

Elyria comeback ends Ross season

By BOB MARKER
Sports Editor

ASHLAND — The Fremont Ross dream softball season ended Saturday as Elyria wiped out a 4-0 Little Giants lead to post a 6-4 victory in the Division I Girls Softball Regional Tournament finals at Brookside Park.

The Pioneers (20-3) stopped the Ross winning streak at 23 and the Little Giants bowed out with a 24-4 mark.

Elyria scored five runs in the bottom of the fifth inning, bunching four hits and a pair of Ross errors. The Pioneers added an insurance run in the sixth on another error and a hit.

"We did not make things go right," Ross coach Cheryl Coressel said. "We were nervous and created out mistakes like we did during the season. We said eventually it would catch up to us and it did today."

Coressel said her team was uncharacteristically nervous.

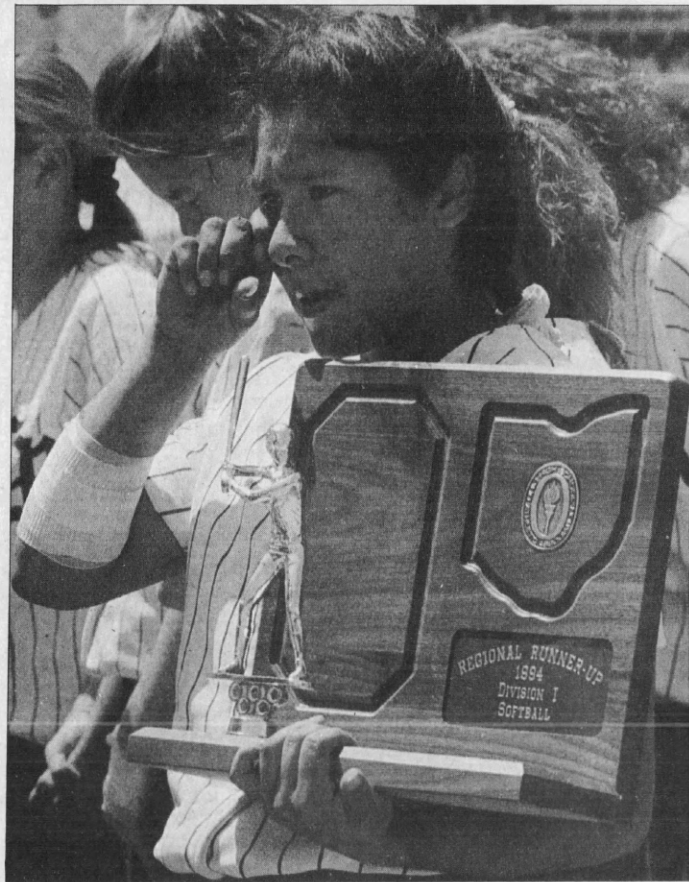
"We never had a lead before," the Ross coach said. "We were sitting on a lead and I think we started looking ahead a little, relaxing and enjoying the day, and we did not make some big plays and Elyria started to hit, too."

Jessica Rollins, who lost for only the third time in 20 decisions, staked herself to a second-inning lead, lining a three-run homer over Jen Plasel's head to the base of the wall in left field. A single by Tricia Busdeker, who had two of the four hits of Elyria freshman Lindsey Anderson, a fielder's choice and Casey Schepflin's single preceded Rollins' blast.

In the third, Dawn Zerman was safe on an error, went to second on Donna Steinberger's sacrifice, moved up to third as Holly Pelfrey flied to center and scored on a passed ball for a 4-0 Ross lead.

Anderson, though, relaxed after that, retiring 12 batters before Busdeker singled leading off the seventh.

In the Elyria fifth, the Pioneers batted around. Kristy Kidder was safe on Zerman's error at short leading off. Kidder moved up on a fielder's choice and scored on Plasel's single to



News-Messenger/Jeremy Wadsworth

BELINDA SANDOVAL of Ross wipes a tear away while holding regional tournament runner-up trophy.

right. Plasel moved to second on right fielder Jamie Hinkle's throwing error.

Jolyn Noe singled and Beth Forbus' infield single loaded the bases. A run scored when Schepflin's throw from second on Maria Norton's grounder

was late at the plate. Tammy Yount followed with a two-run single of Busdeker's glove at

first to tie the game. Tawanda Parnell, running for Norton, scored on Carrie Robinson's bunt when she beat the throw from Busdeker, putting Ross down 5-4.

In the Elyria sixth, Kidder was credited with a double when Zerman apparently lost the ball in the bright sun and it fell between her and Steinberg-

er in short left field.

Kidder scored on Zerman's throwing error on Noe's two-out grounder.

The season ended further into the tournament than expected Coressel admitted.

"Still, we could have gone a little further," she said, "but we made our mistakes."

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Saturday, May 28, 1994 B1

Fremont Ross in regional finals

■ **Big Inning:** Busdeker's 5th-inning triple gives Little Giants 4-3 victory.

By BOB MARKER
Sports Editor

ASHLAND — Tricia Busdeker tripled in two runs in the fifth inning to give Fremont Ross a 4-3 win over Toledo Notre Dame Academy in the semifinals of the Division I Girls Regional Softball Tournament Friday at Brookside Park.

Ross stretched its winning streak to 23 games and will take a 24-3 record into today's 1 p.m. finals against Elyria. 19-3 Thursday, the Pioneers defeated Celina 5-2 in the other semifinal game. Notre Dame ended its season at 22-3.

"We just came back and hit the ball in that one inning," Ross coach Cheryl Coressel said. "This team never gets down. It keeps coming back. They always know there are opportunities."

With one out in the Ross fifth, Dawn Zerman doubled over left fielder Jenny Brennan. Donna



BUSDOKER PELFREY

Steinberger grounded out but Holly Pelfrey singled in Zerman to cut Notre Dame's lead to 3-2. Belinda Sandoval, celebrating her 18th birthday, followed with another single putting runners at first and second. Busdeker tripled to left center on an 0-1 count to score Pelfrey and Sandoval.

"Yes," Busdeker agreed when asked if she has been frustrated at the plate this season. "This pays off, especially since I am a senior."

Said Coressel, "She has been hitting the ball hard but now she is starting to hit the holes."

Notre Dame coach Leigh Ross said, "Ross just got their timing down against Holy."

Ross scored a run in the bot-

tom of the first for the early lead. Zerman walked leading off against losing pitcher Holly Hahn. Zerman stole second and went to third on Donna Steinberger's sacrifice bunt. Pelfrey drove in the first of her two runs when she grounded to third baseman Melissa Berndt. Zerman faked going home, causing Berndt to hesitate before throwing to first. When Berndt threw to first, Zerman scored.

Notre Dame scored three unearned runs in the second. Designated hitter Angie Lewandowski led off with a single on winning pitcher Jessica Rollins (17-2). Hahn was safe on Zerman's error at shortstop. Berndt doubled to right center scoring Lewandowski, but Hahn was out at the plate on Ross right fielder Jamie Hinkle's relay to center.

After Rollins struck out Catlin Carr, she hit Jenny Brennan with a pitch on an 0-2 count. Angie Domschot's single scored Berndt and Melanie Brown singled to score Brennan for a 3-1 Eagles lead.

Notre Dame threatened again

Directions to Brookside Park

Fremont Ross plays Elyria today at 1 p.m. in the Division I Girls Regional Softball Tournament at Brookside Park in Ashland.

Following are the directions to the game site furnished by the Ross Athletic Department:

Take US 20 east to SR 250 South. Do not take the 250 by-pass north of Ashland, instead continued on into Ashland. Turn right on SR 250 (also called Sandusky Street) and follow until reaching the first stop light. There will be a sign that reads Brookside Park. Turn left and this will take you straight into the park.

Admission to the game is \$4.

In the third when Jenny Domschot was safe on Pelfrey's three-base error in center. After a grounder, Hahn popped to Busdeker at first and Domschot was out at the plate attempting to score on the pop up behind first.

In the fourth, Ross turned in another double play when Berndt was doubled off first by Pelfrey on Brennan's fly out.

Notre Dame got a runner to second with one out in the sixth but Rollins retired the side on a pop up and a fly ball. In the final inning, Rollins set the Eagles down on two fly balls and a ground out.

Robbins doubled and singled for Ross as the nine-hit attack was spread out among seven batters. Rollins doubled in the sixth with one out but was stranded at second.

Rollins did not walk a batter but hit one batter while striking out two. She allowed seven hits.

Coressel jokingly talked about icing the cake, a theme she has used since her team won the Great Lakes League championship.

"The frosting is pretty heavy," she laughed, "I think now we are putting the candles on this fun."

REGIONAL SOFTBALL PREVIEW

Little Giants savor postseason

■ **First regional:** Fremont Ross takes a 22-game win streak to Ashland.

By BOB MARKER
Sports Editor

CANTALIA — Marguerite coach Jerry Pooch would like to hang on to this softball season as long as she can, but to maintain the Division I girls' championship trophy.

The Polar Bears (18-1) will face Lima Beth (21-2) in the regional semifinals at 4:30 p.m. Thursday at The Ohio High School. Beth was the state runner-up last season.

"Today was the first day I took the trophy out of my truck," said Pooch, in his first season as coach. "Pooch, a 1988 Marguerite graduate, said the formula for the Polar Bears' success is simple. "Hard work and a lot of dedication from my players," she said Tuesday afternoon while getting ready for practice.

Marguerite finished second in the Division I Softball Ray Conference race. "I was hoping this team would hit second."

Pooch said, admitting that not winning the NSC eliminated a postseason goal.

Getting at least to the district tournament was another goal, while reaching the regional has added satisfaction.

What makes it this far is very exciting for the girls," Pooch said.

Polar Bears handle pressure well

Pooch has labeled a young team with three seniors. Her starting pitchers are senior Allie Chapman and freshman Sarah Lowery. Chapman is the control pitcher and Lowery the speed runner.

In the infield, Pooch starts a representative from all four classes. In the outfield, it is a junior and a pair of sophomores. The outfield is a center. "That makes it look nice for the years to come," Pooch said. "The pitching and defense has been the key to our season. The hitting has not been too strong but we have had a lot of key hits. We deal very well with pressure. As soon as the pressure is on, we play well."

The pressure returns Thursday.

It gets into the tournaments.

There was more pressure during the season when everyone began assuming that we were going to win the trophy," she said.

There was no margin for error. "There you get new talent as a talent. We are just enjoying our experiences in the tournament."

Coressel used an old cliché of each was being icing on the cake. "And I like my frosting thick," she laughed about a season that began and had a getting sweeter all the time.