

Ross soccer swept by S'view

News-Messenger reports

Sylvania Southview scored the final three goals Saturday and up-ended Fremont Ross, 3-1, in the Little Giants' boys soccer opener at Kelsey Hayes Field.

After a scoreless first half, Ross took the lead on a 35-yard cross by Mike Lozano that got by Southview goalkeeper Chris Minard at the seven-minute, five-second mark of the second half.

The Cougars tied the score on Jake Phillips' penalty kick 10 minutes later. Kevin Lanning followed up with the go-ahead goal in the 31st minute, and iced the triumph with another goal in the final minute of play.

Southview outshot Ross 10-6. Robby Straight led the Little Giants

with nine intercepts. Daryl Copley added seven, and Derek Sprouse, Luke McElfresh and Blair Ellenberger had six intercepts apiece.

Ross plays host to Findlay at 5 p.m. Wednesday.

By George, Ross wins

Sophomore scores every goal in victory

By TIMOTHY R. WOLFRUM
Sports editor

Tyrone George has an instinct for popping up in the right place at the right time on a soccer field.

But it seems the Fremont Ross sophomore's senses are even keener when he plays Findlay's Gold team.

George scored his second career hat trick against the Trojans on Wednesday, accounting for all the scoring during a 3-0 Ross victory at Kelsey Hayes Field.

The midfielder scored midway through the first half and twice more early in the second half before sitting out the final 20 minutes. His goal output matched the three goals he scored

Inside: Ross girls battle hard before falling at Findlay.

Page B3

in his first varsity start last Aug. 29 during a 4-1 Ross victory at Findlay.

"Yeah, I guess," George said when asked if he is extra motivated against the Trojans. "Their A team beat us last year in the tournament with six seconds to go. We're just trying to get ready for Napoleon and Whitmer. Those are our biggest competition right now."

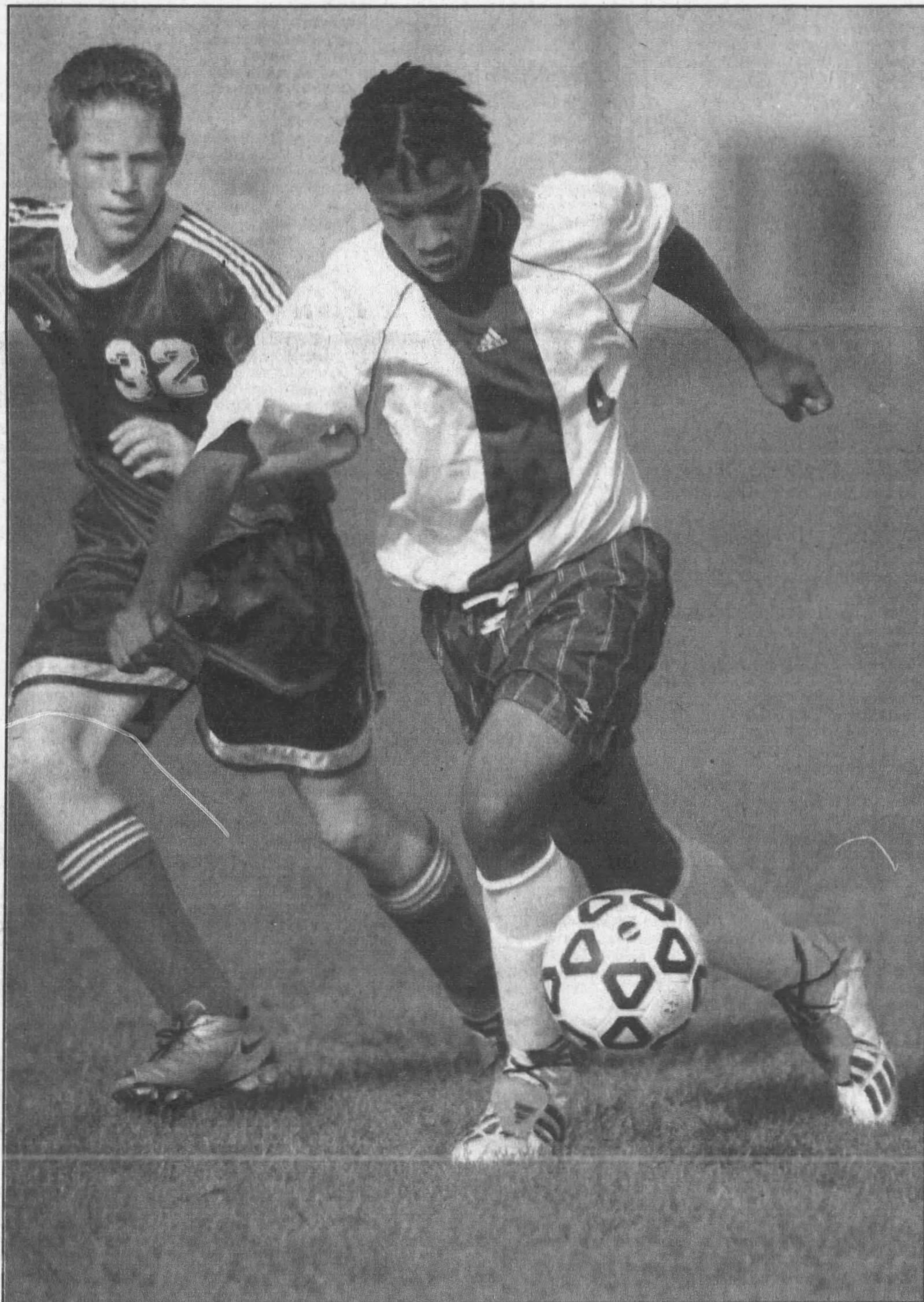
The Little Giants (1-1, 1-0 GLL), who have won the past two Great Lakes League titles, recorded their third straight victory over the Gold team, the equivalent of Findlay's junior varsity squad. The Blue, or varsity, team does not compete in the GLL, opting to play a tougher independent schedule to prepare for the postseason tournament.

Last season, Ross swept the Gold team and came within six seconds of taking the Blue team into overtime before losing 1-0 in the district semifinal.

But the Little Giants lost career goals leader Adam Swope and career assists leader Jarred Stull to graduation, leaving George as Ross's main offensive weapon.

Findlay knew that. It just couldn't stop him. "I told them if you give this guy any space, he'll exploit you," Findlay head coach William Geaman Jr. said. "That's exactly what he did."

George opened the scoring in the 25th minute when he dumped in a rebound shot from the left side of the net. Sophomore forward Adam Wilhelm laced a shot from the right wing, and it bounced off the hands of



News-Messenger/Ben French
TYRONE GEORGE of Fremont Ross gets past Josh George of Findlay during Wednesday's Great Lakes League match at Kelsey Hayes Field.

See ROSS, B3

Ross blanks Findlay Gold for GLL win

Continued From B1

diving Findlay goalkeeper Logan Anderson right to George.

In the second minute of the second half, freshman Blair Ellenberger ripped a crossing pass that bounced high in front of the net. George leaped and headed the ball into the net.

Another varsity newcomer, Mike Lozano, assisted on George's final goal in the 22nd minute of the second half. Lozano, a forward, turned and chipped the ball over a defender in front of the net to George, who hit a low drive to the left of Anderson and into the back of the net.

"Even though he's a sophomore, Tyrone is a veteran of the game of soccer," Ross head coach Jeff Pendry said. "He knows where to be and when to be there. It was proof again tonight. ... One of his best attributes is that when the opportunity is there, he tends to finish."

Said George, "I got some good assists from my teammates and had some follow-ups."

Pendry was encouraged by the contributions of Ross's varsity neophytes. Wilhelm did not play soccer last season.

"Blair is a freshman who we expected to make an immediate impact. He had a nice assist," he said. "We're getting contributions from guys who haven't played varsity before. That's nice to see."

The Ross defense controlled the action for much of the night,



News-Messenger/Ben French

LUKE McELFRESH of Ross gains control of the ball during Wednesday's victory over Findlay at Kelsey Hayes Field.

especially in the second half. The Trojans managed only four shots on goal for the match. Ross junior goalkeeper Anthony Weiker recorded three saves in his first varsity shutout.

"We had expectations going into the game," Pendry said. "De-

fensively, I think they met their expectations. Offensively, I'm sure they were expecting more."

Ross travels to state powerhouse North Olmsted on Saturday. The Little Giants shocked the Eagles, 3-1, last season at Kelsey Hayes Field.

BOYS SOCCER

Ross 2, Napoleon 2

NAPOLEON — The Fremont Ross soccer team battled back from a 2-0 halftime deficit, but settled for a tie with Napoleon.

Mike Lozano scored the first Little Giant goal in the 13th minute of the second half, and teammage Jaime Ramirez followed up with a goal in the 20th minute.

Luke McElfresh and Matt Salas led the Ross defense with 10 intercepts apiece, while Daryl Copley and Derek Sprouse each had nine intercepts.

The Little Giants host Toledo St. Francis today.

BOYS SOCCER

Whitmer 3, Ross 2

TOLEDO — The Panthers scored three second-half goals to hand Ross its first GLL loss of the season on Tuesday.

Scott Cook's indirect kick in the 34th minute of the second half gave Whitmer the victory.

Blair Ellenberger and Matt Salas scored the goals for the Little Giants (1-3-2, 1-1-1 GLL). Goalkeeper Anthony Weiker had three saves, while Daryl Copley, Rob Straight and Salas had 11 intercepts apiece.

Ross hosts Clay at 5 p.m. today on Parents Night. Parents are asked to be at Kelsey Hayes Field by 4:30 p.m.

Giants regain footing in GLL

By **TIMOTHY R. WOLFRUM**

Sports editor

The Fremont Ross boys soccer team had a couple irritating losses on its mind at the beginning of Thursday's match against Oregon Clay.

The Little Giants still smarted from Tuesday's 3-2 Great Lakes League loss at Toledo Whitmer, and the veterans remembered well last year's upset loss to Clay on Parents Night.

But Ross salvaged its pain with early goals by Tyrone George and Jaime Ramirez then ran away with the match in the second half on the way to a 6-0 victory at Kelsey Hayes Field.

George, Ramirez and Luke McElfresh each punched in a pair of goals as the Little Giants (2-4-2, 2-1-1 GLL) regained their footing in the league race on this season's Parents Night.



McELFRESH

"We thought we should have beat Whitmer," said McElfresh, who connected on two second-half penalty kicks. "We outplayed them; we just couldn't convert."

"Tonight, we had to come out and start off right."

Ross head coach Jeff Pendry said Thursday's match was a must-win for his team, which has won the past two league crowns. Last season, Ross had just clinched the GLL title when it lost to Clay, a team it had beaten 9-1 earlier in the campaign.

"For the most part, these guys were just trying to rebound from the Whitmer game on Tuesday," Pendry said. "We're in a situation now because of Whitmer that we pretty much have to win out."

Neither Whitmer nor Napoleon, which tied Ross on Sept. 3, has suffered a league loss. But the Panthers and Wildcats must play each other twice and come to Fremont before the GLL race is decided.

See ROSS, B3

Ross blanks Clay to avenge Parents Night defeat

Continued From B1

The Little Giants wasted no time taking control of Thursday's match. George hopped on a loose ball in front of the net and lined it into the net in the second minute of play.

In the 11th minute, Ramirez got a pass from George on the right side of the goal and wound up for a 15-yard shot to give Ross the 2-0 lead it would take into halftime.

Clay head coach Tom Gladieux said Ross's ball control was the key to the match.

"They moved it from one side to the other, up and down," the fourth-year coach said. "I could see that was going to kill us. I was

definitely impressed with their working the ball around in the middle."

Ross also dominated possession of the ball, winning most of the loose balls. The Little Giants took 24 shots to Clay's three.

"Coach has been emphasizing that a lot," McElfresh said. "He really wants us to challenge more, so that's what we're trying to do."

McElfresh opened the second-half scoring after he was fouled in the box with 29:05 to play. His penalty kick was low and beat the Clay goalkeeper just inside the left post.

McElfresh, the team's designated penalty kicker, got another try with 21:44 to play in the second

half after George was fouled in front of the goal. This time, McElfresh's kick was right at the goalkeeper, but it glanced off his hands and into the net.

"Every year, we do a preseason drill with PKs (penalty kicks)," Pendry said. "The guy who wins takes PKs until he misses. That's Luke. Those were the first two he had, and he executed them well."

Said McElfresh, "I don't practice them very much. I can get the first one in most of the time, but the second one, it's tough confusing them."

George scored with 24:35 left when the ball squirted away from the Clay goalkeeper, and Ramirez wrapped up the scoring with 14:10

remaining when he headed in a corner kick from Derek Sprouse.

Ross goalkeeper Anthony Weiker recorded the shutout with three saves.

The Little Giants played Thursday's match with only 12 players, which means they had only one reserve. The Ross roster of 13 varsity players — sophomore Adam Wilhelm played with the junior varsity — is hurting the Little Giants.

"It's slowing progress," Pendry said. "The other thing it's doing is that most of our games are good, quality soccer games for 50 or 60 minutes. Then we kind of hit that fatigue wall."

Ross is at Sylvania Northview on Saturday.

News-Messenger reports

Jaime Ramirez and Adam Wilhelm scored goals for Ross as the Little Giants won a non-league boys soccer battle 2-1 over Toledo Central Catholic on Thursday at Kelsey Hayes Field.

Ramirez tallied a goal in the 10th minute of the first half on a feed from Matt Salas. Wilhelm scored just before halftime on a pass from Blair Ellenberger.

Central Catholic's lone goal in the 20th minute of the second half.

Derek Sprouse and Daryl Copley led the Ross defense.

Ross is at Findlay at 7 p.m. Tuesday.

Ross slips in bid for league 3-peat

Napoleon takes over second place with 1-0 victory

By TIMOTHY R. WOLFRUM
Sports editor

The prospects for a third straight Great Lakes League championship dimmed Thursday for the Fremont Ross boys soccer team when the Little Giants failed to find the net against Napoleon.

The Wildcats scored the match's only goal late in the first half when midfielder Alex Cobb broke free from the Ross defense and beat goalkeeper Anthony Weiker just inside the near post.

Napoleon's defense made Cobb's goal stand up for a 1-0 victory at Kelsey Hayes Field to take sole possession of second place in the GLL race.

Ross (5-6-2, 4-2-1 GLL) trails Napoleon (7-2-2, 4-1-1 GLL) by a match and first-place Whitmer by a match and a tie with three matches remaining. The Little Giants host Whitmer on Tuesday.

"It's definitely not over," Ross head coach Jeff Pendry said. "It's a case now where we need other teams to help us out. ... We need things to happen against Napoleon and Whitmer for us to get it."

The Little Giants and Wildcats tied 2-2 on Sept. 3 at Napoleon and played an even match Thursday. This time, though, the Wildcats had just enough defense to hold off Ross.

"The kids knew where we were at," Napoleon head coach Tim Carney said. "Actually, we're in a big stretch of our season. We have eight games over 14 days and tournament seedings coming up on Sunday. We felt we had to win three out of four

at least to get a good seed. The guys were pretty motivated."

Ross, which outshot its opponent 5-4, wasted a strong game by Weiker and his defense and missed a couple point-blank opportunities to score.

Weiker made three sliding saves, one of them on a first-half penalty kick by Napoleon's Greg Keller. Derek Sprouse and Daryl Copley led the defense with 10 and eight intercepts, respectively.

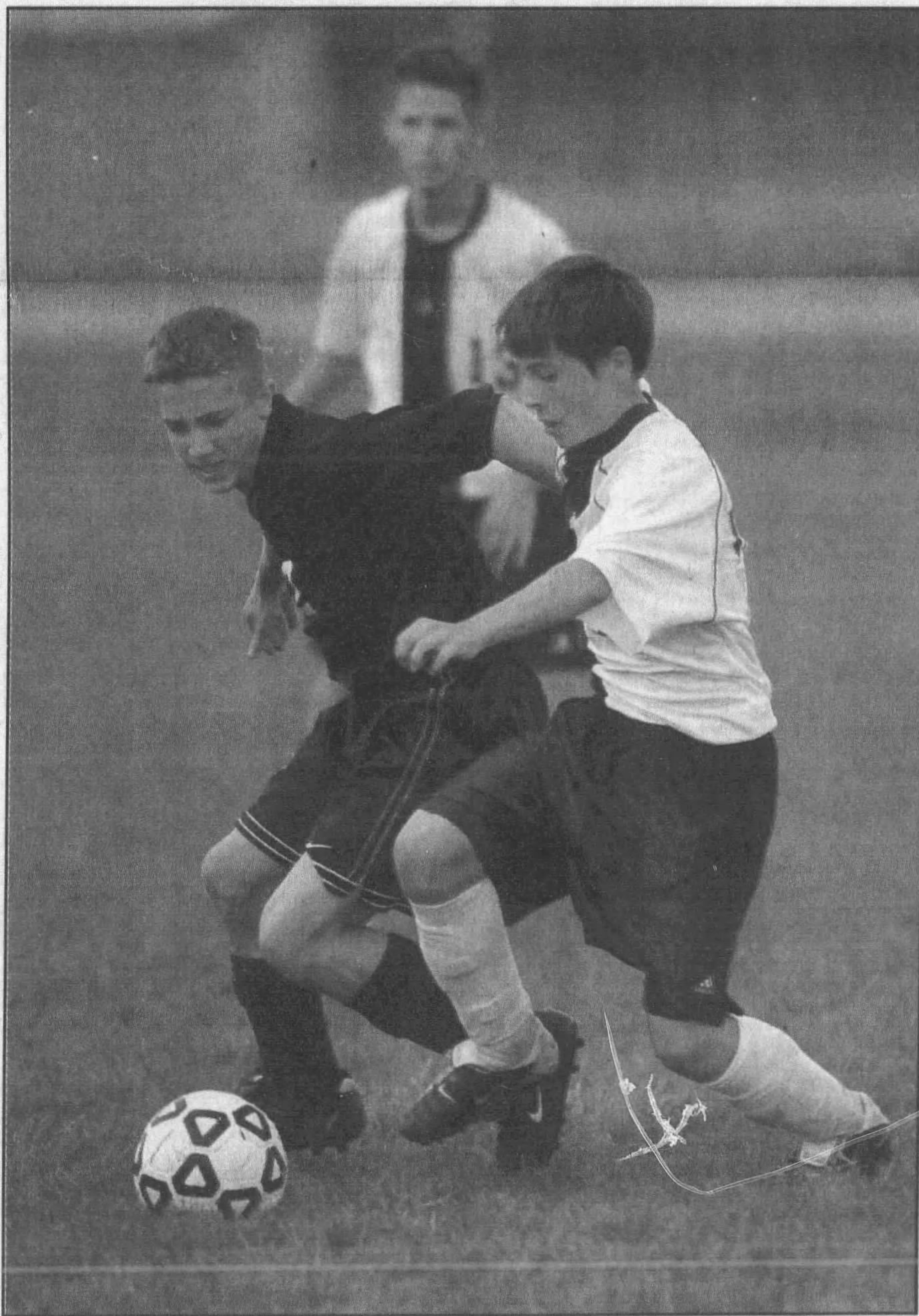
"The defense played well again. ... I think Weiker improves as he gains confidence. I think the PK he saved earlier in the game helped him out," Pendry said.

Ross sophomore Tyrone George got his team's best two chances to score. George's shot from straight on hit the left post midway through the first half. Early in the second half, George headed a strong crossing pass from Jaime Ramirez on goal, but Napoleon goalkeeper Ryan Dietrich deflected the ball over the crossbar.

"Our best opportunities in the game came off of Tyrone's head and his foot," Pendry said. "We had plenty of other opportunities, but we kind of wasted them. We didn't put many shots on net, and that's what hurt."

Said Carney of his defense, "They were scrapping today. They were getting the ball out when they needed to. The keeper came up with one huge save on their best opportunity of the second half."

See ROSS, B2



News-Messenger photos/Ben French

BLAIR ELLENBERGER, above right, of Ross fights a Napoleon defender for the ball Thursday during a Great Lakes League soccer match at Kelsey Hayes Field. Top left, Jaime Ramirez of Ross sticks his nose into the action.

BOYS SOCCER

Ross 4, Clay 1

OREGON — Jaime Ramirez scored twice as the Little Giants won a GLL matchup.

Ramirez opened the Ross scoring midway through the first half on an assist from Nick Rowan. Matt Salas followed that goal with one of his own before the half ended.

Robbie Straight opened the second-half scoring with a goal from about 30 yards. Ramirez then scored on a cross from Adam Wilhelm three minutes later.

Clay's lone goal came from Sean Kaign, who scored in the 30th minute of the first half.

Ross (7-6-2, 4-2-1 GLL) hosts Sandusky at 5 p.m. Thursday.

The Little Giants will open Division I sectional tournament play against Bowling Green at 5 p.m. Oct. 16 in Findlay.

Giants defend league crowns

Ross boys win; Findlay helps

News-Messenger reports

After a loss to Napoleon on Sept. 26, the Fremont Ross boys soccer team's hopes for a third straight Great Lakes League title seemed far-fetched.

But the Little Giants, who trailed league leader Whitmer by a match and a half with three to play, did their part by winning their final three league matches.

Meanwhile, everything else broke just right.

Ross closed out its regular season with a 10-0 victory over Sandusky on Thursday at Kelsey-Hayes Field, then

PENDRY

LOZANO

got the news that Findlay had tied Whitmer.

That handed the Little Giants (8-6-2, 7-2-1 GLL) an outright league crown for the third straight season.

"It's very nice," Ross head coach Jeff Pendry said on his way home from watching the end of the Whitmer-Findlay match. "The guys don't even know it yet."

"We had to have a slew of things happen after we lost to Napoleon. They all happened."

Whitmer and Napoleon each finished with 6-2-2 league records. The Findlay Gold team was responsible for much of the help Ross received.

The Trojans defeated Napoleon to knock the Wildcats out of contention then pulled off the tie against Whitmer on Thursday.

Napoleon and Whitmer tied against each other as well.

The Little Giants had an easy time holding up their end Thursday night. Mike Lozano, Jaime Ramirez and Nick Rowan each had two goals. Blair Ellenberger, Adam Wilhelm, Matt Salas and Tyrone George also tallied goals.

Salas had three assists, George a pair. Ramirez and Daryl Copley added single assists.

Ross outshot Sandusky 27-3. Derek Sprouse and Rob Straight led the Little Giant defense with 11 intercepts apiece. Goalkeeper Anthony Weiker contributed two saves.

Ross meets Bowling Green at 5 p.m. Wednesday in the Division I sectional at Findlay.

GLL rewards Salas with top player nod

Davies to run at NAIA Nationals

News-Messenger reports

His coach didn't have a vote, but it didn't matter.

Fremont Ross junior Matt Salas had already taken it upon himself to convince the other Great Lakes League coaches he was worthy.

Ross head boys soccer coach Jeff Pendry wasn't allowed to vote for one of his own players as GLL Player of the Year. But Salas was named the league's top player in postseason balloting anyway.

"Matt is probably the best all-around player we have," Pendry said. "We have some that are better than him on offense and some that are better than him on defense.



SALAS

But in terms of both, he's a tremendous assest on the field. When he came off the field because of i n j u r y ,

there was certainly a void."

Salas was the Little Giants' third-leading scorer with five goals and four assists for 14 points. He was named to the All-Northwest District second team, while teammates Tyrone George

See ROSS, B3



Varsity Soccer: Top Row- Anthony Damschroder, Adam Wilhelm, Danny Chavez, Mike Lozano, Derek Sprouse, Luke McElfresh, Nick Rowan, Matt Salas.

Bottom Row-Jaime Ramirez, Blair Ellenberger, Rob Straight, Anthony Weiker, Jason Damschroder, Daryl Copley.