

2002 Great Lakes League...

Great Lakes League

When: Noon Saturday. Round 1 begins at noon, Round 2 at 1:30 p.m., Round 3 at 3 p.m. and the finals at 5 p.m.

Where: Fremont Ross High School.

Format: Double-elimination bracket.

Last year's team champion: Lorain Southview.

This year's team favorites: Fostoria, Ross, Findlay.

Ross wrestlers to

watch: Tommy Wagner (152), Zac Potridge (112), Andrew Legg (171), Chris Kayser (189).

Other wrestlers to

watch: Chad Sharp, Whitmer (140); Dan Guerny, Whitmer (152); Brad Coy, Clay (130); Alex Grine, Fostoria (275); Alex Shift, Fostoria (135); Jeremy Bennett, Fostoria (189); Jay Dreschel, Sandusky (112); Willie Walker, Sandusky (189).

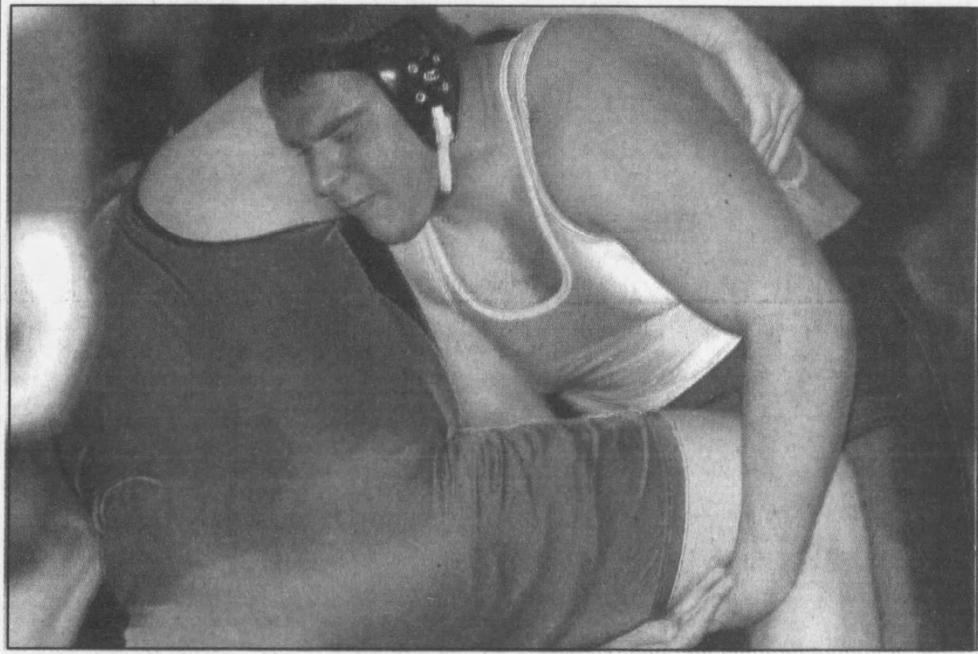
Outlook: Ross incurred only one GLL dual-meet defeat during the season, a 47-27 loss Fostoria on Dec. 12. As the preseason favorites, the Little Giants will have their work cut out to make a convincing case to earn the crown. Last year, Ross placed 11 wrestlers and looks for the same success this year at the Purple Pit, where Ross has done well all season. The Little Giants return Kyle Wensinger (145) and Jarrod Pena at heavyweight to the lineup. Ross will need a total team effort to win the tournament and the GLL title.

Coach's quote: "It looks like we should have 11 seeds for places. I'm happy about that. We're going to have to upset some the other top seeds though. We have to go for the tech falls and pins. If we are going to win it, they're going to have to step up. They understand what they have to do. It's going to be a tight race. I'm really excited. I really think they can do it." — **Grover Dowell, Ross.**



LEGG

Ross, Rockets reign



News-Messenger/Ben French

JARROD PENA of Fremont Ross attacks Fostoria's Alex Grine during the heavyweight finals Saturday at the Purple Pit. Grine won this match, but the Little Giants earned the Great Lakes League championship by winning the tournament.

Giants sneak out with first GLL title

By ALEXIUS TOMASZEWSKI
Staff writer

One point.

It's an escape in wrestling, and that's how Fremont Ross came away with its first Great Lakes League championship Saturday at the Purple Pit.

The Little Giants used a team effort to win the GLL tournament with 177 points. Fostoria came in second (157 points), while Sandusky (114.5) and Whitmer (113) took third and fourth, respectively. Findlay (103.5) and Clay (46) rounded out the standings.

Ross escaped Fostoria, which boasted five individual championships, for the overall league title. The Little Giants were one point better than the Redmen, who had garnered 10 points for winning the dual-meet title and 12 points for second place in the tournament. The Little Giants snagged 15 points for winning the tournament and eight for its 5-1 GLL dual meet record. The final standings: Ross 23, Fostoria 22.

"I'm really excited about how they

More inside

Woodmore's Matt Graber won his second straight Suburban Lakes League title Saturday. Gruber, Grant Sarver and Ralph Roberts won titles for the Wildcats, who placed third behind five-time champion Elwood. Lakota's Brian Jacobs was named the league's Most Outstanding



GARBER

Wrestler. Gibsonburg's Chad Perkins also won an individual title. **See story, B4.**

did in the finals," Ross head coach Grover Dowell said of his wrestlers. "I didn't think we'd be able to hold off Fostoria. They have a heck of a team."

Dowell, along with Fostoria head coach Chuck Mason, shared the GLL Outstanding Coach honor. Oregon

Clay's Mike Zeiler (152 pounds) was named the GLL's Most Outstanding Wrestler.

"The boys stepped it up a bit. We had a couple of instances I wasn't happy with, but I thought the boys did a nice job," Dowell said. "I was really proud of (Jake) Gutschalk and (Zac) Potridge. They had real nice tournaments."

Ross placed almost its entire team; 13 wrestlers earned GLL honors, seven winning in the finals.

"It feels really good," senior Tommy Wagner said. "Everyone predicted us to win it at the beginning of the season, and we made it happen for ourselves today. We're the real deal. I'm real proud of the guys."

Ross was sluggish in the first two rounds before heating up in the finals.

Said Dowell, "We were terrible. It was as if we looked past guys. Some thought, 'We beat 'em once we, can do it again.' That doesn't always happen. That came back to bite us, but they did a nice job."

See ROSS, B4

Oak Harbor takes home six crowns, SBC trophy

By SCOTT BLACK
News-Messenger correspondent

SANDUSKY — The blueprints were drawn on Jan. 18 and 19 at the Sandusky Bay Conference Duals Tournament in Clyde.

On Saturday, Oak Harbor put the finishing touches on the model by sweeping through the SBC Tournament with six individual champions and the team title.

St. Mary Central

Catholic finished second, just like at the duals, with 189 points. Clyde came in third with 159.5 points and three champions in T.C. Hoffman, Jon Taylor and Luke Seal.

The only change in the standings came from Port Clinton, which finished in sixth place with 98 points and bumped Margaretta down to seventh with 94.5 points.

Keith Kline got the ball rolling for the Rockets by winning the 103-pound division title with a 13-4 major decision over Edison's Ryan Tinnel.

"This feels great," Kline said. "This is Oak Harbor's first title in a while, and that makes it even sweeter to take the trophy home. I was just glad to go out there and win the first match because it gets us off to a good start and pumps everyone up."

The Rockets' next championship came at 145 pounds. Chuck Diefenthaler downed Edison's Nate Schlessman, 6-4, and that started a string of five straight titles for Oak Harbor.

See TAYLOR, B4



KLINE

Ross racks up first GLL crown

Continued From B1

Potridge (112) claimed Ross's first individual championship with a 20-7 major decision over Fostoria's Dan Jordan. To reach the finals, he posted victories over Findlay's Troy Gwinn and Whitmer's Ryan Macut.

"I was expecting him to be worse than he actually was," Potridge said of Jordan.

Potridge was a GLL champion his sophomore year. Returning to the podium after a year hiatus was rewarding.

"It feels good to get back where I was at," he said. "Now I feel really good about sectionals."

At 130 pounds, Gutschalk won his first varsity tournament with a 21-6 technical fall over No. 1 seed Jesus Holguin of Fostoria. Gutschalk downed Findlay's Rick Alessi and had a bye on his way to the finals.

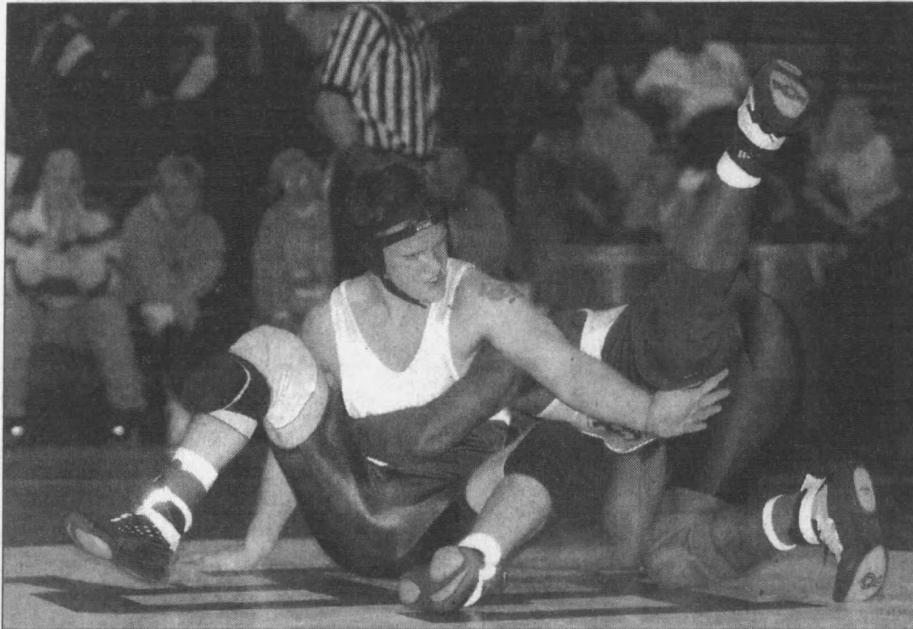
Gutschalk became motivated after Internet prognosticators failed to recognize him.

"I wanted to prove some people wrong," he said. "I really didn't want to settle for second. I looked at the team scoreboard and saw Fostoria nipping at our heels, so I wanted to do my part."

The Little Giants had five wrestlers take second. Sam Kreuger dropped a 10-5 match to Fostoria's Bill Reese in the finals after defeating Findlay's Ian David.

Mike Shanahan (160) lost to Findlay's Bill Seng, and 171-pounder Andrew Legg bowed to Sandusky's Willie Walker, 3-1 in overtime. Shanahan edged Clay's Sean Swigart to reach the championship bout. Legg, the No. 1 seed, had a bye and defeated Whitmer's Steve Derian.

Kris Kayser (189) was on the losing end of a 14-4 bout with Jeremy Bennett of Fostoria. He



News-Messenger/Ben French

ANDREW LEGG, left, of Fremont Ross tries to reverse Sandusky's Willie Walker during the 171-pound final Saturday at the Great Lakes League wrestling meet at the Purple Pit.

"I wanted to prove some people wrong. I really didn't want to settle for second. I looked at the team scoreboard and saw Fostoria nipping at our heels, so I wanted to do my part."

— Jake Gutschalk,
Fremont Ross wrestler

reached the finals with triumphs over Eric Duenke of Findlay and Ben Wright of Whitmer.

Heavyweight Jarrod Pena edged Sandusky's Kevin Gibson to advance, and then lost to Fostoria's Alex Grine, 17-4, and settled for the runner-up spot.

Six Little Giants came away with third-place finishes, with Kyle Polter (119) leading the way. He posted an 18-11 victory over Whitmer's Desmond Henry. Jaime Resendez (125) pinned Findlay's Paul Hogan in one minute, 43 seconds to earn a third-place finish, and Austin Earle (140) also pinned for third place. He decked Clay's Blain Napier in 4:59. Myles Porter (145) ripped away for an escape in the closing seconds for a 9-8 victory over Cody Allen of Clay. Wagner

(152) posted a 14-8 decision over Noah Williams of Findlay for third.

"It was a team effort. With 13 kids placing, I couldn't ask for more," Dowell said. "They knew themselves that they could win the tournament, but they'd have to really turn it up, and they did."

The first league crown was especially satisfying to Dowell, who adds it to the 100th-career victory milestone he reached earlier this month.

"I'd like to kiss all the boys, but I'm not going to do that," he said.

The Little Giants travel to Oregon Clay for the sectional tournament on Friday.

Wrestling

High School

GLL Tournament

Team Standings

1-Ross	177
2-Fostoria.....	157
3-Sandusky	114.5
4-Whitmer	113
5-Findlay	103.5
6-Clay	46

103

Championship: Bill Reese (Fost) dec.
Sam Krueger (Ross) 10-5.

112

Championship: Zac Potridge (Ross)
maj. dec. Dan Jordan (Fost) 20-7.

119

Championship: Jake Keegan (Fost)
dec. Jared Jenkins (Sand) 5-1.

3rd Place: Kyle Polter (Ross) dec.
Desmond Henry (Whitmer) 18-11.

125

Championship: Anrico Cunningham (Sand)
maj. dec. Kirk Bowman (Whitmer) 12-3.

3rd Place; Jaime Resendez (Ross) pin
Paul Hogan (Find) 1:43.

130

Championship: Jake Gutschalk
(Ross) t-fall Jesus Holguin (Fost).

135

Championship: Ryan Duenke (Find)
pin Adam Crawford (Sand) 3:13.

140

Championship: Chad Sharp (Whitmer)
maj. dec. Alex Shiff (Fost) 16-4.

3rd Place: Austin Earle (Ross) pin
Blain Napier (Clay) 4:59.

145

Championship: Tim Root (Whitmer)
dec. Taylor Roynon (Find) 7-4.

3rd Place: Myles Porter (Ross) dec.
Cody Allen (Clay) 9-8.

152

Championship: Mike Zeiler (Clay) dec.
Dan Gurney (Whitmer) 12-9.

3rd Place: Tommy Wagner (Ross)
dec. Noah Williams (Find) 14-8.

160

Championship: Bill Seng (Find) dec.
Mike Shanahan (Ross).

171

Championship: Willie Walker (Sand)
dec. Andrew Legg (Ross) 3-1 (OT).

189

Championship: Jeremy Bennett maj.
dec. Chris Kayser (Ross) 14-4.

215

Championship: Joe Morton (Fost) dec.
Danny Johnson (Sand) 3-1.

3rd Place: Luke Swint (Ross) maj.
dec. Eric Bremm (Find) 11-3.

H

Championship: Alex Farine (Fost) maj.
dec. Jarrod F..... USS, 17-4.