

Alleghany pummels Fort Defiance 88 - 65

The Alleghany Cougars built a 25 point lead by halftime and coasted to a dominating 88 – 65 win over the Fort Defiance Indians held at Rockbridge High School in the last game of the 10th annual Rock the Ribbon Roundball Shootout on January 27. AHS used a 14 – 0 run beginning with 1:21 to go in the first quarter and extending until the middle of the second quarter to extend their record to 13 -5 for the year. Fort fell to 7 – 8 and hopes to get back on track with three Shenandoah District games in the coming week against Riverheads, Stuarts Draft, and Waynesboro.

Fort got off to a fine start, going up 7 – 0 in the first two minutes on a bucket by Trey Miller with an assist to Jaylen Alexander, a three pointer from Rhylan Martin, and a tip-in by Carter Berry. It didn't take the Cougars long to tie the score before Jalen got a basket in the paint to make it 9 – 7, Fort's last lead of the night. The Indians could only manage a drive by Gio Armendariz Cruz while Alleghany scored ten points to go up 17 – 11. Tripp Hanger hit a three pointer before Alleghany went ahead 20 – 14. Gio then got a drive to go and was fouled. His free throw pulled Fort within three at 20 – 17 but then the Indians went stone cold. The quarter ended with a 24 – 17 lead for the Cougars and they extended their lead to 34 – 17 before the Indians would score midway through the second quarter.

Tripp's three finally broke the ice for Fort but the rest of the quarter wasn't good. Jasigh Ransome hit two free throws and Gio had a layup plus two free throws. Meanwhile, Alleghany built up a huge lead, 51 – 26 at the half.

Notice that Sam Garber's name hasn't been mentioned in this story. Sam had the worst night of his career, missing well over a dozen field goals and scoring only three free throws for the night. The Indians were also playing without Carter Fink who had missed the bus and Bradley Hebb who remains injured.

The second half was a stalemate as Alleghany was never threatened. The game was testy at times with tempers flaring. Fort's first point in the second half came on a technical foul shot by Sam. In the third quarter, Fort also got a free throw from Gus Gutshall, a layup on an out-of-bounds play by Carter Berry, a basket in close by Gio, two more free throws by Sam plus one for Jasigh and one for Jalen after a basket. Fort ended the quarter with two free throws by Gio, two by Carter Berry, and field goals by Trey, Tripp, and Rhylan. The score after three periods was 74 – 48.

Fort's fourth quarter was no better. Del Ray Jones hit a three pointer, Jaylen a foul shot, Evan Braun a basket in the lane, and a three point play by Gio but the score remained 86 – 57 midway through the quarter. Rhylan's basket, Tripp's second three pointer, Jalen's foul shot, and Gio's basket near the buzzer finished the scoring for FDHS. The final was Alleghany 88, Fort Defiance 65.

Gio led the Indians with 18 points and was named to the All-Tournament team. Tripp added 11.

Grandfather's note: The Fort season has been a strange one with only games against Turner Ashby being close. No other game has finished with less than a ten point difference either in winning or losing. Has Fort improved? I'd say no. The free throw shooting has improved somewhat but the season average is still only 55%. Passing certainly has not. There were times in this game when many Fort fans, not including me, yelled at Gio to pass the ball since his eyes only appear to see the rim when he drives. Shooting has not improved; a total of nine three point baskets have been made in the last two games despite dozens of attempts. Defense shows no improvement; the average opponent scores over 84 points per game against FDHS. Team play is absent; tonight, like nearly all previous games, the only way Gus touched the basketball was when he got a rebound.

Fort's Box Score:

Name	2 Pt Goals	3 Pt Goals	Free Throws	Total
Gio Armendariz Cruz	6	0	6-6	18
Bradley Hebb	0	0	0-0	0
Jasigh Ransome	0	0	3-4	3
Carter Fink	0	0	0-0	0
Trey Miller	2	0	0-0	4
Sam Garber	0	0	3-4	3
Austin Metz	0	0	0-0	0
Evan Braun	1	0	0-0	2
Rhylan Martin	2	1	0-0	7
Del Ray Jones	0	1	0-0	3
Tripp Hanger	1	3	0-0	11
Jalen Alexander	2	0	3-5	7
Gus Gutshall	0	0	1-4	1
Carter Berry	2	0	2-2	6
TOTAL	16	5	18-25	65