

Staunton storms past Fort Defiance 100 - 74

Fort Defiance played a great second quarter against Staunton on February 9 in the Don Landes Gym, outscoring the Storm 23 – 13. Unfortunately, it takes four good quarters to beat a team like Staunton. Staunton blew the homestanding Indians away 100 – 74.

It was senior night at Fort Defiance as five of the Indians (Sam Garber, Carter Fink, Del Ray Jones, Jaden Alexander, and Austin Metz) played their last regular season home game in the Don Landes Gym. Unfortunately, the opponent was Staunton who came into the game undefeated in Shenandoah District play having already sewn up the District Championship. The result was not pretty for the Indians. The loss left Fort with a 10 – 10 overall record, 7 – 3 in the District. Staunton improved to 15 – 6, 11 – 0.

Staunton opened with three quick scores by breaking Fort's press to go up 6 – 0 before Sam Garber banged home a three pointer from the corner. The Storm increased its lead to 12 – 3 before Evan Braun got two for the Indians. After Staunton went up 16 – 5, Jasigh Ransome made two free throws. Gio Armendariz Cruz scored on a drive to make it 16 – 9. After a Staunton score, Carter Fink hit a jumper in the lane then Bradley Hebb, playing for the first time in a month, drove for a basket to make it 18 – 13. Staunton broke the press again to go up 20 – 13 with 3:08 to go in the quarter then went on a 6 – 0 run to go up 26 – 13 before Gio turned an offensive rebound into two points. Staunton outscored the Indians 8 – 1 in the final two minutes of the quarter; all Fort could muster was a free throw by Jasigh.

The second quarter was like a different ball game from the other three. Fort shot better, took only one three point shot, distributed the ball better, turned it over fewer times, and played decent defense. Staunton opened the scoring to go up 36 – 16 then back-to-back field goals by Carter F. and Jasigh made it 36 – 20. Staunton made two free throws and a field goal to increase their lead to twenty, 40 – 20, and it looked like a typical Staunton blowout was in the works. However, Fort clawed back. Carter Berry made a free throw, as did Carter Fink, and Gio drove for two to narrow the lead to 40 – 24. After a Staunton score, Carter F. again scored in the paint. Staunton scored again to make it 44 – 26 then Fort made its move. Gio hit two free throws, Gus Gutshall scored in close after snaring an offensive rebound, Sam hit another three pointer from deep in the corner, and Tripp Hanger got two off a put back. Fort was back in the game at 44 – 35. Staunton hit a three pointer then Carter Fink and Evan each made a pair of free throws, putting the home team only behind by eight, 47 – 39, at the half.

Ah, if FDHS could only have played that way the rest of the game. In the third quarter Fort returned to its bad habits of turning the ball over and not getting back on defense fast enough. Staunton outscored the Indians 29 – 15. Fort got three pointers from Tripp and Jasigh and Tripp made a rare four point play after being fouled while swishing a trey. But the only other points the Indians could get were a jumper by Sam, a free throw by Gio, and a two pointer by Rhylan Martin. The third quarter ended at 76 – 54 in favor of the visitors.

Staunton won the fourth quarter as well, 24 – 20, and reached the century mark in the last minute on two foul shots. Fort's scoring in the quarter came from Sam, who had a three pointer, Jasigh, who had a field goal, Carter Fink with a score in the paint, Gio on a drive, another three pointer

by Tripp, a trey by Del Ray Jones, a layup by Rhylan, two foul shots by Sam, and a free throw by Jasigh. Fort never got closer than 20 in the quarter.

Five Indians scored in double figures led by Sam with 13. Tripp had 12 while Gio, Jasigh, and Carter F. each had 11. Staunton was led by Manny Chapman with 29.

Fort's last two games against Stuarts Draft and Wilson Memorial will determine if the Indians earn a spot in the Region 2 tournament. Both games are away next week.

Grandfather's note: Gus played a minute or so in each quarter. As he has done all season, he got some rebounds, scored, and hustled. What more could you ask? I'm proud of him.

Fort's Box Score:

Name	2 Pt Goals	3 Pt Goals	Free Throws	Total
Gio Armendariz Cruz	4	0	3-4	11
Bradley Hebb	1	0	0-0	2
Jasigh Ransome	2	1	4-6	11
Carter Fink	4	0	3-4	11
Trey Miller	0	0	0-0	0
Sam Garber	1	3	2-3	13
Austin Metz	0	0	0-2	0
Evan Braun	1	0	2-2	4
Rhylan Martin	2	0	0-0	4
Del Ray Jones	0	1	0-0	3
Tripp Hanger	1	3	1-1	11
Jalen Alexander	0	0	0-2	0
Gus Gutshall	1	0	0-0	2
Carter Berry	0	0	1-2	1
TOTAL	17	8	16-26	74

The following article appeared in the Staunton News Leader:

Friday sports roundup: Chapman's 30 leads Staunton boys; Gap girls roll over Riverheads

High school sports

Patrick Hite

Staunton News Leader



FORT DEFIANCE — It's now 10 in a row for **Staunton** boys basketball, which hasn't lost in a month. The Storm blew into **Fort Defiance** Friday night, overwhelming Fort 100-73 to remain unbeaten in Shenandoah District play.

Manny Chapman led Staunton with 30 points as the Storm improved to 15-6 overall and a league best 11-0 in the Shenandoah District with one game remaining Monday.

Staunton finished a brutal week that saw it face the second-, third- and fourth-place teams in the district, winning all three games. Fort, because of its uptempo style, was a tough team to face last after playing Wilson Memorial and Stuarts Draft earlier in the week.

"It's hard to keep that energy coming in here," Jack Jones said about Fort. "They run you the whole time and they do a good job of it. At the end of the

day it's all mental and we're so deep. We have eight guards that can compete with the best of the best."

Staunton coach Terrell Mickens said you can't really prepare for Fort.

"It's so hard to simulate what they do and what (Mike Gale) does so well as a coach with that system," Mickens said. "You've basically got to take care of the basketball, push it ahead and shoot layups. If you get in a 3-point contest with them you're going to lose."

Staunton jumped out to a 34-16 lead after the first quarter, but Fort rallied in the second to get back within eight at the halftime break. After Chapman's 3-pointer gave Staunton a 12-point lead with 1:11 left, Carter Fink and Evan Braun hit two free throws each to cut Staunton's lead to 47-39.

Staunton, and specifically Chapman, answered the call in the third quarter. Chapman hit a 3-pointer, a pair of layups and an assist — from a sitting position on the floor — to help the Storm stretch its lead to 13 midway through the third. Chapman scored 14 points — nearly half of his total for the game — in the third and Staunton led 76-54 heading to the final quarter.

"We came in the first quarter with a lot of good energy but the second quarter it kind of dropped," Chapman said. "I told them coming out in the third quarter we needed to bring the same energy we had at the beginning of the game. That's what we did. I think I did a good job leading them through it."

Fort could never rally in the fourth. All that was left to answer was if Staunton could break triple digits. It did with 39 seconds left on a pair of free throws from Anthony Renne.

Jones had 18 and Durrell Hamilton added 16 in the win.

After playing Riverheads Monday, Staunton is off until next Friday when the Region 3C playoffs begin. Mickens said his team would be on the road, but the seedings aren't finalized yet. Three overtime losses didn't help Staunton this

season, but the coach said his team is ready for the playoffs no matter where they play next week.

"I think we're playing pretty good," Mickens said. "Obviously you can get better. We just try to take it a game at a time. If we share the basketball we're going to be in every single game because we're going to play defense. Hopefully we continue that and guys stay healthy and try to get on a run here."

Jasigh Ransome led Fort Defiance with 14 points as Fort dropped to 10-10 overall, 7-3 in the district with games against Wilson Memorial and Stuarts Draft remaining.