

# *Giants slip past Woodward*

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OREGON — Ross squandered a golden opportunity early but took advantage of a last inning Woodward miscue to defeat the Polar Bears 2-1 in the Class AAA Sectional Tournament semifinals Thursday.

John Rios scored from second base on Doug Gallagher's third hit of the game and an error on Woodward leftfielder Chris Cielewski in the top of the seventh.

Gallagher had scored Ross's first run in the first inning after tripling. Brian Humbarger's sacrifice fly brought the Ross second baseman home.

Pinch-hitter Jim Hufford started Ross's last inning rally off losing pitcher Glen Burtis. After working Burtis to a full count of fouling off several pitches, Hufford walked. Ross's second pinch-hitter, Steve Ebert popped up on a last attempt to Burtis for the first out.

Leadoff hitter John Rios forced Hufford at second but stole second with Gallagher at the plate. Gallagher singled to left but Rios hesitated momentarily. Cielewski, playing in close, bobbled the ball as Rios was rounding third. By the time Cielewski got control of the ball, it was too late.

"He (Rios) was coming all the way," Coach Chuck Lindsey said.

That was one thing Lindsey had complete confidence in; he did not have that confidence during Ross's fourth inning golden opportunity.

The Little Giants loaded the bases with no outs on Jay Bower's second single, a walk to Bobby Clark and a single by Brian Farr. Burtis regained his composure after Farr's hit and struck out Troy Logan, Tom Pena and Jim Burkett to get out of the jam.

"We had tried a squeeze play the other day," Lindsey said, "and it didn't work. I guess I lost confidence in it. We had veterans coming up and I thought somebody would hit it.

"But I can't take anything away from their pitcher, he got the job done when he had to."

Pena won his second game of the tournament. He had beaten Macomber 12-2 Saturday. This time, he gave up four hits, struck out four and walked four.

The Ross righthander did not give up a hit until doubles by Cieslewski and Bob Vergiels produced Woodward's run in the fourth.

The Little Giants will play Toledo Central Catholic at 7 p.m. Monday for the sectional title and a berth in the district tourney.

"These seniors," Lindsey reflected, "worked their butts off this winter; I hope that we can win Monday."

Ross is 11-3 while Woodward lost for the third time in 13 games.