

# Sandusky inside-the-park home run stings Smith, Little Giants

By TIM HARMON

Staff writer

PLYMOUTH — Sandusky catcher Eric Irby's bat, silent for most of two games against Fremont Ross this season, awoke with a boom Saturday.

Irby provided momentum for the Blue Streaks to defeat the Little Giants 3-2 in a Division I sectional tournament game with one swing and sent Sandusky into the sectional title game against Ashland.

Irby's inside-the-park home run in the bottom of the seventh broke up Aaron Smith no-hitter and forced an extra inning.

"Eric is that kind of player," Sandusky coach Bil Deming said. "Everybody

strikes out (four times in two games against Ross, including once Saturday) once in awhile, but he's had some big hits for us."

With Ross leading 2-0 and Smith cruising, the Sandusky seventh started with a lead-off walk to winning pitcher Todd Kaufman.

After Scott Root made a diving catch in center field to keep the no-hitter going, Smith left a fastball out over the plate and Irby launched it to center. Root went back, dove and smashed into the fence. Shaken from the collision, Root lay prone as the ball settled and Irby raced around second.

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