

Monticello Runs Past Fort Defiance 77 - 62

The Monticello Mustangs beat the Fort Defiance Indians 77 – 62 on December 21 in the Fluvanna County High gym on the first day of the Route 53 Holiday Bash Basketball Tournament. The game was, unfortunately, another version of what is becoming commonplace for the season:

- Very poor shooting and shot selection from the field
- Ineffective press with Monticello getting many easy layups
- Excessive turnovers by the guards especially after they penetrate too far in the lane
- Too selfish of an offense with players not looking for each other but rather for a shot
- Awful free throw shooting (4 – 16)
- No set offensive plays but rather a free-for-all from the three point zone
- Big men on both offense and defense play mostly outside the three point line instead of near the rim
- Forwards only way of touching the basketball is to get an offensive rebound

Fort never led in this one. Monticello raced out to a 7 – 0 lead with 5:53 to go in the first. Carter Fink's putback finally got the Indians on the board. Sam Garber rattled home a three pointer after Fort had fallen behind 10 – 2. He added one of two free throws after Monticello had scored again and FDHS got within six at 3:21 as Gio Armendariz Cruz got a steal and a layup to make it 14 – 8. The two teams swapped buckets with Fort's coming from Bradley Hebb. Del Ray Jones banged in a three pointer to make it 16 – 13 in favor of the Mustangs. After a Monticello free throw, Gio's layup left the score at 17 – 15 at the end of the first period. This was the closest Fort would get.

Monticello went up 25 – 17 as Fort's only points came from Bradley's deuce. Sam hit one of three free throws and Bradley again made a field goal but Monticello extended its lead to 31 – 20. Jalen Alexander scored two on a nice pass from Sam and Gio added a layup plus one to make it 33 – 25. Del Ray got another three pointer to go but Monticello saw its lead at the half at 37 – 28.

A Mustang triple made it 40 – 28 before Carter Fink again got a putback. Bradley made a nice fade away shot in the lane but, meanwhile, MHS scored twice more by beating the press to run out to a 46 – 32 lead. Jalen got two on a nice pass from Gio and Jasigh Ransome got a three to fall to make it 46 – 37. MHS then ran off seven consecutive points before Gio's layup made it 53 – 39. Carter Fink again got two points off an offensive rebound, Tripp Hanger hit a three pointer, and Sam made another three but MHS finished the quarter strong to take a 64 – 47 lead at the end of the period. Fort's shooting miseries at the foul line were obvious by this time, having made only 3 of 14 tries at this juncture.

Fort and Monticello traded baskets in the fourth quarter. Fort's points came on a foul shot by Bradley, a layup by Gio, a bucket by Carter Berry, a field goal off an out of bounds play by Carter Fink, two short jumpers by Bradley, one field goal by Sam, and one from Jalen with an assist from Jasigh. The final was 77 – 62.

The Route 53 Holiday Bash featured boys basketball teams from Fort, Monticello, Fluvanna County, and William Monroe. The second day of the tournament will pit FDHS against Fluvanna County and Monticello against William Monroe. With the win, Monticello evened its season record at 5 – 5 while Fort fell to 2 – 5.

Bradley Hebb led the Indians with 13. Gio had 11 and Sam, who struggled to get his shot to go in the game, scored 10. None of the Fort players shot the ball well. Rhylan Martin was out with an injury.

Grandfather’s note: Gus played sporadically except in the fourth quarter. He did not score but picked up a couple rebounds. This game was undoubtedly frustrating to him as it was to me.

Fort’s Box Score:

Name	2 Pt Goals	3 Pt Goals	Free Throws	Total
Gio Armendariz Cruz	5	0	1-1	11
Bradley Hebb	6	0	1-6	13
Jasigh Ransome	0	1	0-0	3
Carter Fink	3	0	0-4	6
Trey Miller	0	0	0-0	0
Sam Garber	1	2	2-5	10
Austin Metz	0	0	0-0	0
Evan Braun	0	0	0-0	0
Rhylan Martin	0	0	0-0	0
Del Ray Jones	0	2	0-0	6
Tripp Hanger	0	1	0-0	3
Jalen Alexander	3	0	0-0	6
Gus Gutshall	0	0	0-0	0
Carter Berry	2	0	0-0	4
TOTAL	20	6	4-16	62