

Huge Second Half Propels Fort Defiance Past Stuarts Draft, 55 - 34

The Fort Defiance Indians turned a one point deficit at halftime into a 21 point win at Stuarts Draft on February 13 in the last regular season game for the Indians. The victory gave the Indians a 13 - 9 final season record, 7 - 5 in the Shenandoah District, and now they await word on who/where/when their Regional game will be. Fort Defiance finished third in the District, behind Staunton and Wilson Memorial and ahead of Buffalo Gap, Riverheads, Stuarts Draft, and Waynesboro. The Cougars ended their season with a 7 - 13 record, 3 - 9 in the District.

Fort's big three again were the reason for the win: Tyreek Veney had 23 points, Sam Garber 13, and Henry Gutshall 12. These three accounted for 48 of the 55 points FDHS got for the night. Both Henry and Tyreek had eight point outbursts in the third quarter which helped turn the halftime deficit into a ten point lead by the end of the quarter. Donovan Jenkins led Stuarts Draft with 17, half of his team's points.

Stuarts Draft got on the board first in the game with a three pointer. Sam then scored in the paint for the visitors then Henry snared an offensive rebound and scored to make it 4 - 3 in favor of FDHS. Sam again scored down low to make it 6 - 3 with 4:25 to go in the quarter. Kaden Johnson banged in a three pointer then Sam hit one of two free throws to give Fort a 10 - 3 advantage. Draft closed to 10 - 5 at the end of the quarter. Tyreek picked up his second foul in the quarter so he had to miss the last part of the first and some of the second quarter as well.

The second quarter was not a good one for Fort. Draft scored the first six points to take a 11 - 10 lead while Fort went scoreless for the first four minutes. Finally Tyreek got things going with a three pointer from the top of the key to return the lead to Fort at 13 - 11. Sam knocked down a three moments later and the Indians held a 16 - 11 advantage. SDHS got a three pointer before Gio Armendariz Cruz hit one of two free throws with 1:40 to go, making the score 17 - 14 in favor of the visitors. Another three pointer from Draft tied the game then they went ahead with a jumper, 19 - 17. Tyreek hit another three pointer from the top of the key to give Fort a 20 - 19 lead but Draft got the last bucket of the quarter to take a 21 - 20 lead into halftime.

The second half saw a different Fort Defiance team on the court. Henry started the ball rolling with a nice drive down the left hand side of the lane to return the lead to Fort at 22 - 21. Then, as he has done in every game, he broke Draft's momentum by taking a charging foul. Gio spun into the lane with a deuce to make it 24 - 21. SDHS responded with a bucket to make it 24 - 23. Sam got two more in the paint then, after a Draft basket, Tyreek bombed in a trey to give Fort at 29 - 25 lead with 4:08 to go. Henry then took over. First he hit two free throws to push the lead to 31 - 25. After SDHS got a basket and a foul shot, he spun into the lane to make it 33 - 28. SDHS got two more fouls shot to drop, then Henry worked free in the paint for two more to go up 35 - 30. Tyreek swished a three pointer then stole the ball and went the distance for a layup to give Fort a 40 - 30 lead at the end of the quarter.

The fourth quarter again went Fort's way. Tyreek drove and scooped in a basket to make it 42 - 30. On Draft's next possession, Sam flew in and made a monster block on a Stuarts Draft layup

attempt. Then he took a pass from Tyreek and scored on Fort's end of the court, making it 44 - 30 with 4:30 to go. Draft finally scored to make it 44 - 32 then they fouled Tyreek who hit both of his free throws with 2:15 to go. Next, Henry, who sat out the first four minutes of the quarter, was fouled and he hit both ends of the one-and-one to push Fort's lead to 48 - 32. After a Tyreek free throw, Draft got a bucket then Tyreek got another steal and score to make it 51 - 34. Draft had to foul down the home stretch. Sam hit one of two free throws then Tyreek hit two more freebies to make the score 54 - 34 with 41 seconds left. At this point, Coach Brandon Fulk emptied his bench. Austin Metz got one of two free throws to fall in the waning seconds which made the final score Fort 55, Stuarts Draft 34.

This game was reminiscent of Fort's first game with Stuarts Draft which saw them turn a deficit into a win with a big second half performance. For tonight's game, Fort scored 35 points and held Draft to just 13 in the second half.

The regional pairings haven't been announced yet but with the win against Draft, Fort hopes to host a first round Regional game, perhaps on Friday, February 17.

Fort's Box Score:

Name	2 Pt Goals	3 Pt Goals	Free Throws	Total
Gio Armendariz Cruz	1	0	1-2	3
Kaden Johnson	0	1	0-0	3
Bradley Hebb	0	0	0-0	0
Conner Patterson	0	0	0-0	0
Sam Garber	4	1	2-4	13
Tyreek Veney	3	4	5-9	23
Jack Liskey	0	0	0-0	0
Del Ray Jones	0	0	0-0	0
Jalen Alexander	0	0	0-0	0
Henry Gutshall	4	0	4-4	12
Alphonso Bruce	0	0	0-0	0
Austin Metz	0	0	1-2	1
Carter Fink	0	0	0-0	0
TOTAL	12	6	13 - 21	55

Stuart Draft's Box Score:

Name	2 Pt Goals	3 Pt Goals	Free Throws	Total
Thomas Clements	0	0	0-0	0
Colin Graham	1	1	0-0	5
Derrick Moore	0	0	0-0	0
Harley Frame	2	1	0-0	7
Ryan Ramsey	0	0	0-0	0
Trent Cote	0	0	0-0	0
Donovan Jenkins	6	0	5-5	17
Christian Moats	1	0	0-0	2
Aiden Conner	0	1	0-0	3
TOTAL	10	3	5-5	34

The Waynesboro News Virginian had this article about the game:

BOYS BASKETBALL | FORT DEFIANCE 55, STUARTS DRAFT 34

Strong second half propels Fort Defiance boys basketball team past Stuart Draft

STEVE COX For The News Virginian

Feb 14, 2023

STUARTS DRAFT — Fort Defiance took control in the second half Monday night and pulled away for a 55-34 victory over Stuarts Draft in Shenandoah District boys basketball action.

Draft led by a point, 21-20, at the half, but the Indians outscored the Cougars 35-13 in the final two quarters to take the win.

"I wasn't happy with our defense in the first half. On offense, we didn't take advantage of Draft's switching on defense, and we settled for too many perimeter shots," said Fort coach Brandon Fulk. "It was a frustrating first half."

Harley Frame knocked down a 3-pointer for Draft's first points of the game, but Fort scored the following 10 points, four by Sam Garber and three by Kaden Johnson on a 3-pointer. Draft failed to score for more than seven minutes until Donovan Jenkins made two foul shots with one second left in the quarter.

The scoring drought shifted to the Indians to start the second quarter as Fort failed to score for more than four minutes to start the quarter. A layup by Chris Moats and two buckets by Frame put Draft ahead 11-10. Fort regained the lead on a 3-ball by Veney at the 3:25 mark, and a 3-pointer a minute later by Garber gave the Indians a 16-11 lead. Draft surged ahead, 19-17, with an 8-1 spurt that included corner 3-pointers from Colin Graham and Aidan Connor. A 3-pointer by Veney switched the lead back to Fort with 15 seconds left, but Graham answered with a driving layup just before the buzzer, sending the Cougars to the break with a 21-20 edge.

Fort started converting shots in the paint in the third quarter as big man Henry Gutshall scored eight points from in close. The Cougars kept pace as Draft sophomore Donovan Jenkins did his work from in close, scoring all nine of Draft's points in the quarter.

A three-point play and two more foul shots by Jenkins kept the Cougars within three points, 33-30 before Fort closed the third quarter with seven straight points to push the advantage to double figures. Gutshall scored on a layup, and Veney followed with a 3-pointer and a breakaway layup following a steal, giving the Indians a 40-30 lead heading into the final quarter.

Fort's run extended to 11 straight points on buckets by Veney and Garber to start the final quarter, stretching the lead to 44-30. Veney added seven more points, and the Fort defense limited Draft to just four points in the final eight minutes as the visitors finished off the big 55-34 victory.

"That third quarter was really good," said Fulk. "We had zero turnovers in the third quarter, and I thought we rebounded better. Defensively we were pretty good. Tyreek (Veney) had some early foul trouble, but I thought he hit some big shots for us in the second half. Sam (Garber) asserted himself at both ends and played pretty well. So we responded pretty well in the third quarter."

Veney paced the Indians with 23 points, 17 coming in the second half. Garber scored 13 points, and Gutshall added 12 points. Jenkins led Draft with 17 points. He was the only Draft player to score in the second half, netting all 13 of the Cougars' points.

Both teams will continue their seasons in upcoming regional tournament action.

FORT DEFIANCE 55, STUARTS DRAFT 34

FORT DEFIANCE 10 10 20 15 — 55

STUARTS DRAFT 5 16 9 4 — 34

FORT DEFIANCE (55) — Garber 5 2-4 13, Gutshall 4 4-4 12, Johnson 1 0-0 3, Veney 7 5-9 23, Cruz 1 1-2 3, Metz 0 1-2 1, Hebb, Fink, Patterson, Jones, Liskey, Alexander, Bruce, TOTALS 18 13-21 55.

STUARTS DRAFT (34) — Frame 3 0-0 7, jenkins 6 5-5 17, Moats 1 0-0 2, Graham 2 0-0 5, Commer 1 0-0 3, Clements, Moore, Ramsey, Cite, TOTALS 13 5-5 34.