

Ross captures sectional title

Little Giants knock off previously unbeaten Madison 10-1

News-Messenger Reports

BUCYRUS — John Stierwalt handcuffed previously unbeaten Mansfield Madison on four hits as Fremont Ross upset the Rams 10-1 in the Class AAA sectional baseball finals at Wynford High School Saturday.

Madison had entered the game with a 19-0 mark and immediately took a 1-0 lead on Rob Peterson's home run in the bottom of the first.

In the top of the second, Gregg Gallagher was grazed on the helmet by a George Novasic pitch leading off the inning.

"It grazed him but you could hear the pop," Ross Coach Dan Fought described. "But he stayed in."

Mike Hrynciw followed with a two-run homer to give Ross the lead.

"He (Novasic) never came back after that," Fought said. "Then we got two more (runs) off him in the third."

That rally came with two outs. Scott Weber was safe on an error and Stierwalt doubled him home. Gallagher, revived from the near beaming, singled to score Stierwalt.

The Little Giants put the game out of reach with a six-run fifth inning. Ross had seven hits in the inning, including RBI singles by Rick Egbert and Mike Zelms and a pair of double steals with the front end of those thefts being home plate. A wild pitch and a passed ball accounted for the other runs.

Stierwalt fanned six, walked one and threw just 86 pitches.

"He was never in trouble after the second

inning," Fought said about his pitcher. "He had two runners on in that inning but no runner got to second after that inning."

Fought was also smiling about Ross's second errorless game of the season.

"That was really nice," he said. "In the last four games, we have played good baseball."

Four players — Weber, Stierwalt, Gallagher and Zelms — had two hits apiece. Designated hitter Zelms, a sophomore, was in his first start on the varsity team.

The Little Giants had 13 hits.

Ross, 10-11, is slated to play Bowling Green this afternoon at 4:30 in the Class AAA district tourney at Findlay High School. Ross lost a double-header to the Bobcats earlier this season.