

1999 Sectional Tournament

# Clyde stays unbeaten in conference

## Watkins gets second seed

News-Messenger reports

CLYDE — The Clyde girls tennis team remained unbeaten in the Sandusky Bay Conference with a 4-1 win over Edison on Monday.

Cassie Newsome beat Ashley Schaeffer 6-3, 6-1 at first singles, Amanda Showman beat Kim Taylor 6-1, 6-1 at second singles and Marissa Greenslade beat Kelly Cole 6-2, 6-1 at third singles.

Andrea Wilson and Danielle Shetzer beat Jessica Sisson and Erin Miller 6-0, 6-1 at first doubles, but the Fliers' pair of Kelly Williams and Laura Seaman lost 7-5, 3-6, 2-6 to Melissa Brunetti and Noelle Tanigawa at second doubles.

Janetta Chrisman, Jennah Craig, Jessica Brenneman, Heather Langley and Hannah Young were junior varsity winners for Clyde.

The Fliers remained one game ahead of Port Clinton in the SBC race. The Red-

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skins beat Sandusky St. Mary's 5-0 on Monday.

### Watkins gets second seed

Fremont Ross senior Ainsley Watkins, fresh off her second straight Great Lakes League championship, is the No. 2 seed in the Little Giants' sectional.

Watkins will receive a first round bye, and her second round opponent will be with Ashley Barbone of Mansfield Senior or Alison Leedy of

Ashland. Melissa Schaub of Lexington is the sectional's top seed.

Sheri Pollock of Ross plays Tiffin Columbian's Rutu Dalal in the first round, and Laura Papalia plays Columbian's Michelle Maxwell.

The Little Giants' top doubles team of Erica Wolfe and Gina Melchiori faces Sandusky's Jessica Samko and Dana Wobser in the first round, and Nicole Wolfe and Brittany Ford face Ashland's Amanda Pheifer and Anjie Tennis.

# Giving it one last shot



News-Messenger/Liz Margerum

AINSLEY WATKINS is the second-seeded singles player at this weekend's Division I sectional tournament at Sandusky.

## Ross ready for sectional

By SCOTT TAPPA  
Sports editor

It was a tough loss. Needing just one win reach the state tennis tournament last year, Ainsley Watkins of Fremont Ross played Ashland's Sarah Juzwik in the district semifinals at Bowling Green.

Then a junior, Watkins lost 7-6 (8-6), 6-3, 7-5, before losing to powerhouse Allyson Gabel of St. Ursula in straight sets.

"That was heartbreaking, because I wanted it so bad," said Watkins.

Watkins is now a year older and a year wiser as she heads into this weekend's Division I sectional at Sandusky High School as the second seed.

"Last year, I saw a lot of emotion when she was play-

ing at BG for that third spot," said Ross coach Lisa Wolfe. "I don't think I'll see that this year. She had a lot of nerves, we couldn't seem to calm her down, but she is so focused this year, she won't let anything bother her."

Watkins' senior season has already been a success. She carries a 20-4 record and a second straight Great Lakes League singles title into sectional play.

"The one goal I set before the beginning of the season was to win the GLL, and I definitely accomplished that," said Watkins, who lost a total of 12 games over two matches in winning her second straight league title.

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## Clyde rebounds from PC loss

News-Messenger reports

CLYDE — The Clyde girls tennis team rebounded from its first Sandusky Bay Conference loss of the season to post a tough 3-2 win over SBC rival Huron on Wednesday.

"It's a testament to the experience my girls have," said Clyde coach Jeff MacFarland. "I've got five seniors and two juniors, and they know how to bounce back. They wanted it, they had a goal to finish atop the SBC."

The Fliers lost to Port Clinton on Tuesday to even the two teams in the SBC. After beating Edison 4-1 on Wednesday, the Redskins must still play Huron.

Wednesday, Clyde got two singles wins and a doubles win to top the Tigers.

Morgan Landes beat

Cassie Newsome 6-0, 6-1 at first singles, but Clyde won the next two matches, with Amanda Showman beating Abby Crooks 6-3, 4-6, 6-2 and Marissa Greenslade beating Lauren Skaggs 7-6 (9-7), 3-6, 6-2.

Huron's Alix Faust and Catherine Taylor beat Andrea Wilson and Danielle Shetzer 6-2, 6-2 at first doubles, but Clyde's Kelly Williams and Laura Seaman beat Elizabeth Borden and Jen Furey 6-2, 6-4 at second doubles.

Clyde (14-2, 10-1) has one SBC match left, with Sandusky St. Mary's on Monday. On Tuesday, the Fliers play Napoleon in the OTCA tournament, and attempt to reach the finals of that tournament for the second time in three years.

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# Ross pairs Wolfe, Melchiori for top doubles entry

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But her game has come a long way since last season's tournament. In addition to working on the mental game, Watkins has tried to add a little more speed on her shots.

"Last year I worked on consistency, this year I worked on getting more pace on the ball," she said.

It looks like the work is paying off.

"When she gets her first serve in — and it's a high percentage — it's just beautiful, opponents just say, 'Nice shot,'" said Wolfe. "Her backhand, her forehand, they've all greatly improved through the season. She's never been a net player, she does her thing at the baseline."

After going through last season as one of two underclassmen on a team dominated by seniors, Watkins has assumed more of a leadership role on this year's team, Wolfe said.

"The leadership she has shown this year is unbelievable, the work ethic," the coach said. "She never wants to rest, she wants to continu-

ally play, and it shows on the court when she plays a match. She never gives up, that will carry her these next couple weeks."

Watkins has a first round bye, and will play the winner of the Ashley Barbone (Mansfield Senior)-Alison Leedy (Ashland) match. Barbone is not Mansfield's No. 1 player, and Watkins said Ashland's top three singles players will be playing doubles in the tournament, meaning Leedy is normally a doubles player.

Watkins' first test would likely come in the fourth round, where third-seeded Rachael Stein of Mansfield will likely await. Watkins beat the volatile Stein earlier this year, a match Watkins said is one of the highlights of her senior season.

"She beat me two years ago in three sets, and that was a heart-breaker," Watkins said. "I beat her pretty handily, but I'll probably meet up with her again. She's a really hard person to play against."

Watkins' district nemesis last year, Juzwik, has opted to play doubles this year with teammate Ann Larue. The Ashland pair is seeded first

and sits in the upper half of the sectional bracket, the same as the Ross duo of Erica Wolfe and Gina Melchiori.

Wolfe (19-5) and Melchiori (15-7), the Little Giants' usual third and second singles players, respectively, are teamed up for the first time, and they've made rapid progress in the several days they've worked together, said coach Wolfe.

"(Tuesday)'s practice was excellent," Wolfe said. "They had a little bit of the negatives going on at Monday's practice, and we straightened that right up. Tuesday they turned their game totally around."

As evidence, the coach said Wolfe and Melchiori lost to Brittany Ford and Nicole Wolfe, Ross's usual top doubles team, on Monday, but came back and won 6-0, 6-0 on Tuesday.

"Gina has a major strong forehand, the strongest forehand next to Ainsley on the team," coach Wolfe said. "Erica is an attentive player, never takes her eye off the ball, and that makes a good doubles player. They both have very good serves."

Melchiori and Erica Wolfe open against Jessica Samko and Dana Wobser of Sandusky. Wobser played the GLL tournament at third singles, while Samko played first doubles.

The first seed the Ross team would meet would be the fourth-seeded team from Mansfield Madison, Kristi Remy and Tabi Smith, who are also singles players making the transition to doubles.

Ford and Nicole Wolfe get a seed right off the bat, No. 3 Anjie Tennis and Amanda Pfeifer of Ashland. But coach Wolfe said her team has a chance to pull some upsets.

"If Brittany's playing an aggressive net game, that's the ticket," she said. "Nicole's first serve, if it's in, is basically untouchable. If those two things can be combined on Friday, they'll be fine."

Rounding out the Ross singles lineup are Laura Papalia and Sheri Pollock, who usually team together at second doubles.

"I'm glad to see both seniors able to play on varsity," Wolfe said. "Personality-wise, they're very nice, easy to get along with."

# 3 Ross players move to district

## Both Clyde doubles teams advance

News-Messenger reports

**SANDUSKY** — Fremont Ross senior Ainsley Watkins beat one rival but lost to another one Saturday at the Division I tennis sectional at Sandusky High School.

Watkins beat Rachael Stein of Mansfield Senior 6-2, 6-0 in the semifinals, but lost to Lexington's Melissa Schaub 6-1, 6-1 in the final.

The Little Giants doubles team of Gina Melchiori and Erica Wolfe lost both of its matches Saturday. In the semifinals, Melchiori and Wolfe lost to Ann Larue and Sarah Juzwik of Ashland 6-0, 6-2, and lost to Stephanie Kissell and Lara Ellinger of Tiffin Columbian 6-3, 4-6, 6-0 in the consolation match.

Melchiori, Wolfe and Watkins advance to Friday's

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district tournament at Bowling Green State University.

Players from powerful Toledo St. Ursula will be the Little Giants' key opponents from the Division I Jermain Park Toledo sectional. Anna Volberg, Julia Masters and Melissa Noe advanced in singles, and the doubles teams of Jenni Nixon and Angie Bhat and Eva Szuch and Kate Lohner finished 1-2.

Notre Dame's Kristin Murphy is the other singles player to qualify, and Notre Dame's Kristi Spriggle and Megan Flynn and Central Catholic's Katie and Julie Bohl are the other doubles teams from that sectional.

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See **CLYDE, B2**