

1996 Season review...

BOYS **Fremont Ross**

Coach: John Elder

1995: 5-2 overall, second to Bedford in the Great Lakes League

Key losses: Jeremiah Wagner, who finished 12th in the state, and Clint Hill

Key returnees: Three seniors: Jeremiah Smith (16th in state in 1995), Kurt Snyder and Kevin Alexander. Also juniors Jake Smith, Eric Gabel and Eli Semer, sophomore Jon Framstead

Strengths: Should have some experience coming back. The team has been running since early July

Weaknesses: Whether some of the young returning letterman can step in and step up and get faster.

Outlook: "The kids are pretty optimistic ... (but) Bedford is definitely best team in GLL," coach Elder said. The team's goal is to make regionals for the third straight year.

GIRLS

Fremont Ross

Coach: Cathy Esposito

1995: Finished sixth at regionals

Key loss: Sarah Williams

Key returnees: Senior captain Monica Wood, juniors Alison Kelly, Jeanette Frontz, Molly O'Connor, Kristyn Warner, Meredith Huffman, Jamie Toepppe, sophomores Lindsay Frontz, Jeanette Frontz, freshmen Abby Cominsky, Molly Goeke and Jenny Gabel.

Strengths: Depth that coach Esposito has not had before. Great leadership, best I've ever had.

Weaknesses: Toepppe's injury, a stress fracture

Outlook: Best team coach has ever had. The top five are all capable of running 19-minute times. The team has dependable freshmen.

High school

Cross Country

Boys

Bowling Green	41
Ross	48
Bryan	51
Napoleon	78

1-Jeremiah Smith (R) 17:31;2-Nolan Fahrer (BG) 17:39; 3-Bob Thormeier (B) 17:50;4-Rory Storch (N) 17:56;5-Derek Martin (B) 18:14;6-Eric Gabel (R) 18:18; 7-Derek Sider (BG) 18:19; 8-Jeff Schroeder (BG) 18:35; 9-Jesse Ascunce (BG) 18:45; 10-Jackson Goodnight (B) 18:49.

Girls

Ross	27
Bowling Green	35
Napoleon	88
Bryan	89

1-Lenna Lewis (BG) 21:18; 2-Lindsay Frontz (R) 21:22; 3-Alison Kelley (R) 21:38; 4-Kristyn Warner (R) 21:59; 5-Kathy Frye (BG) 22:39; 6-Erin Cernkovich (BG) 22:51; 7-Molly O'Connor (R) 23:05; 8-Carly Nutter (BG) 23:11; 9-Kara Zamman (N) 23:18; 10-Peggy Gonzalez (N) 23:20.

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

A test of endurance



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

JEREMIAH SMITH of Fremont Ross pulls away from the field Saturday at the Norm Bray Invitational at Walsh Trails. He finished in 17:08.

Ross's Jeremiah Smith is in 3rd cross country season

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By BRIAN SPIESS
Sports editor

ross country runner Jeremiah Smith discovered his knack for distance running on a much shorter course: a basketball court.

"I guess I discovered that I had good endurance during seventh- and eighth-grade basketball," Smith recalled Monday afternoon, just prior to taking a practice run. "I just never got tired out there."

The Fremont Ross athlete no longer plays basketball competitively, instead using his endurance to succeed in cross

country and track and field. This week, Smith won both the Norm Bray Invitational (17:08) and a regular-season meet against Bowling Green, Bryan and Napoleon (17:31).

Coach John Elder anticipates Smith's weeks to get better later this fall, when the senior is again expected to compete for the state crown.

"I would expect top 10," Elder said of Smith, who did not even run cross country as a freshman. Several of his track teammates (Smith runs the 800 meters and 4x800-meter relay) talked him into coming out for the fall run-

ning sport.

As a sophomore, Smith and the Little Giants team went to state. Smith placed 23rd, helping the team to a No. 2 finish. A year later Smith finished 16th at state at Scioto Downs in Columbus.

His mother, Kathy Miles, watched those state meets, knowing that the result was not as important as the quest.

"It helps him because he's working for himself and for his team," she said.

"He's physically strong," Elder

Other top athletes

Turn to page B2 for a list of other athletic accomplishments by area athletes.

See SMITH, B2

Smith an 'individual' for cross country team

Continued from B1

said, "and mentally strong. He just goes out to get it."

Practices "can be kind of a drag for a while," Smith said of the team's 1 1/2 hour runs. But while he doesn't like the task, he's happy with the company.

"I like how you have a smaller team," Smith said. "It's a tighter

team. You really get to know everyone."

And on the runs, Smith has time to get to know himself. For 3.1 miles — about 17 minutes in Smith time — he can think about his two brothers, his two sisters or his job at Kroger's.

He described himself as laid-back. Elder called him "very humble."

"Cross country's an individual sport in a team concept," Elder said. "He's definitely an individual."

Bedford 22, Fremont 34
Bedford 16, Sandusky 54
Fremont 18, Sandusky 51

INDIVIDUAL RESULTS — 1-Mike Wisniewski (B) 16:59; 2-Jeremiah Smith (F) 17:17; 3-Jeff Davis (B) 17:43; 4-Matt Koepfer (B) 17:45, 5-Kurt Snyder (F) 17:59; 6-Chris Forrey (B) 18:02; 7-Andy Cebull (S) 18:06; 8-Eric Gabel (F) 18:16, 9-Matt Danzinger (B) 18:22; 10-Jon Framstad (F) 18:44.

GIRLS

Fremont 15, Bedford 42
Fremont 15, Sandusky 58
Bedford 15, Sandusky 59

INDIVIDUAL RESULTS — 1-Lindsay Frontz (FR) 21:14; 2-Alison Kelly (FR) 21:20; 3-Kristyn Warner (FR) 21:47; 4-Monica Wood (FR) 21:58; 5-Abby Cominski (FR) 22:06; 6-Shannon Rens (B) 22:10; 7-Sarah Blanchard (B) 22:21; 8-Jamie Feeley (B) 22:39; 9-Molly O'Conner (FR) 10-Lisa Camp (B) 22:49.

Cross Country

28TH Tiffin Carnival

BOYS VARSITY DIVISION I-A

Team Standings

1-Cleveland St. Ignatius	122
2-Cincinnati Moeller	166
3-Hudson	174
4-Medina	205
5-Centerville	226
6-Bedford	238
7-Cin. Harrison	242
8-Tol. St. Francis	250
9-Ashland	255
10-Seneca East	296
11-Beavercreek	307
12-Pickerington	311
13-Westerville South	318
14-Kettering fairmont	322
15-Marion Harding	383
16-Southview	399
17-Findlay	399
18-Fremont Ross	426
19-Caldwell	452
20-Northview	459
21-Tol. Central Cath.	479
22-Amherst Steele	483
23-Mass. Perry	484
24-Eastlake North	621
25-Defiance	670
26-Fairborn	682

Winner And Area Finishers

1-Ernest Zigler (Harrison) 15:47
13-Jeremiah Smith (Ross) 16:42
81-Eric Gabel (Ross) 17:57
101-Jon Framstad (Ross) 18:08
111-Kurt Snyder (Ross) 18:14
123-Ryan Werling (Ross) 18:22
131-Eli Semer (Ross)
152-Jake Smith (Ross)

GIRLS VARSITY DIVISION I-A

Team Standings

1-Beavercreek	73
2-Cincinnati Colerain	78
3-Rocky River Magnificant	123
4-Seneca East	151
5-Cincinnati Anderson	156
6-Massillon Perry	215
7-Strongsville	255
8-Kent Roosevelt	273
9-Cin. Mother of Mercy	286
10-Middletoon	319
11-Fremont Ross	328
12-Southview	367
13-Tol. Central Cath.	411
14-Hudson	416
15-Pickerington	418
16-Ursline Acad.	421
17-Centerville	450
18-Lancaster	476
19-Notre Dame	482
20-Greenville	520
21-Columbian	546
22-Clay	565
23-Bedford	591
24-St. Ursula	593
25-Start	677
26-Eastlake North	852

Winner And Area Finishers

1-Tiffany Smith (Mass. Perry) 18:50
25-Lindsay Frontz (Ross) 20:15
52-Alison Kelly (Ross) 20:45
62-Monica Wood (Ross) 21:00
84-Kristyn Warner (Ross) 21:25
105-Abby Cominski (Ross) 21:43
138-Molly O' Connor (Ross) 22:24
162-Molly Gocke (Ross) 23:01

Ross girls win at Galion, boys team places fourth

News-Messenger reports

At the the Galion Invitational, Fremont Ross captured its second championship this season, finishing five points ahead of Ashland. Lindsay Frontz sparked the Little Giants, finishing third with a time of 19:23.

"We ran real balanced," said Ross coach Cathy Esposito. "I was hoping that they'd stay in a pack a little bit better. They did as well as they needed to do to win the invitational."

Ross's Molly Goecke won the open division race, with a time of

21:27.

Woodmore brought home a second-place finish from the Perrysburg Invitational "A" Division. The Wildcats' Lindsay Travis won the meet in 20 minutes even, while Amanda Roedarmel finished 34 seconds later for sixth place.

The Wildcats' 58 points were 19 more than meet champion Cardinall Stretch's total of 39.

Old Fort (221) finished 10th in the meet, led by Heidi Burks' 16th-place showing in 21:38. Gibsonburg followed with 243 points,

Cross Country

getting a 13th-place finish from Brooke Bowe (21:09).

In the "AA" Division, Clyde's 131 points placed it third behind Eastwood (72) and Blissfield (96). Oak Harbor finished 11th with 258 points.

BOYS CROSS COUNTRY

Sparked by Jeremiah Smith's second-place finish, the Fremont Ross boys cross country team placed fourth overall at the Galion Invitational Saturday.

Smith was just eight seconds behind winner William Sheets of Ashland, who finished in 16:01.

"(Smith) had a great race," said Ross coach John Elder. "That was really nice. We always go down there and count on doing well. ... We did better than we expected."

The Little Giants finished with 151 points. Winner Ashland had 65.

In the "AA" Division of the Perrysburg Invitational, Oak Harbor captured fourth place with 129 points. Bryan won the

meet with 86.

Kevin Straub paced the Rockets with a ninth-place finish (17:21).

"It was the best that we've run all year long," said Oak Harbor coach Bob Van Horn. "To finish fourth in this race was a sign that we're progressing the way we want to. The guys came to run."

Clyde, led by Jason Hill (14th, 17:32) and Josh Cook (17th, 17:48) finished on the Rockets' heels, with 129 points. Genoa had a 10th-place showing (244), while Margaretta finished 12th (279).

Jeremiah Smith continued his dominance for the Fremont Ross boys cross country team, finishing first in the Little Giants' 15-46 victory over Great Lakes League rival Fostoria.

Smith finished in 17:26, 32 seconds before second-place finisher Kurt Snyder of Ross.

Smith has top time in Little Giants win against Whitmer

News-Messenger reports

The Fremont Ross boys cross country team ran a near-perfect race in defeating Great Lakes League foe Toledo Whitmer, 16-47, Tuesday. With a time of 17:07, Jeremiah Smith took first place for the Little Giants (5-2, 3-1 GLL). Kurt Snyder (second, 17:56), Eric Gabel (third, 18:04) and Jon Framstead (fourth, 18:12) followed.

Phil Riehm led Old Fort to a 19-48 victory over Elmwood, with a first-place time of 17:47. Dan

CROSS COUNTRY

Haugh finished second overall for the Stockaders in 18:07. In a Sandusky Bay Conference tri-meet, Clyde totaled 27 points to run past Port Clinton (48) and Edison (55). Clyde's Jason Hill finished second overall, with a 17:41, one second behind meet winner Rob Schaffer of Elmwood.

Oak Harbor's Kevin Straub captured a victory with a time of

17:41 to lead the Rockets to a tri-meet win over Genoa and Margaretta. Andy Miller helped secure the Rockets' 18-point total with a second-place showing in 17:43.

Genoa had 43 points, while Margaretta had 52.

GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY

Margaretta's second-through-fourth runners boosted the Polar Bears' score as they edged Oak Harbor and Genoa, 36-37-51, in a tri-meet. Oak Harbor's Jessica

Baumgartner won the meet in 21:12.

Ashley Orshoski topped Margaretta with a second-place time of 21:25. Manette Finneran was seventh (22:54) and Lynn O'Rork was eighth (23:27), while Claire Miller and Abbi Smith tied for ninth in 23:35.

Jenny Staats cruised to a 1-minute, 15-second victory as Clyde downed Edison and Port Clinton in a Sandusky Bay Conference tri-meet. Staats' 20:07 bested Edison's Meagan Zitner,

who timed a 21:22. Clyde's Rachel Salazar was third, with a 21:35.

Elmwood downed Old Fort, 21-34, getting a first-place finish from Sandy Zeigler (21:22) and a No. 3 showing from Jenny Jacobs (23:06).

Lindsey Frontz, Alison Kelly, Kristyn Warner and Monica Wood finished in the top four spots for Fremont Ross as the Little Giants downed Whitmer, 19-35, for their fourth win without a loss in the GLL.

Cross Country

OREGON CLAY INVITATIONAL

Boys Div. I

1, Bedford	46
2, Maumee.....	82
3, Toledo St. John's.....	122
4, Toledo St. Francis	133
5, Toledo Central Catholic Area teams	
8, Fremont Ross.....	217

Ross: 1-Jeremiah Smith 16:19, 39-Eric Gabel 17:30, 40-Jon Framsted 17:31, 52-Kurt Snyder 17:52, 85-Ryan Werling 18:31, 92-Eli Semer 18:46, 94-Kevin Alexander 18:48

Ross open race results: 9-Jake Smith 18:29, 22-Josh Burris 18:56, 88-Derek Wensinger 20:45

Girls Div. I

1, Amherst Steele	105
2, Toledo Central Catholic 119	

3, Fremont Ross 126

4, Notre Dame (Toledo).....	149
5, Bowling Green	198

Ross: 6-Lindsay Frontz 19:31, 19-Alison Kelly 20:25, 27-Kristyn Warner 20:35, 31-Monica Wood 20:40, 43-Abby Cominsky 21:00

Ross's Smith wins Clay race, Stockaders take 1st in team meet

Jeremiah Smith of **Fremont**

Ross won the Div. I boys cross country race at the **Oregon Clay** Invitational Saturday. Smith finished in 16:19 to lead the Little Giants to an eighth-place finish.

"Jeremiah Smith ran a super race," Ross boys coach John Elder said. "This was an important race because it let's everyone know how district meets in northwest Ohio will be. Based on the results, we're the 6th best team in districts."

The Ross girls placed third, with Lindsay Frontz turning in the Little Giants best place (6th, 19:31).

"We definitely can run with them," Ross girls coach Kathy Esposito said of Amherst Steele, the meet winners.

Clean sweep

Ross wins all 7 GLL meets

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

Sure, there are bigger and better things on the horizon for the Fremont Ross girls country team other than Tuesday's Great Lakes League tri-meet with Oregon, Clay and Findlay.

CROSS COUNTRY

The league championship meet is in 10 days, with districts and regionals right on its heels.

But there was plenty of value — more than just finishing undefeated in the league — to beating Clay, 22-50, and Findlay, 15-50, said coach Cathy Esposito.

"I think every time we run a meet like this it prepares us a little better for bigger meets, and these girls need to run competitively to keep their mindset. They get really mentally down when they don't compete and all they're doing is practicing," Esposito said.

They practiced winning Tuesday, running in an air-tight pack for the majority of the rough, hilly Walsh Park course to finish 9-0 overall in dual meets and perfect in seven GLL contests.

The Ross boys team also won its meet, dumping Findlay, 25-30, and beating Clay by virtue of forfeit. Brett Baddorf set a course record for Findlay.

While Clay sophomore Katie Sekinger breezed to a girls victory in 20:04, the Little Giants claimed six of the top eight spots, led by Lindsay Frontz's second-place showing in 20:48.

"I felt pretty good," said Frontz, a sophomore. "Better than I usually feel on this course. It's hard. Too many hills."

Frontz, who has not finished lower than second in any of Ross's dual meets, is part of a talented youth movement that has blessed Esposito's squad this season.

"I knew they would step up, but I didn't think they'd be as strong as they are, though," said Esposito. "They're fantastic. My freshmen are very dependable."

The same can be said for the upperclassmen, too. Finishing

See **UPPERCLASSMEN, B2**

Upperclassmen key in cross country win

Continued from B1

third in Tuesday's meet was Alison Kelly (20:58), while senior captain Monica Wood was just six seconds behind. Juniors Kristyn Warner (sixth, 21:30) and Jami Toeppe (seventh, 22:02), making a comeback from a basketball injury, capped Ross's scoring.

Only Findlay's Jodi Harrington could crowbar her way into the pack-rats that were the Little Giants.

"That's exactly what we practice all the time," said Esposito. Our pack stayed together today and there really wasn't anyone around to break it up."

Like any good postseason-bound team, Ross has been able to shore up its roster. (Was that Indians GM John Hart around the Purple Pit?)

No trades or free agent acquisitions, but rather the return of Toeppe after a successful rehabilitation from a stress fracture suffered last winter. She has practiced with the team for about a month, and Tuesday marked a triumphant return for state runner-up.

"I knew we would have the depth to get us through the year so that Jami would be able to heal and come in when we needed her, and that's what's happened," Esposito said.

Now comes a lull for the Little Giants, and it is Esposito's chore to keep her team focused.

"Just concentrate on helping them to peak for the big meets, districts and regionals," Esposito said of her

goal for the next 10 days leading up to the league meet at Oregon's Pearson Park. "That's our goal now, just to peak."

Meanwhile, the Ross boys team took three of the top five spots while in awe of Baddorf's performance. Baddorf finished in 16:36, three seconds better than former Trojan and state champion Sam Bell's 1994 mark.

Jeremiah Smith paced the Little Giants with a second-place finish (16:54). Jon Framstead finished fourth (18:01), Eric Gabel fifth (18:10), Kurt Snyder sixth (18:18) and Eli Semer ninth (18:31).

Smith was neck-and-neck with Baddorf for the first half of the race before Baddorf pulled away.

"In the second mile I fell off, I don't know why," Smith said. "I was just tired, I guess, and my legs gave out."

Monday's training regimen may have contributed to Ross's heavy feet.

"We've had people finally step up. We've just got to put it all on the same page in the same meet," Smith said. "We're capable of it, we just have to mentally prove it to ourselves first."

Said coach John Elder: "Down the road, we want to see how well we can do. We think we can get second in the GLL (behind Bedford), and based on this meet I think we can. ..."

"We want to look forward to after the league meet. We want to see districts, regionals, state. We want to get as far as we can."

