultz	2	0	0-4	4
Tripp Hanger	0	0	0-0	0
Connor Batten	1	0	0-0	2
Ayden Thornton	0	0	0-0	0
Gus Gutshall	0	0	0-2	0
TOTAL	10	8	8-22	52