

Fremont Ross

Coach: Mike Gilbert, 5th year (75-22).

2002 record: 16-8 (8-2 GLL).

2002 tournament: Lost district semifinal, 8-3, to Oregon Clay.

Key losses: CF Kristy Gabel (.325 batting average), DH-1B Jera Johnson (.344), OF Jodi Menkhoff (.244).

Key returnees: Seniors — C Amy Reiter (.346), SS Lydia Sandoval (.234), 2B Erica Wolfe (.254), 1B Tara McAfee, LF Kristen Hammer (.295).

Juniors — RF Rachel Hammer (.316), P Miranda Steinberger (13-6, 2.20 earned-run average), P Sara Hoffman (3-2, 2.86).
Sophomore — 3B Paige Kingsborough (.363).

Promising newcomers: Juniors — Jaymelee Glaspy, Nicole Marroquin, Shannon Hickey.

Sophomore — Rachael Daugherty.

Outlook: There is every reason to expect the Little Giants to contend for another Great Lakes League championship, the last before the league becomes the Greater Buckeye Conference, and get to the district for the third straight year. Steinberger returns as the team's ace after a solid sophomore season. Kingsborough was the team's top hitter as a freshman, and Reiter is a team leader behind the plate. Gilbert hopes his team can improve its defense and hit better in crucial situations.

Coach's quote: "As always, I am excited to start another season and fortunate to have players with great attitudes. I feel it a privilege to coach for Fremont Ross."



REITER

Girls softball squad rolls to 15-6 victory

News-Messenger reports

BOWLING GREEN — The Fremont Ross softball players were ready to start the season and showed it at the plate with 14 hits in a 15-6 romp over the Bowling Green.

Eight Little Giants tallied hits with Amy Reiter leading the way. She went 3-for-5 with a pair of runs. Kristen Hammer, Paige Kingsborough, Rachel Hammer and Tara McAfee each collected a pair of hits. Lydia Sandoval, Erica Wolfe and Nicole Marroquin each contributed a hit.

On the mound, Ross ace Miran-

da Steinberger surrendered only one earned run and fanned five batters.

The Little Giants travel to Oak Harbor on Wednesday.

Rockets get past Ross

Big first inning propels Oak Harbor

By **BRIAN LAVRICH**
Staff writer

OAK HARBOR — The Oak Harbor softball team got off to a great start Wednesday.

The Rockets scored four runs in their first inning of the season then cruised to a 6-4 win over Fremont Ross in their season opener.

"They had a hard time in the first inning, and we had some nice hits," Oak Harbor coach Tracy Donnelly said. "Offensively, I'm pretty pleased with what we did. We did pick up two more runs to ensure the win, which was good."

"It was a real good team effort."

The Rockets led 6-2 after three innings, but the Little Giants scored two runs in the fifth to pull the score to 6-4.

"We fell behind early and we didn't field the ball too well," Ross coach Mike Gilbert said. "We had too many errors and mental mistakes."

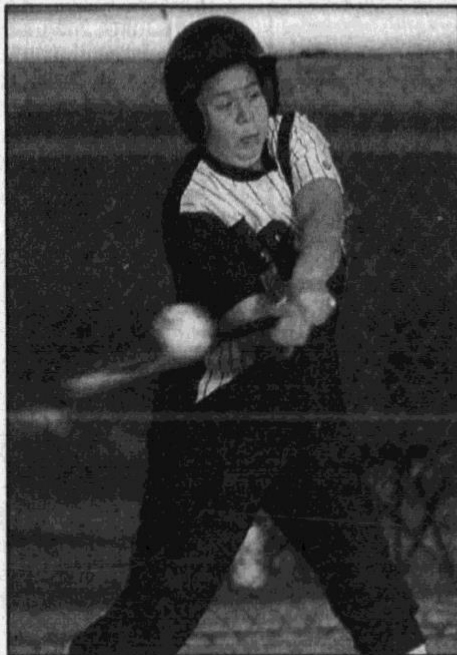
"We kept battling back. We didn't give up."

Oak Harbor ace Stephanie Damschroder was the winning pitcher, going the full seven innings. Two of the runs she gave up were unearned as the Rockets made four errors. Ross got only four hits while striking out three times against Damschroder.

"I felt like we all did good," Damschroder said. "We played as a team. There's still stuff we can improve on, but it was a good first game."

Damschroder said she couldn't remember the last time she gave up four runs in a game. Her earned run average last season was 1.11.

"They were a good team," Damschroder said. "I don't mind giving up runs to a team like that."



News-Messenger/Abigail Bobrow

PAIGE KINGSBOROUGH connects for Ross during Wednesday's softball game at Oak Harbor.

See **LITTLE GIANTS**, B3



News-Messenger/Abigail Bobrow

FREMONT ROSS softball players don their gloves as hats while in the dugout toward the end of Wednesday's game against Oak Harbor. The Little Giants dropped a 6-4 contest.

Little Giants fall to Rockets, drop first game of season

Continued From B1

Donnelly said the weather this spring has limited Damschroder and the other Rocket pitchers.

"With the weather, she hasn't been getting her pitches in," Donnelly said. "It's not one of her better performances. It was adequate, but she helped us win the game. I expect a lot more from her."

Ross (1-1) made three of its own errors as Sara Hoffman pitched six innings with four earned runs allowed on eight hits. She walked five and struck out two.

"We hit the ball fairly well, but she's a good pitcher," Gilbert said. "I'm pleased with our hitting. We just need to do a better job on defense."

"This was just one game. There is always tomorrow."

Branda Rose went 2-for-4 with two RBI and a run scored for the Rockets.

"I'm pleased with our hitting. We just need to do a better job on defense. This was just one game. There is always tomorrow."

Mike Gilbert,
Ross coach

Donnelly was happy with Rose's game.

"Branda had a key bunt for us," Donnelly said. "She does whatever I ask of her."

Rose received help from Carli Wittman, who was 2-for-3 with an RBI and a run, and Becky Perry (2-for-4 with one run).

Ross's most successful hitter was Paige Kingsborough, who went 2-for-3 with a double and a run scored.

Ross replays bad start, loses to AW

Lady Generals score six early runs, roll 8-2

By **TIMOTHY R. WOLFRUM**
Sports editor

The Fremont Ross softball team is fast finding out comebacks are not its strong suit.

Head coach Mike Gilbert would like to see his team try playing from out in front next time.

For the second day in a row Thursday, the Little Giants fell behind early and came up short against a highly touted opponent.

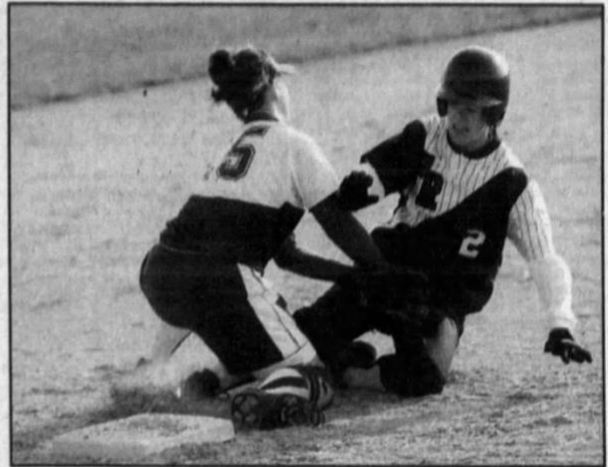
This time it was Division I powerhouse Anthony Wayne. The Lady Generals scored two runs in

each of the first three innings to lead 6-0 on their way to an 8-2 non-league triumph in Ross's home opener at a windy and cold Alumni Field.

On Wednesday, Oak Harbor jumped on Ross (1-2) for four runs in the first inning and held on for a 5-4 victory.

"It's almost like watching the same game over, kind of like a nightmare," Gilbert said of Thursday's game.

See **LITTLE GIANTS, B2**



News-Messenger/Ben French

TARA McAFEE, right, of Fremont Ross slides into an out at third base after ripping a double to the fence in the third inning Thursday at Alumni Field. Anthony Wayne third baseman Kara Hensley applies the tag after a sterling relay throw from shortstop Chrissy Gothke.

Little Giants fall to Lady Generals

Continued From B1

"That's one of the best teams in northwest Ohio. They've got a quality program. We didn't come out and play very well. After three or four innings, we settled down and started playing ball. We have to execute."

Anthony Wayne, which retains four starters from its 2001 state-tournament team, made the most of its scoring opportunities against Ross hurler Miranda Steinberger in the first three innings.

Kara Hensley walked, and Tracy Lehman followed with a bunt single to begin the game. Both runners moved up on a wild pitch then came around to score on consecutive grounders to second base.

In the second inning, Michelle Pennington coaxed a one-out walk, and Hensley got a two-out single. Lehman then reached on an error, scoring Pennington. Hensley and Lehman worked a double steal from first and third, respectively, to make it 4-0.

Leslie Everhart and Jenn Woods opened the third with singles. Everhart scored from second, and Woods go to third on consecutive wild pitches. Woods later scored on an Ashley Stevens single.

That was more than enough offense for the Lady Generals (2-0).

"I think a team always plays better when they're ahead, our kids especially," Anthony Wayne head coach Carolyn Vogtsberger said. "They're more comfortable, and they hit even better."

Woods went the first five innings to pick up the victory on the mound for Anthony Wayne. She allowed four hits and an earned run before giving way to Kim Vogtsberger. Woods struck out five and walked none.

"She pitched behind a first-team all-stater for three years," coach Vogtsberger said of Woods. "This is her time to shine. She pitched really well on Tuesday against Central Catholic. She had another great outing tonight. So we're hoping she keeps going with it."

Ross got on the board with a run in the fourth inning. Paige Kingsborough and Rachel Hammer came up with back-to-back two-out doubles to deep center field. Both hitters finished 2-for-3, and Kingsborough scored both Little Giant runs.

In the seventh, Kingsborough and Hammer singled. Shannon Hickey later drove in Kingsborough with a sharp single to left.

For the game, Ross came up with seven hits, just one fewer than Anthony Wayne.

"We're hitting the ball well," Gilbert said. "That's one thing I'm really happy with. But when you're down six runs, it takes away your bunting and a lot of the game."

Steinberger went the distance for Ross. She settled down after the rocky start, retiring nine straight batters at one point. Steinberger allowed five earned runs and eight hits while striking out seven and walking three.

Ross visits Oregon Clay today in the Great Lakes League opener.

SOFTBALL

Ross 12, Port Clinton 4

Paige Kingsborough and Jaymelee Glaspy each drove in three runs as the Little Giants broke a two-game losing streak with a non-league romp.

Kingsborough went 3-for-5, Glaspy 2-for-3. Kristen Hammer added two hits and two RBI, and sister Rachel Hammer contributed two hits and a run scored.

Ross (2-2) broke the game open with six runs in the third and three more in the fourth.

Miranda Steinberger earned the victory on the mound, giving up two earned runs on six hits. She struck out eight and walked five.

Ross visits Findlay on Friday.

Findlay 4, Ross 3

FINDLAY — The Little Giants rallied with three runs in the sixth inning, but they came up short in their Great Lakes League opener.

Kristen Hammer paced Ross's nine-hit attack by going 3-for-4 with a pair of doubles and a run scored. Nicole Marroquin added two hits.

Findlay managed only four hits but capitalized on five Little Giant errors. Miranda Steinberger (2-2) took the loss on the mound.

Ross (2-3) is at Toledo Central Catholic today.

Ross splits with TCC

TOLEDO — After a 10-0 shutout, the Ross softball team bounced back for a 5-3 triumph, splitting with Toledo Central Catholic on Saturday.

The Fighting Irish capitalized on five Little Giant errors for nine unearned runs in the first game. Kristen Hammer had Fremont's lone hit, while Miranda Steinberger fell to 2-3 with the loss on the mound.

She gave up eight hits, one earned run while striking out eight in the route-going performance.

In the second game, Ross rallied for a pair of runs in the top of the eighth inning to break a 2-2 stalemate. Amy Reiter singled to score Erica Wolfe, who reached first on a fielder's choice. Rachel Hammer followed with a RBI single to score Kristen Hammer, who was walked.

Sara Hoffman (1-1) earned the win on the mound, giving up two earned runs, eight hits with six strikeouts.

Wolfe paced the Little Giants with a 3-for-4 effort on the afternoon with a run and an RBI. Shannon Hickey and Jaymelee Glaspy each contributed two hits.

Ross (3-4) hosts Toledo St. Ursula today.

Ross 7, St. Ursula 6 (11)

Jaymelee Glaspy capped a three-run Ross rally in the bottom of the 11th inning to clinch a non-league triumph at Alumni Field, improving the Little Giants' mark to 4-4.

St. Ursula put the pressure on the home team with a pair of runs in the top of the 11th. Ross responded as Shannon Hickey cracked a single to score Paige Kingsborough and Rachel Hammer to tie the game again.

Glaspy, who was walked to load the bases with Kingsborough and Hammer on board, tagged on a Tara McAfee infield pop-up for the winning run.

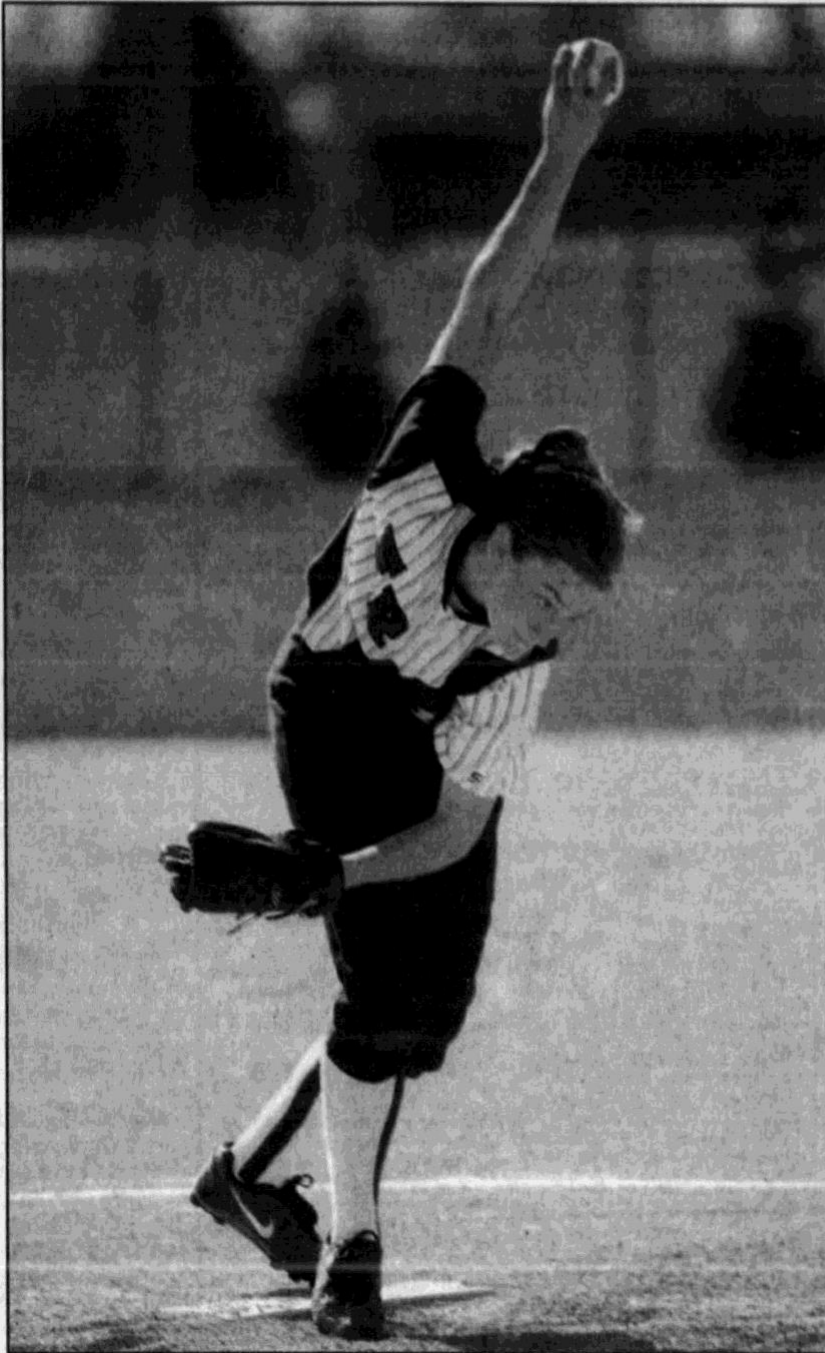
Rachel Hammer was 3-for-5 for the victors, while Kristen Hammer and Hickey contributed two hits each.

Miranda Steinberger (3-3) was the winning pitcher, giving up six runs (two earned) and seven hits with four walks and seven strikeouts.

Ross hosts Sandusky today in Great Lakes League play.

Softball

No beating the heat



Hoffman strikes out 12 in Ross 8-1 victory

By ALEXIUSTOMASZEWSKI
Staff writer

As the Fremont Ross softball team cleaned up the diamond after Tuesday's game, Sara Hoffman naturally took to the mound and raked it.

She didn't mind. After all, she owned it.

The Fremont Ross junior hurler struck out 12 batters and allowed two hits and one run in a complete game to give the Little Giants an 8-1 triumph over Sandusky on Tuesday at Alumni Field.

A fierce wind kept Sandusky's hitters at bay. And so did Hoffman. The Blue Streaks managed only three hits, all singles.

"She had a good game," Blue Streaks head coach Tom Garad said. "I have to give her credit. Her change-up was working well and she kept our hitters off balance. And coming of a doubleheader where we saw slower pitching, that didn't help either."

Ross moved above .500 at 5-4 and evened its Great Lakes League record to 1-1.

The Little Giants jumped out early 3-0 af

News-Messenger/Ben French

FREMONT ROSS PITCHER Sara Hoffman prepares to deliver against Sandusky in Great Lakes League action on Tuesday at Alumni Field. The Little Giants won 8-1.

See **GIANTS**, B3

Giants earn first league triumph, 8-1

Continued From B1

ter the first inning. Kristen Hammer walked and then stole second. She crossed home plate on Amy Reiter's sacrifice grounder and Reiter made it to third when Sandusky third baseman Tiffany Reed overthrew her first baseman after fielding Reiter's hit. Reiter moved to third on the error. Paige Kingsborough followed with an RBI single to bring Reiter home. Kingsborough scored the last run of the inning on an Amanda Voegel wild pitch.

Voegel took the loss for the Blue Streaks, who fell to 2-5 (0-2 GLL).

The Little Giants had a pair of extra-base base hits, but they were trying to keep the ball low to the ground, which proved an effective strategy against the wind.

"What I liked today is that we got our bunts down," said Ross coach Mike Gilbert of his offense. "With the wind the way it was, we wanted to bunt and move runners, which we did. You have to make the other team play defense.

"We played pretty well," Ross skipper Mike Gilbert said. "We



News-Messenger/Ben French

LITTLE GIANT Shannon Hickey (14) is congratulated on her way back to the Ross dugout after scoring a run against Sandusky on Tuesday.

didn't make the mistakes we normally make. The pitching was good and we put the ball in play."

Rachel Hammer was 2-for-3 to lead the Little Giants, while Kingsborough, Shannon Hickey and Tara McAfee each contributed a hit.

The Sandusky defense struggled to get outs when Ross bunted. In the second inning, Hickey led off with a double and moved to third on McAfee's sacrifice. She reached first on an error as Hickey scored. Next, Erica Wolfe was walked and McAfee scored on a wild pitch. Kristen Hammer dropped a sacrifice grounder to score Wolfe.

Sandusky had troubles on the mound, using three pitchers with the hopes of getting some consistency. It found none on the mound or at the plate, tallining

only two hits and had five errors.

"We usually can hit better than that," Garad said. "Ross has a good team. ... We had two, three errors. You get past that and not give them easy runs."

Victoria Gray and Celena Corder each had a hit for the Blue Streaks. Theisen was walked in the second inning, advanced on a Ashley Evans bunt and scored Sandusky's lone run on a Shaquanna Crum RBI.

Hickey added a Ross run in the bottom of the fourth inning, scoring on a passed ball after getting aboard with a walk. Hickey's fielder's choice scored Rachel Hammer for another run in the fifth inning to give the Little Giants an 8-1 cushion.

Ross travels to Lima Senior on Thursday.

News-Messenger reports

OREGON — The Fremont Ross softball team fell back to .500 overall after a 16-10 Great Lakes League loss to Oregon Clay on Wednesday.

Oregon Clay had a slim hitting advantage (13-12) and capitalized on six Little Giant errors.

Paige Kingsborough had the hot bat for Ross, going 4-for-4 with three runs scored and two RBI. Shannon Hickey was close behind with a 3-for-4 effort with four RBI.

Erica Wolfe, Nicole Marroquin, Kristen Hammer, Amy Reiter and Rachael Daugherty all contributed a hit.

Miranda Steinberger took the loss on the mound for Ross (5-5, 1-2 GLL).

The Little Giants travel to Lima Senior today.

Softball

High School

Ross 11, Lima Senior 1

Thursday

Ross	400	140	2	—	11	14	1
Lima Sr.	100	000	0	—	1	5	1

WP — Miranda Steinberger (4-4). S — Sara Hoffman.

2B — Shannon Hickey (R), Nicole Marroquin (R), Rachael Daugherty (R), Tara McAfee (R).

Ross pitching: Steinberger 4 inn., 1 run, 3 hits, 5 strikeouts, 2 walks; Hoffman 3 inn., 0 runs, 2 hits, 5 strikeouts, 1 walk.

Ross hitting: Hickey 3-4, 2 runs, RBI; Marroquin 2-3, run; McAfee 2-3, run, 2 RBI; Kristen Hammer 2-4, 2 RBI; Amy Reiter 1-4, 2 RBI, run; Paige Kingsborough 1-5, run; Daugherty 1-2, run; Erica Wolfe 1-3, 2 RBI, 2 stolen bases, run; Lydia Sandoval 1-3, 2 runs, RBI.

Record: Ross 6-5.

News-Messenger reports

TIFFIN — Amy Reiter had six hits and scored six runs to lead the Fremont Ross softball team to a pair of high-scoring victories Saturday at Columbian.

The Little Giants scored the first seven runs of the opener on the way to an 8-5 victory. In the second game, Ross erupted for innings of seven, six and five runs to hang an 18-5 pasting on the Tornadoes.

Ross (8-5) got pitching victories from Sara Hoffman and Miranda Steinberger. Hoffman improved to 3-1 by going six innings in the first game; Steinberger is 5-4 after going the distance in the nightcap.

Reiter, the Little Giant catcher, went 2-for-4 with a double in the opener and 4-for-5 with a double in the second game. She scored three runs in each game and knocked in three in the nightcap.

For the doubleheader, Paige Kingsborough had five hits and three runs scored and Nicole Marroquin added four hits and a whopping nine RBI. Shannon Hickey, Tara McAfee and Erica Wolfe each had three hits for the twin bill.

Ross hosts Whitmer today in a makeup game.

Ross 5, Whitmer 3

Miranda Steinberger kept Whitmer at bay with eight strikeouts, and Fremont Ross took advantage of four Panther errors to claim its second Great Lakes League triumph at Joe Lotycz Field.

The Little Giants (9-5, 2-2 GLL) scored a run in the opening inning and tacked on two more in the fifth and sixth.

Nicole Marroquin, Kristen Hammer, Rachel Hammer, Amy Reiter and Tara McAfee each had a hit for Ross.

Steinberger (6-4) went the distance, giving up three runs, six hits with four walks in the win.

The Little Giants travel to Napoleon today.

SOFTBALL

Ross 5, Napoleon 3 (10)

NAPOLEON — Amy Reiter and Tara McAfee drove in runs in the top of the 10th to send the Little Giants to a Great Lakes League victory.

State rules say each team begins every inning after the ninth with a runner at second base. Ross (10-5, 3-2 GLL) started the 10th with Paige Kingsborough at second. She moved to third on a Rachael Daugherty single and home on a hard groundout by Reiter.

Rachel Hammer, who ran for Daugherty, later scored on a McAfee double to cap the scoring.

Ross hurler Miranda Steinberger shut down Napoleon to sew up the victory. Steinberger allowed no runs on two hits in five innings of relief.

McAfee, Kingsborough and Shannon Hickey each had two hits for the Little Giants.

Ross hosts Perrysburg on Thursday.

Perrysburg 9, Ross 2

The Yellow Jackets jumped out to a five-run lead after the first inning and rolled to a non-league victory at Alumni Field.

Nicole Marroquin led Ross (10-6) by going 3-for-3. Tara McAfee added two doubles and an RBI. The Little Giants scored both of their runs in the bottom of the seventh inning.

Sara Hoffman took the defeat on the mound. Ross committed three errors to Perrysburg's none.

Ross hosts No. 3 Oregon Clay today.

High School Softball



News-Messenger photos/Ben French

AMY REITER, right, of Fremont Ross reaches for the ball after Clay's Melissa Bowie was safe at the plate in the third inning of a Great Lakes League game at Alumni Field.

Clay capitalizes

No. 3 Eagles take flight on Ross errors

By TIMOTHY R. WOLFRUM
Sports editor

Fremont Ross permitted its third-ranked rival an extra out during three of the first four innings Friday at Alumni Field.

Oregon Clay did what state-ranked teams do when graced with such generosity.

The Eagles made the Little Giants pay.

Clay scored the game's first six runs — five of them were unearned — on the way to a 7-4 Great Lakes League victory.

The Eagles already led 2-0 when they scored four times in the fourth inning, all after a two-out throwing error.

"We've been a pretty good hitting team all year, so we're going to hit the ball hard at them and hopefully make things happen," Clay head coach Brenda Radabaugh said.

"I tell them to be aggressive with the bat and get on any way, whether it's a hit, walk, error."



MIRANDA STEINBERGER of Ross pushes off toward the plate Friday at Alumni Field.

Clay improved to 14-0 (5-0 GLL) and beat Ross for the second time in 10 days. The Little Giants fell to 10-7, 3-3 in the league.

"They're a good ballclub," Ross head coach Mike Gilbert said. "But if we cut out the errors — the one error let in four runs — we're right there with them."

That's the difference between a state-ranked team and one that's not. They make the plays."

Clay pitcher Kristen Crawford went five innings to earn her seventh victory. She allowed four runs, three earned, and four hits while striking out six and walking five.

After the Little Giants battled back to get within 6-4 after five innings, Radabaugh called on Ashley Henney, who pitched to scoreless innings for the save.

Crawford helped herself by driving in three runs, two of them during the four-run fourth. Crawford and Melissa Bowie had two hits apiece for the victors. Bowie scored three times.

Miranda Steinberger took the loss for Ross. She allowed seven hits and two earned runs while striking out six and walking four.

The Little Giants scored a pair of runs in both the fourth and fifth innings.

Jaymelee Glaspy and

Amy Reiter drove in the first two runs with a single and fielder's choice, respectively. In the fifth, Rachael Daugherty drew a one-out walk and came all the way around on three Crawford wild pitches. Shannon Hickey later walked and scored on a Clay error.

But Ross didn't have enough offense to overcome the early deficit, a common theme to the Little Giants' season.

"I just get tired of saying it," Gilbert said. "We dig ourselves a hole, then we come back. It's still a loss. There's nothing I can say. It's just what we do. The last 11 games, we've played real well. But when you get behind, it's hard to bunt, it's hard to steal."

Kingsborough went 2-for-3 to pace the Ross offense. Daugherty added a hit, and Glaspy and Tara McAfee each had a hit and a run batted in.

Ross visits Whitmer on Tuesday.

Spring Sports Roundup

Ross edges Whitmer

News-Messenger reports

TOLEDO — Jaymelee Glaspy singled home Rachel Hammer with the only run of the game Tuesday to lead the Ross softball team to a 1-0 victory over Whitmer.

The run was all Little Giants hurler Miranda Steinberger needed. Steinberger fired a three-hit shutout, striking out seven and walking none.

Hammer, who went 3-for-3, led off the fourth inning with a single and moved to second on Amy Reiter's fielder's choice.

Nicole Marroquin added a 2-for-4 performance for the Little Giants (11-7, 4-3 GLL).

Ross hosts Findlay on Friday.



HAMMER

make-up game against Tiffin Columbian on Tuesday.

Stephanie Damschroder started for Oak Harbor (9-7) and gave up four hits with no walks and 10 strikeouts.

Branda Rose went 3-for-4 with a double, two RBI and a run scored.

OH hosts Port Clinton today.

TENNIS

Port Clinton 5, Oak Harbor 0

OAK HARBOR — The Port Clinton boys tennis team easily dis-

SOFTBALL

Findlay 6, Ross 5

Jaymelee Glaspy went 4-for-4, but came up just short of scoring the tying run Friday at Alumni Field.

Glaspy's triple scored Rachel Hammer and Amy Reiter to get the Little Giants (11-8, 4-4 Great Lakes League) to within a run in the bottom of the seventh inning. But Ross failed to get Glaspy in from third.

Findlay capitalized on two Ross errors to score four runs in the fourth inning. The Trojans got two insurance runs in the top of the seventh.

Reiter went 3-for-4 with two runs scored for Ross. Starter Miranda Steinberger absorbed the defeat.

Ross hosts Ashland in a doubleheader today.

Little Giants sweep pair from Arrows

Little Giant pitchers went 15 innings without surrendering an earned run as Ross swept a talented Ashland team in a doubleheader Saturday at Alumni Field.

Sara Hoffman shut down the Arrows (13-4) on two hits during an eight-inning victory in the opener. Miranda Steinberger followed that up by allowing two unearned runs and seven hits in the nightcap.

Ross (13-8) claimed the first game when Jaymelee Glaspy tripled home Erica Wolfe with the winning run. Shannon Hickey led the Little Giants' seven-hit attack by going 2-for-3.

In the second game, Ross scored four times in the fourth inning thanks to four Ashland errors to take control. The Little Giants won despite being outhit 7-3.

Paige Kingsborough tripled and knocked in a pair of runs to lead the offense in the second game.

The Little Giants may see Ashland again. The Arrows are the top seed in the Division I sectional. Ross would meet them in the second round.

Ross visits Sandusky on Tuesday.

SOFTBALL

Ross 8, Sandusky 0

SANDUSKY — Paige Kingsborough blasted a pair of home runs, and Miranda Steinberger fired a three-hit shutout as the Little Giants won a Great Lakes League contest.

Kingsborough homered in the fifth and seventh innings. She drove in three runs and scored twice. Rachel Hammer and Kristen Hammer each had two hits for Ross (14-8, 5-4 GLL).

Steinberger struck out 10 and walked two on the way to her 10th victory of the season. The Little Giant defense played errorless ball behind Steinberger.

Ross hosts Napoleon on Friday.

Wildcats catch up to changeup

By TIMOTHY R. WOLFRUM
Sports editor

It took Napoleon almost six full innings to figure out the changeup of Ross pitcher Sara Hoffman.

Fortunately for the Wildcats, they needed just one mighty swing to bring down the Little Giants.

Napoleon pitcher Emily Meyer slammed a Hoffman changeup down the left-field line for a two-run double to break a scoreless tie with two outs in the sixth inning. That accounted for all the



HOFFMAN

both teams.

Hoffman (4-3), a junior who pitched eight scoreless innings in her last start Saturday, entered the sixth inning having allowed just one

'Cats' offense in a 2-1 victory at a waterlogged Alumni Field in the Great Lakes League finale for

base runner. She had registered five strikeouts, three of them on changeups that had the Wildcats (12-8, 6-3-1 GLL) way out in front.

But with runners on second and third in the sixth, Meyer laced a high change past Ross third baseman Paige Kingsborough. Kingsborough reached for the hard liner and got the tip of her glove on it, but the ball scooted down the line, allowing Kristen Bostelman and Kayla Mengerink to score Napoleon's runs.

"I think she hung that changeup," Napoleon head coach Joe Meyer said. "She probably wanted to throw another pitch. I don't think she'd throw that one again. We finally caught up to it. ... I was kind of frustrated out here, but it just took us a while before we got the big hit."

Ross (14-9, 5-5 GLL) scored a run in its half of the sixth when Shannon Hickey doubled and later

See LITTLE GIANTS, B4

Little Giants drop Great Lakes League contest to Wildcats

Continued From B1

came in from third on a sacrifice fly from Rachel Hammer. But the Little Giants left the tying run on third in the sixth and put two runners on in the seventh before the Wildcats shut the door.

"We didn't give it to them. We didn't get a hit when we needed one. We need to get Sara some runs," Ross head coach Mike Gilbert said.

It was surprising Friday's game was played at all. Fans had to wade through several small ponds on their way from the parking area to the stands. The sandy infield was nearly free of puddles, but balls hit into the outfield created large splashes.

The standing water in the outfield created a uncomfortable problem for the Ross players. The outfielders have a tradition of performing what they call "the worm" after the second out of each inning.

"The worm" consists of the players doing a handstand, then bellyflopping onto the field. Kristen Hammer, Nicole Marroquin and Rachel Hammer followed the routine every inning, rising with their jerseys sopping wet each time. Rachael Daugherty replaced Kristen Hammer in the

sixth inning and dutifully followed suit.

"They love doing that. They love to play the game, and they're a great bunch of kids to coach," Gilbert said.

"Without (assistant) coach (Russ) Hagerty, we wouldn't be playing. He came out and did the infield. We squeegeed out as much of right field as we could. We wanted to get the season in because you never know about the weather."

Both teams played errorless ball behind strong pitching. Meyer allowed four hits while striking out five and walking four. Hoffman gave up just three hits, striking out six and walking two.

"I thought she pitched a very good game. She kept us off-balance," coach Meyer said of Hoffman. "They hit the ball a little bit harder than we did. But we're used to that. Our pitchers are not power pitchers, so our defense is used to making plays."

Erica Wolfe and Hickey had doubles for Ross. Paige Kingsborough and Rachel Hammer had the other hits.

Napoleon is in its first season of GLL softball after the school rejoined the league. With Friday's victory, the Wildcats have knocked off traditional powers Oregon Clay and Ross. The Little Giants won the first meeting

between the teams, 5-3 in 10 innings.

"For us, this is huge. We're ecstatic. Our girls don't believe yet that they can play against anybody. Once they beat Clay, they started to believe," coach Meyer said.

Ross, meanwhile, appears headed for fourth place in the

GLL, the lowest finish in Gilbert's six seasons as head coach.

"It's been a competitive league," he said. "Anybody can win any night. It's not fun to lose, but it's more fun to play competitive games."

Ross is scheduled to meet Maumee at 10 a.m. today for a doubleheader at Alumni Field.

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Senecas, while Shelly Hoffman, Annie Herron and Mary Kate Hayes each added a pair of hits.

Hoffman was the winning pitcher, giving up four earned runs on five hits with one walk and three strikeouts.

The Crimson Streaks (10-4) host North Baltimore today.

DIVISION IV

Old Fort 4, Hopewell-Loudon 3

OLD FORT — Whitney Magers drove home Stacey Straub with the winning run in the bottom of the seventh to send the Stockaders to a Division IV sectional title.

Magers singled in the run with two outs in the seventh. It was her second hit of the game.

Old Fort (9-8) will meet Calvert at 5 p.m. May 20 in the district semifinal at Old Fort.

Stockaders pitcher Ashleigh Fry settled down after a rough start. The Chieftains reached her for three runs and three hits in the first two innings, but Fry allowed just two hits thereafter. She struck out four and walked three.

Donnie White led Old Fort's offense by going 3-for-4. Jenny Kline added two hits.

The Stockaders meet Calvert today in an MAL game.

REGULAR SEASON

Ross 11-9, Maumee 1-0

Shannon Hickey went 4-for-4 in the opener, and Sara Hoffman tossed a one-hit shutout in the nightcap as the Little Giants swept a pair from the Panthers at Alumni Field.

Hickey scored three runs and led an 18-hit attack in the first game. Paige Kingsborough added three hits and three RBI.

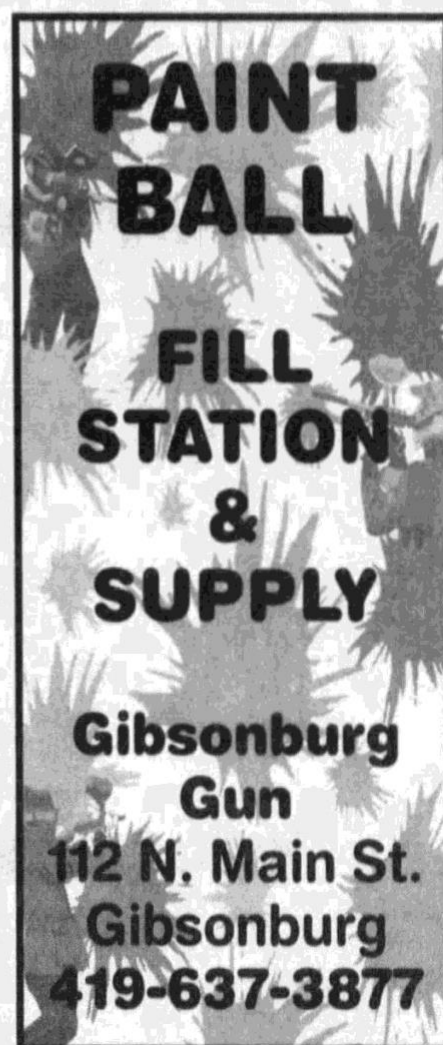
Jaymelee Glaspy, Rachael Daugherty, Nicole Marroquin and Amy Reiter added two hits apiece.

Miranda Steinberger earned the pitching victory. She allowed four hits and a run while striking out four and walking three.

In the second game, Hoffman struck out six and walked none on her way to the one-hitter.

Ross pounded out 10 hits. Reiter and Erica Wolfe had two hits apiece, and Reiter drove in a pair of runs.

The Little Giants (16-9) take on Sandusky in a Division I sectional game at 5 p.m. today at Alumni Field.



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GLL All-League Softball

First Team

Kristin Crawford	Clay
Emily Meyer	Napoleon
Nicki Ohneck	Whitmer
Erin Werling	Findlay
Ashley Kuhlman	Findlay
Paige Kingsborough	Ross
Monica Sigurdson	Clay
Melissa Bowie	Clay
Rachel Hammer	Ross
Mattia Palmeri	Whitmer
Mallory Niese	Findlay
Shannon Hickey	Ross
Whitney Ondrus	Clay

Player of the Year: Melissa Bowie (Clay).

Coach of the Year: Tim Babcock (Findlay).

Second Team

Ashley Henney	Clay
Miranda Steinberger	Ross
Amy Reiter	Ross
Courtney Creager	Napoleon
Brittany Webb	Napoleon
Kayla Mengerink	Napoleon
Kari Bockrader	Whitmer
Tiffany Miller	Napoleon
Kate Yenrick	Clay
Nicole Von Deylen	Napoleon
Courtney McGonnell	Findlay
Tiffany Reed	Sandusky

Honorable Mention

Clay: Lindsay Miller, Michelle Schumacher, Brooke Shimmer.

Findlay: Leah Miller, Kate Schedel, Ashley Kempfer, Stacy Anast.

Ross: Tara McAfee.

Napoleon: Lauren Hoffman, Stacy Polter, Kristen Bostelman.

Sandusky: Victoria Gray, Donna Thiesen, Melanie Hatmaker, Shaquanna Crum.

Whitmer: Jamie Measley, Wendly Wilt, Mindy Farmer.