

Kids want .750, but .500-plus would be great, says coach

By TIM HARMON
Staff writer

Good, but not great, hitting, adequate defense and questionable pitching.

With those ingredients, the Ross High School baseball team will look to improve upon last year's 15-13 record. At least that's the plan as the Little Giants prepare for their season opener Wednesday at Mansfield Madison.

"With our schedule, if we finish around .500, and I want to be above .500, I think the kids will have done a super job," said Ross Coach Dan Fought. "The kids have set high goals. There is not much of a league championship to speak of, so they want to win 75 percent of their games and make it to the district."

The Little Giants, who will

need to win a best of three series against Findlay May 12 and 14 for the right to play Lancaster, Zanesville or Newark for the Buckeye Central Conference championship, have seven returning letterman.

Craig Raney, a second team All-Buckeye Conference performer last year, and Bob Hrynciw, an honorable mention pick, are back along with Talbot Aldrich, Aaron Meade, Tony Patrick, Mark Gonzales and Mike Zelms.

Zelms, the Little Giants leading hitter last year, will miss the first week of the season with stretched tendons in his ankle.

"The biggest strength of this team is it's working attitude," said Fought. "I wouldn't say there is great talent in any one area, but the team concept has come a long way since we

started."

Pitching, which Fought said might not be as bad as he anticipated, is the key to how well the Little Giants will fare against "some of the tougher teams in Toledo and some of the tougher teams in Mansfield."

Patrick, Hrynciw and Raney head the pitching staff which could balloon to include more than half of the 19-man roster. Gone from last year's squad are stalwarts John Stierwalt and Andy Peterson.

"Our pitchers have surprised me," said Fought. "I didn't think they would have progressed as much as they have."

Juniors Ron Hamil and Brad Hammond and sophomore left-hander Shane McConnell round out the bulk of the staff.

"I have 10 guys I could throw at you," Fought said, "but how

they develop..."

"I don't think it will be the big inning that wins games for us. If our pitchers hold the opposition to three runs or less, I think we can score four. If they give up more than three runs a game, we will be in trouble."

That puts a lot of pressure on the defense.

"Our defense has come a long way, and we've got some good leaders," said Fought. "You build you defense up the middle, and we have a good basis."

Hrynciw and Meade are two-year starters in center field and at second base respectively. Gonzales played a half season at shortstop last year, and Aldrich, who Fought said will make 85 percent of the calls behind the plate, gained experience last year as Shawn Overmyer's backup.

Raney is the Ross first baseman, juniors Chad Hickman and Bill Hrynciw are fighting for the third base spot and McConnell and fellow sophomore Scott Meizinger will man the other two outfield positions. Patrick will play first base and center field when Raney and Bob Hrynciw are pitching.

Offensively, the lineup lacks power with the exception of Raney and Hamil, who will DH when not on the mound as the fourth starter.

"We're going to be a pressure team," said Fought. "We have some hitters who can put the ball in play, and when we go on we're going to make things happen."

"We'll do whatever we have to to create pressure on the defense."

Ross downs Madison in baseball opener 4-3

News-Messenger reports

MANSFIELD — Dan Fought had the final score of Ross High School's opening baseball game mapped out long before the season began.

"I was saying that we had to hold our opponents to three runs and we had to score four," Fought said after his team beat Mansfield Madison 4-3 Wednesday night. "It's nice that it worked out so well."

The Little Giants rode the arms of Craig Raney and Bob Hrynciw and the bats of Mark Gonzales and Scott Mezinger to make their coach look like a genius.

Raney pitched 5½ innings, giving up two runs on four hits to get the win before tiring. Hrynciw closed to get the save, giving up the final run.

"Raney pitched a super game, but he kind of ran out of gas in the sixth," Fought said. "Craig lost a little control, but Hrynciw did the job when we needed him."

After striking out five, Raney walked three batters in the sixth before giving way to Hrynciw. Madison closed to within 4-3 on two runs in the sixth, but Hrynciw slammed the door in the seventh.

Gonzales drove in what turned out to be the winning run in the top of the sixth when he singled in Talbot Aldrich.

Ross had taken a 3-0 lead in the first inning on a two-out bases loaded double by Mezinger. Hrynciw started the inning by reaching base on an error. Meade, who had two hits, followed with a double and Raney walked before Mezinger cleared the bases.

Titans steal 8-1 win over Ross

By TIM HARMON
Staff writer

Toledo St. John's ran its way to an 8-1 non-conference baseball victory over Ross Tuesday at Anderson Field.

The Titans added seven stolen bases to a fine pitching performance by Chris Beier and an offense that made the most out of seven hits. St. John's, 2-1, scored two runs in the first inning — the only one's it would need — and Ross, 1-1, never got untracked.

"That's not the way you like to open the home season," said Ross Coach Dan Fought.

The signs of a rough performance for Ross starter and loser Craig Raney were posted when Ted Cothern opened the game with a double. After a strike out,

Matt Dzierwa also fanned, but reached first on an error by Ross catcher Talbot Aldrich.

Cothern scored on a single by Beier and Dzierwa rode home on a bases-loaded walk to Pat Lindsley.

St. John's had control of the game, and Beier and the Titan defense kept control.

"Chris did a nice job throwing strikes, which he has had trouble doing lately," said St. John's Coach Joe Nye, "and we made some good plays in the field. There is no doubt about that."

It didn't help matters that Ross hit the ball right at people.

The Little Giants stranded six runners, including three in the third inning. Their biggest threat came in the fifth, but a base run-

ning blunder turned a potentially big inning into a one-run affair.

Aldrich and Bob Hrynciw opened the fifth with singles. After a strike out, Beier tried to pick Aldrich off second but threw errantly allowing Aldrich to advance to third. Hrynciw, though, got caught between first and third for the second out of the inning.

Raney then delivered an RBI single for Ross's only run.

"We might have had a big inning," said Fought. "You never know, but we ran ourselves out of it with that play, and we can't do that because we don't have the firepower to get back in it."

While Ross struggled, St. John's continually had runners in scoring position.

"We steal until we're thrown out," said Nye. "It puts a little pressure on the defense."

Aldrich did catch Matt Smith attempting to steal third in the third inning, but...

"Getting caught just makes us slow down a bit before we try to run again," said Nye.

And the Titans knew when to run.

"They picked the right pitch," said Fought. "They ran every time (Raney) threw the slow curve ball."

St. John's went ahead 4-0 on Jim Fought's third inning home run. The Titans added a run in the fifth inning on a sacrifice fly by Jeff Sabin after a Cothern triple and capped the scoring with a three-run sixth.

Ross earns win over Perkins

By TIM HARMON
Staff writer

The Ross Little Giants won a baseball game the old-fashioned way Tuesday. They earned it.

The Little Giants, who let a 4-0 lead slip away, scored four runs in the sixth inning then held on for an 8-7 victory over Sandusky Perkins at Anderson Field.

Ross's second victory in three games was an adventure to say the least. Craig Raney, who picked up the win in relief of Tony Patrick, walked five batters in the seventh inning before striking out Dave Sinblebine with the bases loaded.

"It wasn't pretty, but we got the job done," said Ross Coach Dan Fought.

Tony Patrick and the Perkins' defense almost made the Little Giants' first game in a week a breeze. Patrick, making his first start of the season, gave up just one hit and disposed of the Pirates through five innings on 53 pitches.

He had a no-hitter before losing pitcher Bryan Lippus broke up the gem with a base hit leading off the fifth.

The roof, however, caved in in the sixth when Perkins, 0-3, erupted for five runs on four hits. The big blow was a three-run double by Johnny Walker. Jim Guererra added a two-run single.

"I didn't think (Patrick) would tire that quick," said Fought. "He just hit the dead zone."

"I felt we had the game in control. (The Pirates) shocked me when they got the runs off Tony."

Patrick faced the minimum number of batters through four innings, allowing only a walk to Jeff Lewis. Lewis was wiped out as part of an unconventional double play. Scott Terry got tagged

Weiker fires no-hitter

News-Messenger reports

Rob Weiker pitched a no-hitter and the Ross junior varsity baseball team defeated Sandusky Perkins 10-0 Tuesday.

Weiker faced 22 batters, striking out 11 and walking just two.

The Little Giants' offense was led by Marco Sanchez, who had two hits, and Brian Gillis, who had two RBI.

out in a rundown after Lewis was forced at second.

"I was a little nervous because we got no-hit in our opener against Bellevue," said Perkins Coach Doug Mehling.

Ross scored three runs in the second inning on three hits and three Perkins' errors. Shane McConnell, who had three hits, had an RBI single. Chad Hickman delivered a run-scoring triple and Talbot Aldrich added a sacrifice fly.

The Little Giants made it 4-0 in the third inning when Tate Young stole second, went to third on a throwing error by Walker and scored on a sacrifice fly by Scott Mezinger. Young pinch-ran for Raney, who reached base on an error to open the inning.

After the Pirates batted around in the top half of the sixth, Ross did the same in the home half.

McConnell, Hickman, Aldrich and Aaron Meade started the inning with consecutive singles. Aldrich's hit scored McConnell. Hickman later scored on a wild pitch and Aldrich scored on a single by Raney.

Meade was forced at the plate, but Bob Hrynciw, who walked, stole home for what proved to be the game-winning run.



FREMONT ST. JOE'S Tim Meek slides into third base under the tag of Port Clinton's Dave Grady

during the Streaks' 23-3 romp Tuesday at Port Clinton High School.

Streaks club Redskins 23-3

News-Messenger reports

The St. Joseph Central Catholic baseball team improved to 5-2 with a 23-3 shellacking of Port Clinton Tuesday at Port Clinton.

The Streaks pounded out 18 hits, took advantage of six Redskin errors and got a complete game pitching performance from Tim Meek.

In other action, Mohawk defeated Clyde 12-6, Lakota pounded St. Wendelin 18-8, Margaretta drilled Plymouth 19-4, St. Francis beat Genoa 14-2 and Lake crushed Woodmore 17-6.

Brad Young led the offense with three hits and five RBI and Meek helped his cause with three hits and two RBI. Mike Foos added a pinch-hit, three-run homer.

"Everybody hit, but I had no idea we would score 23 runs," said St. Joe Coach Mike Gabel. "Some kids hit the ball better than I thought they would."

"We have been getting better and better every game, and I just hope it continues."

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Meek struck out 13 batters and walked only three in picking up his first win. Kip Krupp took the loss for Port Clinton, which lost for the first time in five games.

Dave Grady had two hits, including a home run, for the Redskins.

In a junior varsity game between the schools at Fremont, the Redskins edged the Streaks 6-3 in eight innings. Scott Calton knocked in the game-winning run for the winners.

Mohawk 12, Clyde 6

Mohawk scored one run in the first inning, two each in the second, third and fifth and plated five runs in the fourth en route to victory.

Clyde, 1-6, had four extra base hits, including seventh inning home runs from Mike McClanahan and losing pitcher Gary Corthell. Mike Carter had a triple and Dvae Gregg, who had three hits and two RBI, added a double.

Tim Carn picked up the win for Mohawk.

Lakota 18, St. Wendelin 8

The Raiders supported winning pitcher Larry DeBock with 11 hits and overcame six errors as they improved to 4-2.

Kent Chalfin had two hits and two RBI.

Brandon Peluso took the loss as St. Wendelin slipped to 0-4.

Margaretta 19, Plymouth 4

Mike Lyons pitched 6½ innings in his first varsity start and the Polar Bears collected 14 hits to remain unbeaten in four games.

Lyons struck out four and walked just one. Dan Armbricht got the final out for the save.

Steve Birmingham led the offense with three hits and four RBI. Dan Smith also had four hits. Lyons helped his cause with two and Brandon Biehl had three RBI.

St. Francis 14, Genoa 2

At Toledo, St. Francis scored six runs in the first inning and

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Hryniciw fires no-hitter

Ross raps 'Skins 9-0

By TIM HARMON
Staff writer

For the second time in two days, a Fremont Ross pitcher twirled a no-hitter.

Bob Hryniciw did the honors Wednesday, blanking the Port Clinton Redskins 9-0 at Anderson Field.

The no-hitter came on the heels of Ross freshman Rob Weiker's gem against the Sandusky Perkins reserve team Tuesday.

Hryniciw was in command after overcoming early control problems. The senior walked five batters in the first four innings. He struck out six, including the side in the third inning.

On the flip side of the coin, Port Clinton's Troy Grindstaff labored six innings for the loss. Grindstaff gave up 11 hits and was the victim of five Redskin errors.

He struck out seven and walked one. Ross, though, complicated things with five stolen bases.

"It feels really great," said Hryniciw. "It's my first no-hitter."

The normally outspoken Hryniciw took the game in stride, as did Ross Coach Dan Fought.

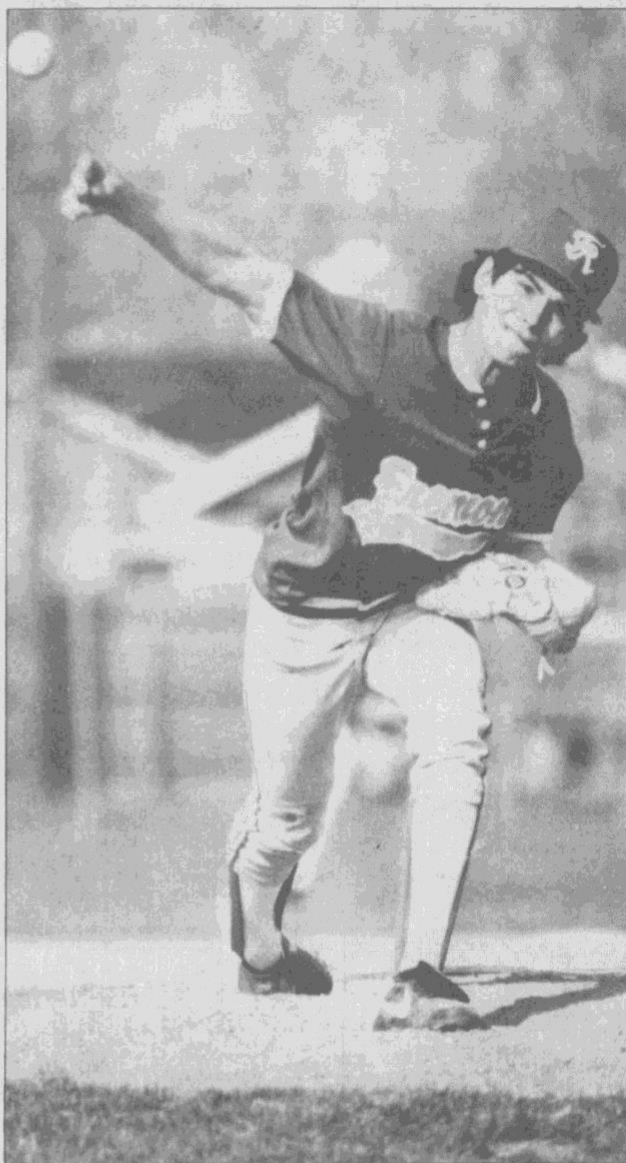
"He did a nice job," Fought said. "That was the best mental performance he's had since he's been a pitcher at Ross."

"He was zoned with the curveball and was around the plate. We (Fought and assistant coach Tom Woleslagel) told him to stay out of the middle of the strike zone and work the corners, and that's what he did."

Hryniciw, who threw 104 pitches, relied mainly on the curveball.

"I throw the curveball for strikes better than I do the fastball," Hryniciw said. "That's what I went to in the middle innings when I weakened."

Ross supported Hryniciw, who allowed only two balls out of the infield, with solid defense. The Little Giants turned in 11 ground ball outs.



News-Messenger/Terry Reimer

BOB HRYNCIW of Fremont Ross hurls one of the many unhittable pitches to a Port Clinton batter Wednesday on the way to a no-hitter.

Third baseman Talbot Aldrich did the bulk of the work with eight assists.

The Little Giants got the only runs they needed in the first inning on an RBI double by Craig Raney, a run-scoring ground out by Scott Mezinger and an RBI single by Shane McConnell.

McConnell added a single in the third inning before ending his consecutive hit streak at

five with a run-scoring fielder's choice out in the fourth.

"We were putting the ball in play," said Fought. "When we do that, a lot of good things will happen for us."

Ross, 3-1, made it 5-0 in the second inning. Aaron Meade, who had three hits, singled to start the inning and went to third on a errant pickoff at-

Ross

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tempt. He scored when Grindstaff threw wildly after fielding Hrynciw's roller in front of the mound. Hrynciw scored on a single by Raney, who also had three hits.

The Little Giants capped the scoring in the fourth inning. Meade and Raney sandwiched base hits around a flyout. After a double steal, Meade scored on a single by Mezinger and McConnell brought home Raney. Ron Hamil then cleared the bases with a triple.

"We've got a lot of work to do," said Port Clinton Coach Dan Timmons. "We've got a lot of work to do to get ready for Monday.

"Hrynciw pitched a great game; he really kept us off balance."

It was the second straight loss for the Redskins, who opened the season with four consecutive wins.

Late rally provides victory

News-Messenger reports

Ross pushed a run across in the bottom of the seventh to nip Maumee 10-9 and Fremont St. Joseph Central Catholic opened the Midland Athletic League baseball season with a 6-2 win over Seneca East Thursday.

In other games Thursday, Lakota tripped Clyde 16-9, Oak Harbor beat Danbury 9-7, Hopewell-Loudon crushed Bettsville 19-8, Bellevue dumped Port Clinton 11-3, Genoa topped Toledo Waite 5-1, and Toledo Woodward defeated Woodmore 16-7.

Ross scored six runs in the last two innings to defeat Maumee at Anderson Field. Trailing 9-4, the Little Giants tied the game with a five-run sixth. Chad Hickman started the rally with a walk, Bob Hrynciw followed with a single and Mark Gonzales walked, loading the bases.

Talbot Aldrich singled in a run and Aaron Meade's grounder to first produced another RBI. Scott Mezinger followed with a run-scoring base hit and Craig Raney's sacrifice fly made it 9-8. Mike Zelms' singled in the tying run.

In the Ross seventh, Johnny Mallia had an infield single and on Hrynciw's sacrifice, both runners were safe when Hrynciw beat the throw to first. Mallia scored the win-

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Baseball

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ning run on Gonzales' bunt single and an overthrow at first.

Hrynciw had two hits and two RBI and Mezinger and Zelms had two hits apiece for Ross, 4-1. Maumee is 3-3.

Ross win streak reaches 4 games

News-Messenger reports

The Ross baseball team won its fourth straight game Saturday, defeating Bellevue 8-4 at Anderson Field.

In the only other game played Saturday, Oak Harbor defeated Genoa 4-3.

Ross overcame a three-run deficit as it improved to 5-1 behind the complete game pitching of Craig Raney.

Bellevue, 5-3, scored two runs in the first inning and added one in the third before the Little Giants offense got untracked in the home half of the third.

The Little Giants tied the score on an RBI double by Mike Zelms, a run-scoring single by

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Raney and a sacrifice fly by Scott Mezinger.

The teams traded runs in the fourth inning before Mezinger and Shane McConnell produced the game-winner with back-to-back doubles in the fifth.

The Little Giants capped the scoring with three runs in the sixth.

Mark Gonzalez and McConnell had two hits apiece for Ross.

Raney struck out seven and walked only one. Two of the four runs he allowed were unearned.

Brad Bannister took the loss for the Redmen.

Oak Harbor 4, Genoa 3

Trailing 3-2, the Rockets scored an unearned run in the sixth inning and one in the seventh to defeat the Comets for the second time this season.

Jamey Rollheiser tripled and scored on a wild pitch in the sixth inning, tying the game. In the seventh, Rick Ferguson provided the game-winning RBI with a single after a walk to Rich Schultz and a single by Bret Johns.

Bryan Taylor got the mound victory while Ron Kwiatkowski took the loss.

Jim Plantz and Mike Kaylor each had a double among their two hits for Genoa.

Both teams are 4-4.

Ross tops Columbian for fifth straight win

News-Messenger reports

Craig Raney and Shane McConnell had three hits each and Raney scored the winning run as the Fremont Ross baseball team won its fifth straight game Tuesday, a 13-6 victory over Columbian in Tiffin.

In other games, Danbury defeated Bettsville 10-6, Gibsonburg topped Tiffin Calvert 5-1, Sandusky edged Margaretta 4-3 and Genoa outslugged Lake 14-10.

Tony Patrick and Bob Hrynciw combined on a seven-hitter with Patrick getting the victory, his second. Duane Tyree was the loser for Columbian, 4-5.

Raney scored what turned out

High School Baseball

to be the winning run in the fourth inning on a sacrifice fly by Mark Gonzales. Raney led off with a single, moved to second when McConnell was hit by a pitch, and went to third on a fly out by Hrynciw before scoring.

Raney and Hrynciw helped Ross, 6-1, chase Tyree by hitting second inning homers to stake Ross to a 6-2 lead. With two outs, Raney hit a solo shot. After a walk to McConnell, Hrynciw followed with a two-run blast.

McConnell's three hits Tuesday makes him 11-for-18 for the season.

Patrick and John Mallia both

added doubles for the Little Giants and Aaron Meade had a pair of singles.

Danbury 10, Bettsville 6

Danbury got in the win column for the first time this season.

The Lakers collected 16 hits, including four by Jamie Wadsworth, and Matt Hudak had four RBI to support winning pitcher Brian Sauvey.

Ron Wise had two hits and two RBI for Bettsville, which slipped to 2-5.

Gibsonburg 5, Calvert 1

Gibsonburg hurler Lupe Arriaga gave up 10 hits but he was aided by the Golden Bears' defense, which helped keep The Senecas in check.

The Bears, who improved to 3-2, score four runs in the fifth inning for the margin of victory.

Sandusky 4, Margaretta 3

The Polar Bears lost for the first time in six games and Sandusky remained unbeaten in eight as Jeff Keegan got the mound victory over Dan Smith.

Genoa 14, Lake 10

The Comets scored 11 runs in the first inning then held on for the win.

Jim Plantz had three hits and three RBI to pace Genoa, which improved to 6-4. Mike Gose, Steve Smith, Brad Witt, Mike Kaylor and Jeff Benavides each had two hits and Eric Wolfe added three RBI.

Little Giants edge BG

News-Messenger reports

The Ross baseball team defeated Bowling Green 5-3 in the first game of a scheduled double-header Saturday.

The second game of the twinbill was called in the third inning with Ross leading 15-9 because of high winds.

In one other game Saturday, Toledo Woodward edged Oak Harbor 5-4.

Craig Raney got the win for the Little Giants, who broke a 3-3 tie with two runs in the seventh inning. Raney, who improved to 4-1, walked just two and fanned seven in the complete game win.

Bob Hrynciw and Aaron Meade led the offense with three hits apiece. Aldrich had two RBI

and Hrynciw scored twice.

John Paxson, who had two hits for Bowling Green, took the loss.

Ross improved to 7-1 and BG fell to 4-4.

Woodward 5, Oak Harbor 4

An unearned run, one of three allowed by the Rockets in the game, was the difference as Oak Harbor slipped to 6-7.

In the seventh inning, Woodward's Dave Willard singled, moved to second on a hit batsman and scored on back-to-back wild pitched by losing pitcher Mark Rutherford.

Mike Glusko and Rick Ferguson had two hits each for Oak Harbor.

Joe Morales was the winning pitcher for Woodward, which improved to 8-7.

St. Joe flips over seed; Ross No. 2 at Norwalk

By TIM HARMON
Staff writer

The top seed in the Old Fort Class A sectional baseball tournament was decided by a coin flip Tuesday night.

That was the only way the coaches at the draw could separate Fremont St. Joseph Central Catholic and Sandusky St. Mary's. The flip was necessary after a tie in the initial vote forced a second vote, which also ended in a tie.

St. Joe, 10-2, won the toss and thus receives a bye while St. Mary's, 10-1, will play Norwalk St. Paul, 1-8, at 2 p.m. Saturday.

"I've never seen a tie, let alone two," said St. Joe Coach Mike Gabel. "My main goal was to be opposite St. Mary's. I was hoping for No. 1 or No. 2 and luckily we got No. 1."

The Panthers defeated the Streaks 6-4 on April 4.

St. Joe will play the winner of Saturday's sectional opener between host Old Fort, 4-8, and Danbury, 3-5, at noon, May 7.

In the lower half's other game, Arcadia, 3-10, will play Western Reserve, 7-6, at 4:30 p.m. Monday with the winner scheduled to play the St. Mary's-St. Paul win-

Hrynciw difference as Ross tops Clyde

News-Messenger reports

Ross and Clyde combined for just nine hits and the Little Giants were fortunate to come away with a 4-2 victory over the Fliers in a high school baseball game at Clyde Tuesday.

Bob Hrynciw was the difference, besting mound opponent Mike Carter for the victory. Ross improved to 8-1 while the Fliers slipped to 3-11.

In other games, St. Joe topped North Baltimore 7-5 and Genoa defeated Sylvania Southview 13-5.

"It was an awfully tough game mentally," said Ross Coach

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ner at 2 p.m., May 7.

Elsewhere, Fremont Ross was tabbed the second seed in the Norwalk Class AAA sectional. The Little Giants, 8-1, will play Mansfield Malabar, 5-8, at 4:30 p.m. Tuesday.

"We were hoping for the second seed since last week," said Ross Coach Dan Fought. "We were sure that (Sandusky) would get the No. 1 seed because the other teams (in the sectional) are more familiar with (the Blue Streaks)."

Sandusky, 11-1, will play the winner of a rat tail game between Vermilion, 4-8, and Galion, 6-6, at 4:30 p.m. Wednesday.

"Once we got seeded, I jumped

on a line and let everybody else worry about us," said Fought. "That's the first time I have done that. It's the first time I have been able to do that."

Fought said Malabar, with the seventh pill, was undecided about who it wanted to play and opted for the Little Giants to avoid the rat tail game.

Eastwood and Genoa received the first and second seeds, respectively, in the Eastwood Class AA sectional. Ironically, the Comets defeated the Eagles 14-2 last week.

Genoa, 10-4, will play Fostoria, 2-5, at 4 p.m. Saturday while Eastwood will take on the winner of Saturday's 10 a.m. sectional

opener between Clyde, 3-11, and Elmwood, 7-3.

Two teams left out in the cold as far as seeds were concerned were Lakota, 10-2, and Margaretta, 7-2. The Raiders and Polar Bears will play each other at 1 p.m. Saturday with the winner scheduled to play the Genoa-Fostoria winner.

In the lower half's other game, Sandusky Bay Conference rivals Port Clinton and Oak Harbor will play at 4:30 p.m. Monday. The Rockets, 7-7, have already defeated the Redskins, 5-6, twice this season with another regular season game still left to play.

In the New Riegel Class A sectional, Gibsonburg received the second seed behind Tiffin Calvert despite its 4-4 record. The Golden Bears will play Bettsville, 4-6, at 3 p.m. Saturday.

Calvert, 9-3, will play the winner of Saturday's 12:30 p.m. sectional opener between Hopewell-Loudon, 6-5, and Woodmore, which is winless in 10 games.

In the lower half's other game, host New Riegel, 4-7 will play Fostoria St. Wendelin, 4-8, at 4:30 p.m. Monday.

Bases

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Dan Fought. "I'm not taking anything away from Clyde, but we weren't ready to play tonight.

"The good pitching was what we needed, and we got it from Bobby (Hrynciw)."

Hrynciw struck out eight and walked five.

The Little Giants scored single runs in the first, second, fourth and seventh innings. Clyde scored solo runs in the third and the sixth.

St. Joe 7, North Baltimore 5

Jeff Blanton gave up five runs through three innings, but that was it as St. Joe came from behind to defeat North Baltimore in a Midland Athletic League game.

Trailing 5-4, the Streaks scored single runs in the fifth, sixth and seventh innings.

Chris Rivi had three hits, including a double. Scott Radde, who had two hits, and Grant Beckley, who homered, each had two RBI.

Brad Young and Jeff Overmyer, though, were a combined 0-7 from the top two spots in the batting order.

"It was nice to win with those kids not having a good night at the plate," said St. Joe Coach Mike Gabel. "The other kids came through for us."

Chris Boggs took the loss while Joe Kepling and Jeff Long had two hits apiece for North Baltimore, which fell to 4-4 and 1-2 in league play.

St. Joe improved to 10-2 and remained unbeaten in four MAL contests.

Genoa 13, Southview 5

Freshman Mike Kaylor got the win as Genoa scored nine first-inning runs and coasted.

Mike Gose had two hits and Eric Wolfe had two RBI for Genoa, which improved to 10-4.

Whitmer rains on mistake-prone Ross

News-Messenger reports

Dan Fought found a small triumph in Ross High School's 13-6 loss to Toledo Whitmer Wednesday in Fremont.

"I thought that was one of our better team efforts," Fought said after his team fell to the Panthers, the 12th-ranked Class AAA team in the Ohio Prep Baseball Coaches Poll.

"We made a lot of mistakes, but we never gave up," he added. "We hung in there as long as we could and that showed me something. It showed me we can be a good ball club."

Ross, 8-2, made things interesting in a rain-soaked game at Anderson Field when Talbot Aldrich hit a three-run homer in the bottom of the sixth inning to bring the Little Giants within 10-6.

High School Baseball

Bob Hrynciw was 2-for-4 for the Little Giants and Chad Hickman added a double. Ross's big downfall was six errors which led to nine unearned runs.

Dan Trost was the winning pitcher for Whitmer, 12-3, while Craig Raney suffered the loss.

In other games Wednesday, Eastwood belted Lakota 13-9 in nine innings, Gibsonburg topped Northwood 10-6, Port Clinton beat Perkins 16-11, and Huron edged Margaretta 7-6 in eight innings.

Eastwood 13, Lakota 9

The Eagles handed the Raiders their first Suburban Lakes

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St. Joe, Ross drop visitor from Toledo

News-Messenger reports

The Toledo Central Catholic baseball team had a rough trip to Fremont Saturday.

The Fighting Irish lost to St. Joseph Central Catholic 5-2, then followed that with a 4-1 loss to Fremont Ross.

In other games, Elmwood defeated Clyde 3-1, Lakota topped Margaretta 4-2 and Genoa beat Fostoria 10-4, all in the Eastwood Class AA sectional tournament, Hopewell-Loudon eliminated Woodmore 17-3 and Bettsville edged Gibsonburg 8-6 in the New Riegel Class A sectional and Old Fort dumped Danbury 10-4 in the Old Fort Class A sectional.

Trailing 2-1, St. Joe scored four runs in the sixth inning to make a winner of Jeff Radde, 6-1.

Radde helped his own cause with two hits and Grant Beckley

added a pair of safeties.

St. Joe Coach Mike Gabel said defense made the Streaks comeback possible.

"We made some plays defensively that kept us in the game and gave us the opportunity to come back," Gabel said.

"It was one of the biggest wins of the season for us. We came back against a triple 'A' (Class AAA) team."

St. Joe improved to 11-2.

Ross parlayed timely hitting into victory over TCC as Bob Hrynciw, 3-0, pitched a complete game.

The Little Giants, 9-3, scored single runs in the second, third, fourth and sixth innings on eight hits.

"We put the hits together," said Ross Coach Dan Fought.

See AREA, Page B-6

Area

Continued From B-1

"We put runners in scoring position and we made the most of the hits we had."

Talbot Aldrich had two hits, including a double, and two RBI for Ross and Craig Raney scored two runs.

Hrynciw struck out six and didn't walk a batter.

Ross stays aggressive, stays in tourney

By TIM HARMON
Staff writer

NORWALK — Ross's aggressive and fundamentally sound style of baseball paid off in a 9-7 win over Mansfield Malabar in the Class AAA sectional tournament Tuesday at Bill Baines Park.

The Little Giants, who will play the winner of Thursday's semifinal between Norwalk and Lexington 4 p.m. Saturday for a sectional championship, scored six runs on six hits in the third inning and made the big inning stand up.

"We had the big inning and we stayed aggressive," said Ross Coach Dan Fought. "We were told that (the Falcons) couldn't handle the pressure and that they would fold in their tents if we stayed aggressive."

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Shane McConnell and Talbot Aldrich capped a barrage of five straight hits in the third with back-to-back, two-run doubles. Craig Raney, who had three hits, Mike Zelms and Bob Hrynciw opened the inning with consecutive singles.

Ross, 10-3, collected 12 hits in the game including six doubles.

"I was real pleased with the way we hit the ball," said Fought. "We had been in a slump and it's kind of nice to see some of the kids break out."

Tony Patrick picked up the win in relief of Raney, who gave up four runs on five hits and walked five in 2½ innings.

Fundamentals — and a Malabar base running blunder — in the second inning

prompted the Falcons to pull the stakes from the tents Fought talked about.

With runners on first and third and one out, Raney faked a pick-off attempt to third then caught John Horner off first. Raney threw to second baseman Aaron Meade who seized the opportunity for a chance at a putout on Mike Dickman, who had strayed away from third.

Meade worked his way across the diamond to the third base foul line before flipping to Aldrich, who put the tag on Dickman. Aldrich then fired to Mark Gonzalez who made the putout on Horner, who had rounded second.

"The turning point was that play," said Fought. "(The Falcons) took themselves out of a big inning."

"They were trying to catch us sleeping, but we practice those situations. We work on first and third and they are playing right into our hands when they try to play in those situations."

Each team scored an unearned run in the first inning, and Ross scored one in the second on an RBI double by John Mallia.

Malabar, 6-11, chased Raney in the third when it took a 4-2 lead. A lead-off double by Mark Meyers and a single by losing pitcher Mike Bekeleski were sandwiched around three walks.

Patrick doubled and scored on a sacrifice fly by Meade in the fifth inning for a 9-4 Ross lead.

The Falcons took advantage of four walks by Patrick in the sixth inning for three runs and the final count.

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Ross rally falls short

News-Messenger reports

Dan Fought was fit to be tied.

Actually, the Ross High School baseball coach had a fit after his Little Giants had the tying run thrown out at the plate to end a seventh inning rally, resulting in a 6-5 loss to Toledo Whitmer Wednesday.

In other games, Lakota blanked Elmwood 2-0, Edison downed Clyde 5-2, St. Mary's edged Oak Harbor 5-4, Huron belted Port Clinton 13-2, Genoa beat Eastwood 10-5, Otsego thrashed Gibsonburg 20-5, Woodmore fell to Northwood 17-2, Margaretta edged Perkins 6-4, and Seneca East stopped Bettsville 5-1.

Ross trailed 6-0 entering the seventh, but rallied for five

High School Baseball

runs and had the tying run on second base with one out. The Little Giants, 10-4, got things going with five straight walks to open the seventh.

After an error made it 6-3, Craig Raney punched a two-run single. Mike Zelms then followed with a single and Tony Bryan came in to pinch-run for Raney at second base.

Bob Hrynciw, the losing pitcher, singled to left, but Bryan was cut down at the plate. The game then ended on a groundout.

"If the ball bounces or is a little high, the game is tied," Fought said. "Instead their outfielder throws one in about chest high. I thought Tony slid under the tag but the umpire obviously didn't agree."

Hrynciw took the loss despite giving up just four hits. Raney and Zelms both finished with two hits for Ross.

Titles on the line in Saturday b

The championship pairings in the sectional baseball tournaments involving area teams are set. All games are scheduled for Saturday.

Top-seeded St. Joseph Central Catholic will play Old Fort at noon in the upper bracket of the Class A sectional at Old Fort and second-seeded Sandusky St. Mary's will play Arcadia at 2 p.m. in the lower bracket.

At the Class A New Riegel sectional, the upper bracket pits top-seeded Tiffin Calvert against Hopewell-Loudon at 12:30 p.m. while Bettsville will play St. Wendelin at 3 p.m. Saturday in the lower bracket.

Over in the Class AA at Eastwood, Margaretta will play second-seeded Genoa at noon in the upper bracket and top-seeded Eastwood faces Port Clinton at 3 p.m. in the lower bracket.

Ross, will play Norwalk at 4 p.m. in the lower bracket of the

On The Side

Tim Harmon



Class AAA sectional at Norwalk.

The Little Giants won't do anything differently said Coach Dan Fought.

"We're going to play our game," Fought said. "As long as we stay within ourselves, we'll be alright."

"We feel a lot more comfortable (after Tuesday's victory over Mansfield Malabar), and we'll be ready come Saturday."

Fought credited Ross seniors — Talbot Aldrich, Bob Hrynciw, Aaron Meade, Tony Patrick,

Craig Raney and Mike Zelms — for their part in the Little Giants' 9-7 win over the Falcons.

"We have a lot of confidence in our six seniors," said Fought, "and those six seniors did a heluva job today (Tuesday)."

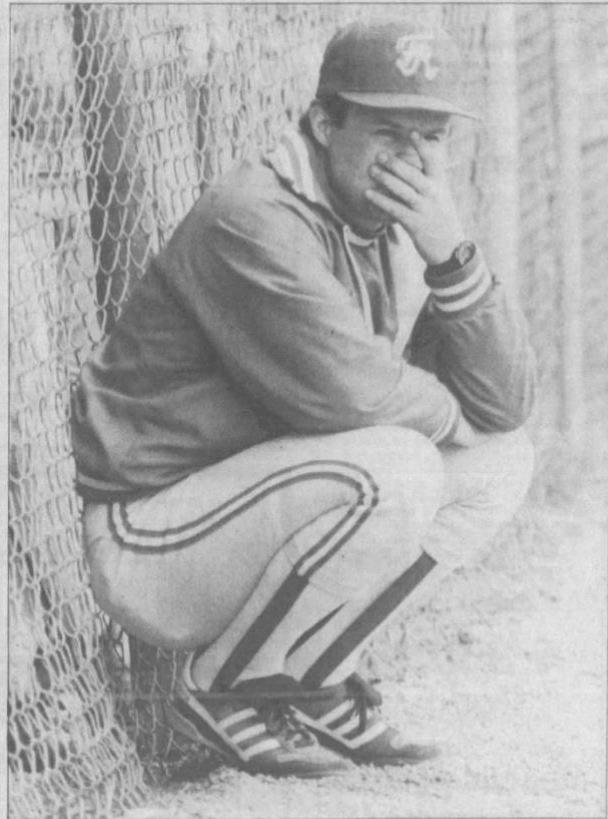
Speaking of Ross, the Little Giants slipped to sixth in the newest Class AAA rankings of the Metropolitan Coaches Association Poll.

In the Class A-AA poll, Genoa maintained its hold on the top spot while Lakota improved from 10th to sixth.

St. Joe, meanwhile, slipped another notch to 19th in the Ohio High School Coaches Association Poll.

Woodmore Coach Vic Welch is still looking for his elusive 100th victory.

The Wildcats have lost 15 straight this season, including



ROSS COACH Dan Fought hides his face as he watches his Ross baseball team perform Thursday at Anderson Field.

News-Messenger/Bob Marker

St. Joe soph blanks Lakota; Ross tops PC

News-Messenger reports

Sophomore Tim Meek scattered six hits as Fremont St. Joseph Central Catholic defeated Lakota 8-0 Thursday in high school baseball.

The win was St. Joe's 12th against two losses while Lakota is 12-5.

In other games, Ross had only four hits but defeated Port Clinton 8-4, Oak Harbor topped Clyde 7-5 and Bettsville slipped past New Riegel 5-4 in eight innings.

Meek had 12 strikeouts, walked three, and was in trouble briefly. Lakota had runners at second and third with no outs in the second but the St. Joe lefthander struckout the next three batters.

St. Joe gave Meek all the runs he needed with two in the first inning. Brad Young walked, Jeff Overmyer was hit with a pitch and Scott Radde walked, loading the bases. A wild pitch scored one run and the second came home of Grant Beckley's sacrifice fly.

St. Joe had just six hits, two by Radde.

Today at 4:30, St. Joe will host Calvert at Anderson Field in a clash between unbeaten Midland Athletic League teams.

High School Baseball

Ross 8, Port Clinton 4

The only thing Ross Coach Dan Fought liked was the Little Giants won for the 11th time in 15 games.

"It definitely was not beautiful," Fought said. "In an article (in The News-Messenger), it said we were not making fundamental or mental mistakes but we did in this game."

"I guess you have to have a game like this now and then and it is positive note going into the sectional finals," Fought said.

Ross plays Norwalk, 8-9, at 4 p.m., Saturday, at Norwalk in the finals.

Winning pitcher Shawn McConnell, 1-1, and Tom Rosenberger scattered six Port Clinton hits. Dave Grady had two hits for the Redskins and Doug Cooper doubled.

Ron Hamil doubled for Ross.

The Little Giants jumped out to a 4-0 lead in the first inning. Port Clinton cut the deficit to 5-3 in the third but Ross scored single runs in the third fourth and sixth inning to ice the win.

Ross took advantage of 13

See BASEBALL, Page B-3

Baseball

Continued From B-1

walks from Port Clinton losing pitcher Mark Hackworth.

Oak Harbor 7, Clyde 5

The Rockets recorded their ninth win to surpass last year's victory total.

Mike Glusko had three hits including a triple, and Mark Rutherford blanked the Fliers over the last four innings to secure the victory for the Rockets, 9-10, 4-4 in the Sandusky Bay Conference.

Dave Behrens, Rick Ferguson

and Rich Schultz all added a pair of hits for Oak Harbor, while Dave Gregg and John Montgomery had two hits each for Clyde, 4-15, 2-6.

Bettsville 5, New Riegel 4

The Bobcats scored the winning run after two outs in the bottom of the eighth.

Kyle Krotzer was safe on an error and Greg Williamson walked, bringing up Miller. The game-winning hit was Miller's second of the game.

Williamson got the pitching win, taking over for starter Eric McNutt in the sixth after New Riegel tied the game with a pair of runs.



News-Messenger/Terry Reimer

TALBOT ALDRICH of Ross swings at a pitch from Findlay pitcher Dave Breitigan during the sixth in-

ning of the Trojans victory over the Little Giants Thursday at Anderson Field.

Breitigan's two-hitter stuns Ross

Little Giants title hopes depend on Saturday doubleheader sweep

By **TIM HARMON**
Staff Writer

Findlay right-hander Dave Breitigan has the Trojans in the driver's seat in their three-game Buckeye Central Conference series with Fremont Ross.

Breitigan checked the Little Giants on two hits, fanning 11

and walking just one as Findlay came away with a 3-2 victory Thursday at Anderson Field.

The series will switch to Findlay for a doubleheader Saturday. If the Trojans win one of two, they will play Newark for the BCC championship.

Findlay, 9-14, broke a 2-2 tie in

the sixth inning. Doug McClain singled with one out and went to third on a sacrifice bunt and a throwing error by losing pitcher Craig Raney. McClain scored on a line drive to left off the bat of Jeff Bova.

See **ROSS**, Page B-3

Ross

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The play was disputed by Ross Coach Dan Fought, who claimed that McLain left third base early.

Ross, 12-5, tied the game in the fifth inning, scoring a pair of unearned runs without the benefit of a hit.

Shane McConnell reached base on an error and was replaced by pinch-runner Kevin Stevenson. Findlay third baseman Dean Whitacre fielded Mark Gonzalez's sacrifice bunt but threw wildly, allowing Stevenson to score from first and Gonzalez to race to third.

Gonzalez scored on a ground out by John Mallia.

"(Breitigan's performance) spoke for itself," said Findlay pitching coach Neal Mersch. "He threw strikes, got ahead of the hitters and kept them off balance."

Ross, though, failed to take advantage of scoring opportunities in the first two innings. Scott Meizinger doubled with one out but was stranded in the first, and Talbot Aldrich singled leading off but was stranded after reaching second on a fielder's choice in the second.

"(Breitigan) pitched a good game, but we let him off the hook," said Fought. "We had runners in scoring position three times (also in the sixth) and didn't take advantage of it."

"(The Trojans) made the most of their breaks, and we didn't and that's why they won."

Findlay scored single runs in the third and fourth innings.

In the third, Joe Williams doubled and scored on Jason McCaugh's single. In the fourth, Mike Gladstone singled and scored on a double by Geoff Korry.

"We lost a tough one to Toledo Whitmer (16-12 after leading 10-3), and it was nice that we could bounce back," said Findlay Coach Jack Foltz. "It was well played by both teams. We expect the same kind of game Saturday and we still have to win one more."

Findlay, ironically, was eliminated from the state tournament by Wapakoneta, whom the Little Giants will play Tuesday in the district tournament at Anderson.

Whitmer boys top Little Giants 77-50

News-Messenger reports

TOLEDO — Ross won four of five field events but Whitmer dominated the track events for a 77-50 victory over the Little Giants in high school track and field Thursday.

Kevin Crawford won the high jump and the 300 hurdles to highlight the six Little Giants wins.

Cardell Beachum won the shot put, Luther McKinstry the long jump and Brian Moreno the pole vault for Ross. Chad Wodrich won the 1600 and Shane Hill the 3200 for the other Ross first places.

Coming your way for

WALLEYES

St. Joe rolls on, Ross splits

News-Messenger reports

St. Joseph Central Catholic ran its baseball winning streak to 16 games with a 7-0 victory over New Riegel Saturday at Anderson Field while Ross was eliminated from Buckeye Central Conference title contention after splitting a doubleheader with Findlay.

Ross dropped the opener 4-3 then came back for a 6-2 win in the nightcap.

St. Joe, 17-2, supported winning pitcher Jeff Radde with solid defense and a nine-hit attack that included triples by Brad Young and Jeff Overmyer.

Radde, 7-1, walked three and struck out four while allowing just three hits.

"Jeff (Radde) did an outstand-

ing job," said St. Joe Coach Mike Gabel. "He only had four strikeouts, but we played real solid defense behind him."

Young was 3-for-3 and Overmyer had two hits and three RBI for the Streaks, who will play Bettsville in the Old Fort Class A district tournament Tuesday.

Craig Tiell took the loss for New Riegel.

At Findlay, Ross let a 3-0 lead slip away in the first game of its doubleheader with Findlay, which scored two runs in the fourth and two more in the sixth for the win.

The victory earned Findlay, 10-15, the right to play Newark for the BCC championship.

Brian Blanton got the mound victory over Bob Hrynciw.

In the second game, the Little

Giants' bats came alive in the victory over the Trojans.

John Mallia had three of Ross's 10 hits as Tony Patrick improved to 4-0. Mike Lasley took the loss.

Ross, 13-6, collected six of its hits in the seventh inning when it broke a 2-2 tie.

"Findlay took advantage of every break they got," said Ross Coach Dan Fought.

But Fought said the Little Giants, who play Wapakoneta Tuesday in the Class AAA district tournament at Anderson, did not hit well enough to win.

"You're not going to win many games getting two (in a 3-2 loss Thursday) and four hits," Fought said. "(The Trojans' pitchers really kept us off base,"

Ross back on track for game with Sandusky

By TIM HARMON

Staff writer

A simple 6-2 victory for Ross over Findlay in the second game of a Saturday doubleheader.

For the Little Giants, the win could have more impact than its face value — avoiding a series sweep against the only Buckeye Central Conference opponent it will play this season.

Ross Coach Dan Fought said Saturday's win was a momentum builder for the Little Giants' district semifinal game against Wapakoneta today at 4:30 p.m. at Anderson Field.

The winner will play Sandusky in the district championship game Thursday. The Blue Streaks, 18-1, defeated Defiance 2-1 in nine innings Monday in the other semifinal.

"That second game was awful important to us," said Fought. "I thought we needed to win to get back on track."

See ROSS, B-3

Ross

Continued From B-1

"The kids were down and that win picked us up for the district."

The Little Giants, despite collecting 10 hits in the second game against Findlay, have been struggling at the plate. They had just four hits in Saturday's opener, a 4-3 loss.

"We finally broke out in the second game and that was nice to see," said Fought. "Hopefully we'll get the hits in the right spots (against Wapakoneta)."