

Fort blows past Waynesboro 76 - 60

Fort Defiance got back on the winning track with a 76 – 60 victory over the Waynesboro Little Giants on January 24. Fort grabbed the lead early in the first quarter and kept it the entire game as nine Indians scored for the home team. The win upped Fort's record to 8 – 6, 2 – 3 in the Shenandoah District while Waynesboro dropped to 3 – 11, 1 – 4.

Waynesboro opened the game with a three pointer but Tripp Hanger answered with the same for FDHS. Waynesboro took a 5 – 3 lead but that would be their last lead of the night. Jasigh Ransome scored in the lane then Gio Armendariz Cruz scored on a drive to give Fort a 7 – 5 lead. Jasigh then swished a trey for the Indians. Elijah Pultz then stepped in front of a Waynesboro player for the steal and raced down the court to score to give Fort a 12 – 5 lead. Carter Berry got two to give FD a 14 – 5 advantage. WHS scored but Elijah followed with a bucket on a nice pass from Tripp to make it 16 – 7. Waynesboro scored a field goal and foul shot to close to 16 – 10 then Gio scored on a drive, was fouled, and made his foul shot with 3.4 seconds to go to make it 19 – 10. Waynesboro wasn't done, though, as they quickly passed the ball and fired in a three pointer from near half court as the buzzer sounded leaving the score Fort Defiance 19, Waynesboro 13 at the end of the first quarter.

Waynesboro went on a mini-run to open the second quarter, scoring the first five points to get within one at 19 – 18 but Evan Braun responded with a three pointer to make it 22 – 18. Gus Gutshall snagged an offensive rebound and was fouled on his putback. He made one of his two free throws to make it 23 – 18. Connor Batten then fired in a three pointer from the corner to give Fort an eight point lead, 26 – 18. Waynesboro hit a three pointer but so did Tripp so again Fort led by eight. Gio scored on a drive and Bradley Hebb followed with two in the lane to make it 33 – 24 with 1:46 to go. Jasigh then popped in a shot from beyond the arc to give Fort a comfortable 36 – 24 lead at the half.

The first half was a decent half for Fort, for a change. They had only two turnovers and made 6 of 17 three point shots. Nine FDHS players scored in the half. Waynesboro was playing with only eight players and one went out with a hurt ankle early in the half leaving them with a small bench.

After Waynesboro scored to open the second half, Gio drove in the lane for two. Waynesboro netted two more then once again Gio scored in the paint to make it 40 – 28. Tripp bombed in two consecutive three pointers sandwiched around a WHS field goal to make the score 46 – 32. Waynesboro made another three pointer, then Tripp was fouled attempting another three pointer and made all three foul shots giving the home team a 49 – 35 lead with 4:38 to go in the quarter. Gio made a trey and the Little Giants tossed in a field goal and foul shot to make it 52 – 38. Jasigh then made a three pointer giving Fort a seventeen point lead, 55 – 38. Waynesboro scored the next two baskets before Bradley scored in the lane. Fort got a foul shot from Elijah to make it 58 – 42 at the end of the third.

Gio scored four points early in the final quarter, first on a foul shot then on a three pointer. Elijah took a nice pass from Bradley and gave Fort its biggest lead of the night, 64 – 42. The Little Giants made a three pointer but Jasigh again hit a trey for the Indians. After another

Waynesboro three pointer, Tripp scored in the lane to make it 69 – 48. WHS scored and Gio drove in the lane for his final points of the night with 3:44 to go. Fort’s final scoring was a deuce by Elijah on a nice pass from Gio and a three pointer by Conner. The final was 76 - 60.

Fort’s three point shooting was better tonight than in the last several games, 13 – 36. Gio led the Indians with 20. Tripp scored 17 and Jasigh 14. Ayden Thornton was not dressed for the game. For the Little Giants, Deonta Brown had 16, Jackson Powell scored 12, and Ka’Marion Martin had 11. Waynesboro’s eight players included five freshmen including Brown, Powell, and Martin.

Grandfather’s notes: Gus played much more tonight than he has in the past several games. He even started though he was only left in for 55 seconds then. But he did return to play several minutes in each quarter. By my count, he got six rebounds (four offensive). He was more content after this game, as expected.

Fort’s next game is a game against Roanoke Catholic tomorrow night, January 25, as part of the Rock The Ribbon Roundball Shootout at Rockbridge High School.

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	2	0	0-4	4
Jasigh Ransome	1	4	0-0	14
Gio Armendariz Cruz	6	2	2-5	20
Miguel Uribe	0	0	0-0	0
Evan Braun	0	1	0-0	3
Carter Berry	1	0	0-0	2
Rhylan Martin	0	0	0-0	0
Elijah Pultz	4	0	1-2	9
Tripp Hanger	1	4	3-3	17
Connor Batten	0	2	0-0	6
Ayden Thornton	0	0	0-0	0
Gus Gutshall	0	0	1-2	1
TOTAL	15	13	7-16	76

The Staunton News Leader had the following short article about the game:

Fort boys win

FORT DEFIANCE — Gio Armendariz Cruz scored 20 points Friday to help Fort Defiance to a 76-60 win over Waynesboro.

Fort (8-6, 2-3 Shenandoah) also got 17 points from Tripp Hanger and 14 from Jasigh Ransome in the win.

Waynesboro (3-11, 1-4 Shenandoah) was led by freshman Deonta Brown's 16 points and 12 points from freshman Jackson Powell.

Fort plays Riverheads at home and Buffalo Gap and Staunton on the road next week, while Waynesboro is at Stuarts Draft and home against Monticello and Wilson.