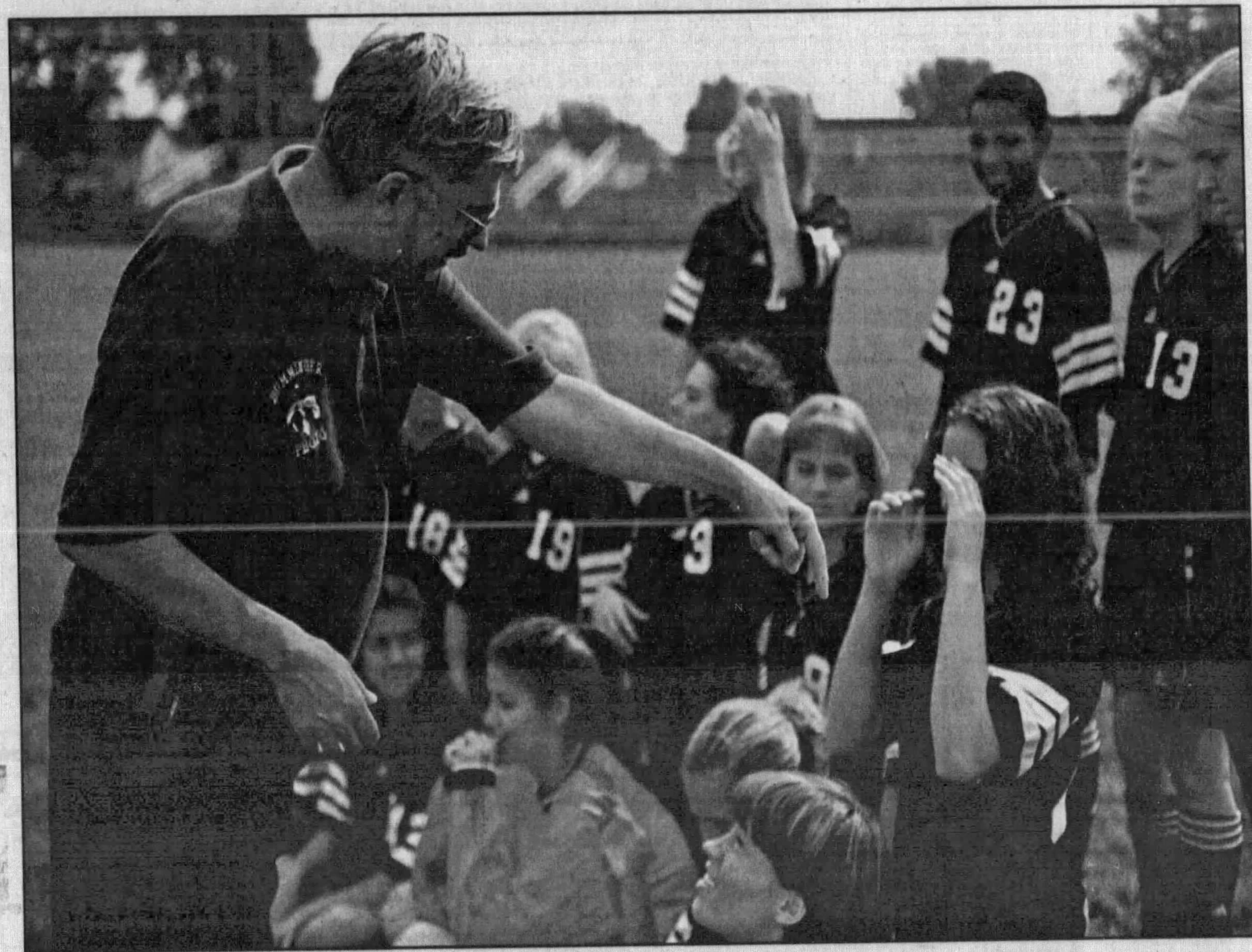


'Back row left, move in a little'



News-Messenger/Liz Margerum

PHOTOGRAPHER KEN DUMMINGER directs members of the Fremont Ross girls soccer team at the school's fall athletic picture day Friday. Coach Scott McVeigh reported that 27 girls are out for the first edition of girls soccer at Ross. The team begins play Aug. 30 at Sylvania Southview.

Girls soccer team a welcome addition to Ross varsity roster

Scott McVeigh was a little nervous on Monday.

McVeigh, coach of the first-ever girls soccer team at Fremont Ross, was about to lead his team to Sylvania for the team's first-ever game, against Southview. To work off his nerves, the coach did what felt natural.

"I was shooting baskets 10 minutes before the bus left," said McVeigh, also a junior varsity boys basketball coach at the school. "Oh yeah, I was nervous."

Yet McVeigh was calmed when the first whistle blew, and his girls came out firing



**Scott
Tappa**

Commentary

like a team that's been together for 10 years, not just a couple of months.

Allison Clark scored the Little Giants' first-ever goal, with Johanna Wearsch providing the first-ever assist on a nice crossing pass, and the Ross offense generated

many more scoring chances in a first-ever first half that pleased the coach.

Unfortunately, high school soccer games last 80 minutes, and over the second 40 the Little Giants' lack of experience was exposed.

"I thought we had a good shot at tying this team, or beating them," McVeigh said. "This proves you have to play 80 minutes."

Well, coach, look at it this way: at least you know your team is capable of at least 40 minutes, not 30, or 20 or 10. Some coaches would probably kill for a half of consis-

tent play.

It comes as a surprise to me that girls soccer took this long to catch on as a varsity sport in Fremont. While other sports obviously have bigger followings, the soccer community is dedicated and well-organized.

Back home, my high school has had girls varsity soccer for about 10 years; my sister earned all-conference honors as a goalkeeper.

My high school also has had a girls golf program for quite some time now. We've seen girls golf teams at Ross in the past, and plenty of

girls have played for boys teams at Ross and St. Joe. Could that be next?

While the recent U.S. Women's World Cup success has made for great sport and even better theater, it would be unfair to say Brandi Chastain's Cup-clinching goal is solely responsible for the boom in women's sport in general, and the creation of this soccer team in particular. Monday's opener was the culmination of several years of planning and interest-building, which probably seemed like several decades to the people involved.

And even though the hosts made the game lopsided on the scoreboard, the guests had them beat in one area: sheer numbers.

"I was talking to their coach, and at Southview they've had soccer for 10 years," McVeigh said. "We actually had more girls out than they have out, 28 to 27, so it was nice to hear that."

Welcome to the party, ladies. Good luck.

■
Scott Tappa is sports editor for The News-Messenger. Contact him at 332-8721, ext. 142.

Ross scores first, but falls in opener

Clark scores team's first goal

News-Messenger reports

SYLVANIA — If Monday's game against Sylvania Southview was a movie, the Fremont Ross girls soccer team would have been better off leaving after the opening credits. But as premieres go, the whole show still wasn't bad.

In the first varsity girls soccer game in school histo-

ry, the Little Giants scored a goal just minutes into the contest — and played their hosts to a 1-1 tie after one half — before falling to Southview 7-1.

"You don't like to take one on the nose like that, but the first half, I thought everybody played well," said Ross coach Scott McVeigh. "That's how we're capable of playing. In the second half, (Southview) made some adjustments, and we lost it for a five- or six-minute span, and they scored two or three

quick ones. That was it."

Allison Clark scored the historic first goal for Ross just two minutes into the game, taking a cross from Johanna Wearsch and converting to give Ross a 1-0 lead.

"They were just pumped, everybody was off the bench cheering, the whole Fremont side was go-



CLARK

ing crazy," said McVeigh, who said his team drew a large contingent of fans. "I think we caught them off guard, they weren't expecting it."

"The first 40 minutes we played great. We had a couple more opportunities that we missed. But in the second half, we just kind of broke down defensively."

McVeigh said Allyson Hickey had a solid game directing the Ross defense, Clark played well at her forward spot and Wearsch,

Monday	
Southview.....	7
Ross.....	1

Wednesday	
Ross at Margareta	
switching between forward and center halfback, controlled the game when playing the latter position. McVeigh also praised the play of halfback Sashay Price.	

"We had a couple people that stepped up that we thought would," McVeigh

said. "We played better than I thought we would, but after a couple quick goals, we got a lot of mental mistakes."

"But the kids played hard, they played their hearts out, and they're still learning."

Ross travels to Castalia Wednesday to play a Margareta junior varsity team — if the Polar Bears' coaches aren't on strike. The match was a late pickup for the team, which otherwise wouldn't have played again until a Sept. 8 Great Lakes League game at Findlay.

Ross tops Bears for first win

Werling's four goals key win

News-Messenger reports

CASTALIA — That didn't take too long.

In just its second match, the Fremont Ross girls soccer team recorded its first-ever win, beating Margareta 6-1 on Wednesday.

"It's a nice feeling. The girls were pumped," said Ross coach Scott McVeigh. "It didn't hit them until I mentioned that it was their first win. They started getting excited."

Freshman Brittany Wer-

ling notched the team's first hat trick, scoring the first three goals for Ross and four overall.

"I thought we played really well tonight, it was a team effort for the full 80 minutes," McVeigh said. "We preached to them at halftime, 'We played 40, we've been here before, but it doesn't mean a thing if we don't play a second 40.' They focused more than they did Monday night (a loss to Sylvania Southview)."

Ross scored the game's first goal, but the host Polar Bears responded to tie the game at 1-1.

"We came out kind of sluggish," McVeigh said. "I don't

Soccer

know if it was overconfidence or what. But then we took over the game."

The Little Giants scored three goals in an eight-minute span — with Werling completing her hat trick in just 26 minutes — and cruised to a 5-1 halftime lead.

Allison Clark and Nicki Straight also scored for Ross. In goal, Jenn Mielke recorded eight saves for Ross, making several nice plays on balls that got through the defense.

"We passed much better than we did Monday night," McVeigh said. "Trapping-

wise, taking the ball out of the air, just controlling the ball, we did a much better job than Monday. We probably won 80 percent of the balls contested between two teams."

McVeigh said Marie Erchenbrecher did a nice job of shutting down Margareta's top offensive weapon.

"They had a girl playing up front who was a lightning-fast player," he said. "We stuck Marie on her halfway through the first half, and the girl probably got one or two touches the rest of the way. It got her real frustrated."

Ross plays at Findlay next Wednesday.

Ross girls top Sandusky

News-Messenger reports

SANDUSKY — The site may not have been the first choice for the Fremont Ross girls soccer team, but the result wasn't bad.

The Little Giants won their first Great Lakes League match Monday, beating Sandusky 2-0.

"It felt good," said Ross coach Scott McVeigh. "We played a little sloppy tonight, but we did what we had to do."

The game was originally supposed to be played at home, in a doubleheader with the Ross boys team's game with Tiffin Columbian. But a simple logistical problem — the second game would have started at 7 p.m., and would have been played in the dark — forced the girls game to be moved.

Brittney Werling and Megan Theller scored goals for Ross (2-2), and Christina Szymanowski made seven saves.

On the first goal, Werling took a pass from Johanna

Wearsch outside the penalty box, weaved her way through and beat two Blue Streaks defenders off the dribble.

"It hit the inside of the pole and went in, it was a real nice shot," said McVeigh, who added that his team had five shots hit the post.

In the second half, Theller scored the game's final goal off a rebound. Theller moved up from her stopper position and pounded home the carom from Allison Clark's shot.

McVeigh said the Ross defense played especially well in front of Szymanowski.

"The defense stepped it up tonight," he said. "Jen Mielke played a great game at full-back. Between her, Allyson Hickey and Megan Theller, they played the back line how we want them to play."

Ross travels to Napoleon on Wednesday, and opens its home schedule Saturday with a 10 a.m. GLL game against Toledo Whitmer.

Ross girls top Napoleon

News-Messenger reports

NAPOLEON — The Fremont Ross girls soccer team improved to 3-2 on the season Wednesday, beating Napoleon 3-1.

Scoring goals for the Little Giants were Brittney Werling, Alison Clark and Marissa Rodriguez.

Johanna Wearsch and Marie Erchenbrecher each had an assist for the Little Gi-

Soccer

ants in what coach Scott McVeigh called a "total team effort".

"I thought we played pretty well," said McVeigh. "Our bench helped out a lot."

Ross hosts Toledo Whitmer at 10 a.m. Saturday in what will be the team's first-ever home game.

Eidner scores four | Ross wins at home

News-Messenger reports

LORAIN — Morten Eidner continued his incredible goal-scoring streak, netting four goals as the Fremont Ross boys soccer team beat Lorain Admiral King 4-1 on Saturday.

It was Eidner's third four-goal game of the week for the Little Giants (5-2, 2-1).

Eidner scored goals in the eighth, 19th and 30th minutes of the first half, with Jared Stull and Pete Scranton picking up assists.

In the second half, the teams played evenly until the Admirals' Kyle Junior scored from four yards out. Two minutes later, Eidner answered with his fourth goal, on an assist from Derek Dalton.

Kyle Myers led Ross with nine intercepts, Craig Hickey had eight, and Adam Wagner and Scranton had six apiece. Dan Wise made four saves in goal for the Little Giants.

Ross hosts Napoleon today.

News-Messenger reports

The Fremont Ross girls soccer team got an exciting win in its first-ever home game, beating Toledo Whitmer 3-2 on a last-minute goal Saturday.

"It was nice to get a win in the first home game," said Ross coach Scott McVeigh, whose team improved to 4-2 overall, 2-1 in the Great Lakes League. "We played hard all 80 minutes. It was a great team win."

Johanna Wearsch had two goals, and Alison Clark had one for the Little Giants.

"It was really nice for Johanna to get in the scoring column," McVeigh said.

Marie Erchenbrecher, Brittney Werling and Marissa Rodriguez had assists in the win. Christina Szymanowski had eight saves in goal for Ross.

Ross plays a non-league game at Toledo Start today.

Ross gets fifth win

News-Messenger reports

TOLEDO — The Fremont Ross girls soccer team picked up its fifth victory of the year with a 7-0 win at Toledo Start.

Brittney Werling, Marie Erchenbrecher and Johanna Wearsch scored twice each to lift the Little Giants, who improved to 5-2. Jessica Steinberger also tallied for Ross.

In goal, Christina Szymanowski and Jen Mielke made four saves each.

Nicki Straight and Brittney Werling were each credited with an assist.

The Little Giants travel to Oregon Clay on Wednesday for a Great Lakes League game.

Ross falls to Clay

News-Messenger reports

OREGON — The Fremont Ross girls soccer team dropped a 3-2 decision to Oregon Clay in a Great Lakes League match.

Ross (5-3, 2-2) was led by Johanna Wearsch's two goals.

Wearsch scored early, but the Eagles scored back-to-back goals in the eight and ninth minutes of the first half and led 2-1 at halftime.

Wearsch scored again early in the second half, but the Eagles scored with six minutes left to grab the win.

Marie Erchenbrecher and Nicki Straight were given assists for the Giants. Christina Szymanowski made 12 saves

Soccer

and Jen Mielke made four.

"In the first half, we were sloppy we stood around a lot," said coach Scott McVeigh, whose team is in the midst of a 17-day stretch in which it plays eight games.

The Little Giants travel to Defiance on Saturday.

In the junior varsity contest, Noelle Stroempl scored a goal and added two assists as Ross won 3-2.

Natalie Durnwald and Ashley Taylor also scored for Ross and Allison Derr had an assist.

Ross is 1-2.

Defiance 'out-bullies' Ross in 3-2 soccer win

Little Giant girls shut out on the road

News-Messenger reports

The Fremont Ross boys soccer team came close, but dropped a 3-2 non-league decision to Defiance at Alumni Field on Saturday.

"Defiance was very physical, and one of their players received a red card for taking out Morten Eidner in the first half," said Ross coach Jeff Pendry. "We were kind of outbullied."

Pete Scranton opened the scoring for Ross in the sixth minute of the first half, converting a direct free kick from 20 yards out. Defiance answered in the 19th minute with a goal by Christian Snavelly.

The Little Giants scored in the final minute of the first half, but the referee ruled that time had run out before the ball was in the goal. The discounted goal would prove crucial.

Josh Adams put the Bulldogs ahead 2-1 in the fifth minute of the second half on a header off a corner kick. Eidner tied things up six minutes later, scoring from seven yards out on a pass from Mike Salas.

But Snavelly scored the winning goal for Defiance in the 28th minute, beating the Ross defense.

"It was our ball control against their physical play," Pendry said. "Our guys weren't used to that kind of play."

With the loss, Ross completed a 14-day span in which the team

Soccer

played eight games, going 6-2. The Little Giants host Bedford in a Great Lakes League game Tuesday before traveling to Findlay for a rematch with the state-ranked Trojans.

In girls soccer action Saturday:

Defiance 5, Ross 0

DEFIANCE — Ross was shut out 5-0 by Defiance in a non-

league game Saturday.

"We were just flat, we had nothing," said Ross coach Scott McVeigh. "I don't know what it was, we just never got started. They scored in the seventh or eighth minute and it was just downhill from there."

Goalkeeper Christina Szymanowski made 15 saves for the Little Giants (5-4, 2-2), who were out-shot 20-8.

Ross returns to Great Lakes League action today, hosting Findlay.

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BELIEVE IT!!**

See page B11.

Findlay girls top Little Giants

News-Messenger reports

Findlay improved to 5-0 in the Great Lakes League with a 6-0 girls soccer win over Fremont Ross at Alumni Field.

Christina Szymanowski made 13 saves in goal for the Little Giants (5-5, 2-3).

Ross earns wet win

Werling nets three

News-Messenger reports

The Fremont Ross girls soccer improved to 6-5 overall and 3-3 in the Great Lakes League on Wednesday with an 8-1 victory over Sandusky at Alumni Field.

"They really battled the elements," said Ross coach Scott McVeigh, whose team played in a steady rain. "The girls focused well. That was their first time they played in that kind of weather."

Leading the Little Giants was Brittney Werling, who scored three goals. Nicki Straight added two goals, and Johanna Wearsch and Tiffany Howard added a goal apiece.

Wearsch and Howard each also added an assist for Ross, which outshot Sandusky 19-10. Christina Szymanowski made the lead stand up with seven saves in goal.

Ross travels to Toledo Whitmer next Saturday.

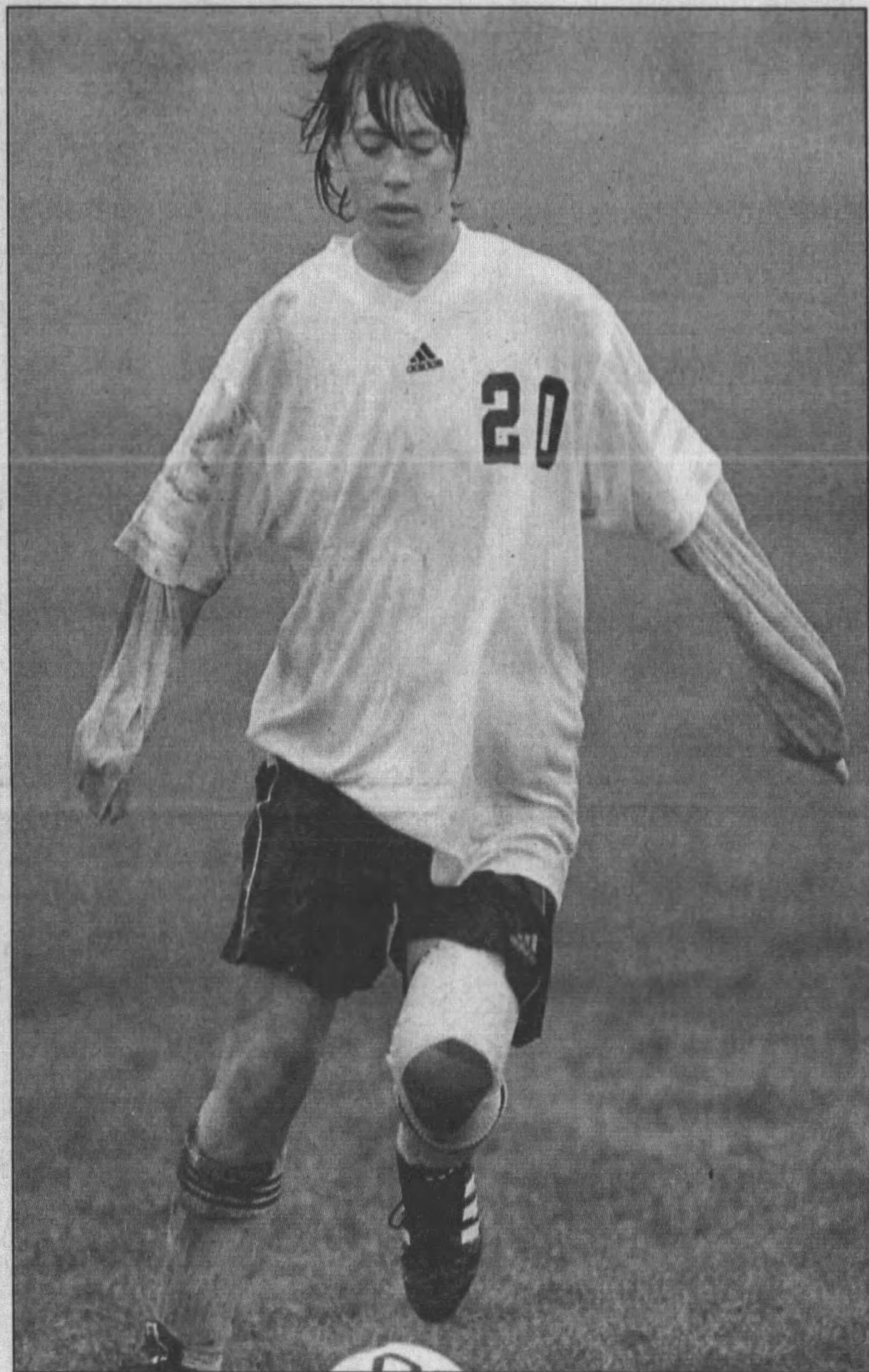
In boys soccer action Tuesday:

Ross 2, Bedford 1

The Ross boys won their ninth match of the season with a 2-1 victory over Bedford on Tuesday at Verity Kelsey Hayes field.

Ross scored first at the third minute of the match as Derek Dalton scored from eight yards out after a corner kick. Travis Jones of Bedford evened the score at the eighth minute on a 25-yard shot.

In the second half, the two teams played evenly until the 15th minute, when Morten Eidner scored on a cross from Dusty Shively



News-Messenger/Liz Margerum

MARIE ERCHENBRECHER dribbles in space in Ross's 8-1 win over Sandusky Wednesday.

to give Ross the lead.

The Ross defense limited the Kicking Mules to four total shots, and just one in the second half. Ross outshot Bedford 10-4 for the game.

Craig Hickey led the

Ross defense with nine interceptions. Mike Salas had eight interceptions, Kyle Myers had seven interceptions, and Adam Wagner and Pete Scranton added six interceptions apiece.

Dan Wise had one save,

and Myers, who replaced Wise when he was injured, also recorded one save.

Ross improved to 9-3 overall and 5-1 in the GLL. The Little Giants travel to face sixth-ranked Findlay today.

Wearsch nets hat trick as Ross tops Start 8-0

News-Messenger reports

The Fremont Ross girls soccer team cruised to a non-league win Monday, shutting out Toledo Start 8-0.

Johanna Wearsch scored a hat trick for Ross with three goals, and Alison Clark had two. Brittney Werling, Allison Derr and Tiffany Howard each had one goal for the Little Giants (7-5, 3-3).

Soccer

Noelle Stroempl and Beth Hoezle each recorded assists for Ross. Goalkeeper Jen Mielke made four saves to preserve the shutout.

The Little Giants' next scheduled game is a Great Lakes League matchup Saturday at Toledo Whitmer.

Ross tops Polar Bears in non-league action

News-Messenger reports

Soccer

The Fremont Ross girls soccer team came to life in the second half Wednesday, scoring five goals to bury Margareta 7-1 in a non-league match.

Marie Erchenbrecher scored two goals for the Little Giants. Jessica Steinberger, Nicki Straight, Johanna

Wearsch, Alison Clark and Beth Hoelzle also scored for Ross.

Clark and Brittney Werling recorded two assists each and Wearsch and Allison Derr also had assists for Ross (8-5). Jen Mielke had six saves in the win.

Little Giants shut out Whitmer in GLL

News-Messenger reports

TOLEDO — The Fremont Ross girls soccer team posted a Great Lakes League shutout on Saturday, beating Toledo Whitmer 3-0.

"We played a lot better than the last time (against Whitmer)," said Ross coach Scott McVeigh, whose team beat the Panthers 3-2 on Sept. 18. "We controlled the game for the whole 80 minutes."

McVeigh had high praise for the play of stopper Sashay Price, sweeper Allyson Hickey and goalkeeper Christina Szymanowski, who helped keep Whitmer scoreless.

"Sashay Price had by far her best game of the year," he said. "She controlled the whole middle of the field."

"Allyson Hickey saved a couple of goal chances, and Szymanowski, she probably had three or four saves that could easily have been goals that she knocked away."

Alison Clark, Johanna Wearsch and Brittney Werling had goals for Ross (9-5, 4-3), and Wearsch added an assist. Szymanowski made nine saves in goal.

Ross hosts Oregon Clay in a GLL game at Alumni Field today, and could move into second place in the league with a win.

"The girls are pumped,"

Soccer

McVeigh said. "Whitmer played twice as physical as the first game, and the refs weren't calling a thing, but it never got us out of our game plan. We kept our composure."

After closing out the regular season, Ross plays Mansfield Madison in first round sectional play on Oct. 19 at Findlay. Madison is the second seed in the sectional, behind Ashland.

In boys soccer action Saturday:

Norwalk 1, Ross 0

NORWALK — The Ross boys team dropped its final regular season game, losing to unbeaten Norwalk 1-0.

Ross dominated the action, controlling the ball in Norwalk territory, but a penalty kick goal from Joe Babcanec in the 21st minute gave the Truckers the only goal.

Adam Wagner led Ross with 10 intercepts, Mike Salas had seven, and Pete Scranton and Tim Holman had five apiece.

Ross ends the regular season 11-5, 8-2 in the Great Lakes League. The Little Giants are off until Oct. 20, when they play Toledo St. John's at Perysburg in the first round of the state tournament.

Goal-oriented

Eidner lights up the nets

By **MICHAEL PIDANICK**
Staff writer

Many terms have been used to describe the play of Fremont Ross senior Morten Eidner this season: "incredible," "exciting," "fun to watch," "very skilled."

Yet the foreign exchange student from Denmark claims that in his homeland he is merely "average."

"I'm a decent player back home," Eidner said. "I've made some select teams, but you'll see a lot better players than me there. I'm just another soccer player back home."

Must be some competition.

Eidner's play this season has been a lot better than decent. He has 27 goals, tying the school mark set by Francisco Rosito in 1993, and has 57 points, breaking another record held by Rosito.

"It's amazing to just sit back there and watch him with the ball," said Ross goalkeeper Dan Wise. "It's phenomenal what he can do with the ball because no one around here can do it. It's great fun to watch him."

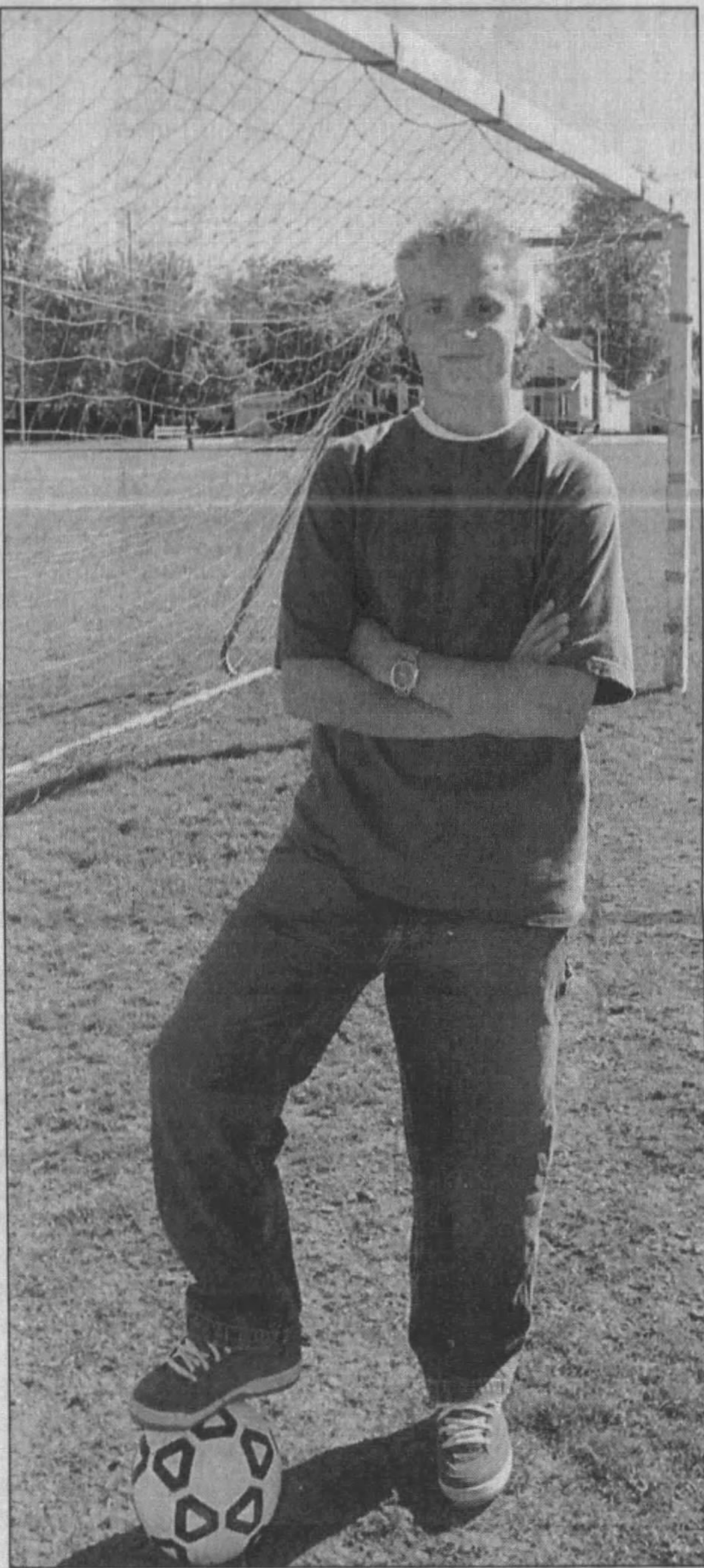
"It's great to have somebody that can generate offense, and we have the confidence that we can go out and win games."

One reason for the disparity in opinions is the level of soccer's popularity in the two countries. Eidner, who has been playing soccer since he was very young, said soccer in Denmark parallels in popularity with football at Fremont Ross. That, in itself, brings the higher level of play in Denmark.

"In Denmark, everyone plays soccer," Eidner said. "Soccer hasn't been in America as long as Europe, so naturally it's different. It's great that it's getting more popular here. It's great to get it rolling."

Another reason, according to Ross coach Jeff Pendry, is Eidner's modesty.

"He is definitely very modest, but he is very confi-



News-Messenger/Liz Margerum

MORTEN EIDNER has scored a school-record 27 goals for the Fremont Ross soccer team this season.

dent about his game," said Pendry. "He'll come off the field frustrated, even when he scores and we win, saying that he should have had one or two more goals, or that there's more that he could have done. He's modest but he knows what he is capable of doing."

Eidner came to Fremont in early August, and is living with host parents Mike and Dessie Morehart. After spending several months in the U.S., soccer is just one of several differences he has noticed between the two nations.

See **EIDNER, B2**

Athlete of the week

Morten Eidner profile

School: Ross

Grade: Senior

Sport: Soccer

Family: Parents: Mette Nielsen and Per Eidner, Brothers: Anders, 21, Thomas, 11; Sister: Maj, 15.

Host family: Mike and Dessie Morehart

Hobbies: Soccer, listening to music, spending time with friends.

Giants battle Clay to draw

Ross finishes third in GLL

By **SCOTT TAPPA**
Sports editor

What's the difference between a second- and third-place finish?

The width of a goalpost, apparently.

Two scoring opportunities for the Fremont Ross girls soccer team glanced off the goalpost, one in each half, as the Little Giants tied Oregon Clay 0-0 in a Great Lakes League contest at Alumni Field.

The tie, which marked the end of the regular season for Ross, gave Clay second place in the GLL, while Ross took third, by virtue of the Eagles' win in the teams' meeting on Sept. 22.

"They had opportunities, but I think we had more," said Ross coach Scott McVeigh. "We put two off the post, that's the game if we put one of those in."

Johanna Wearsch nearly got Ross on the board early in the first half, but her shot hit the crossbar. Later in the

first half, Wearsch's shot rebounded to Brittney Werling, but Werling's shot sailed over the crossbar.

Then, early in the second half, Alison Clark took a pass from Werling in the Clay box, but Clark's shot hit the post.

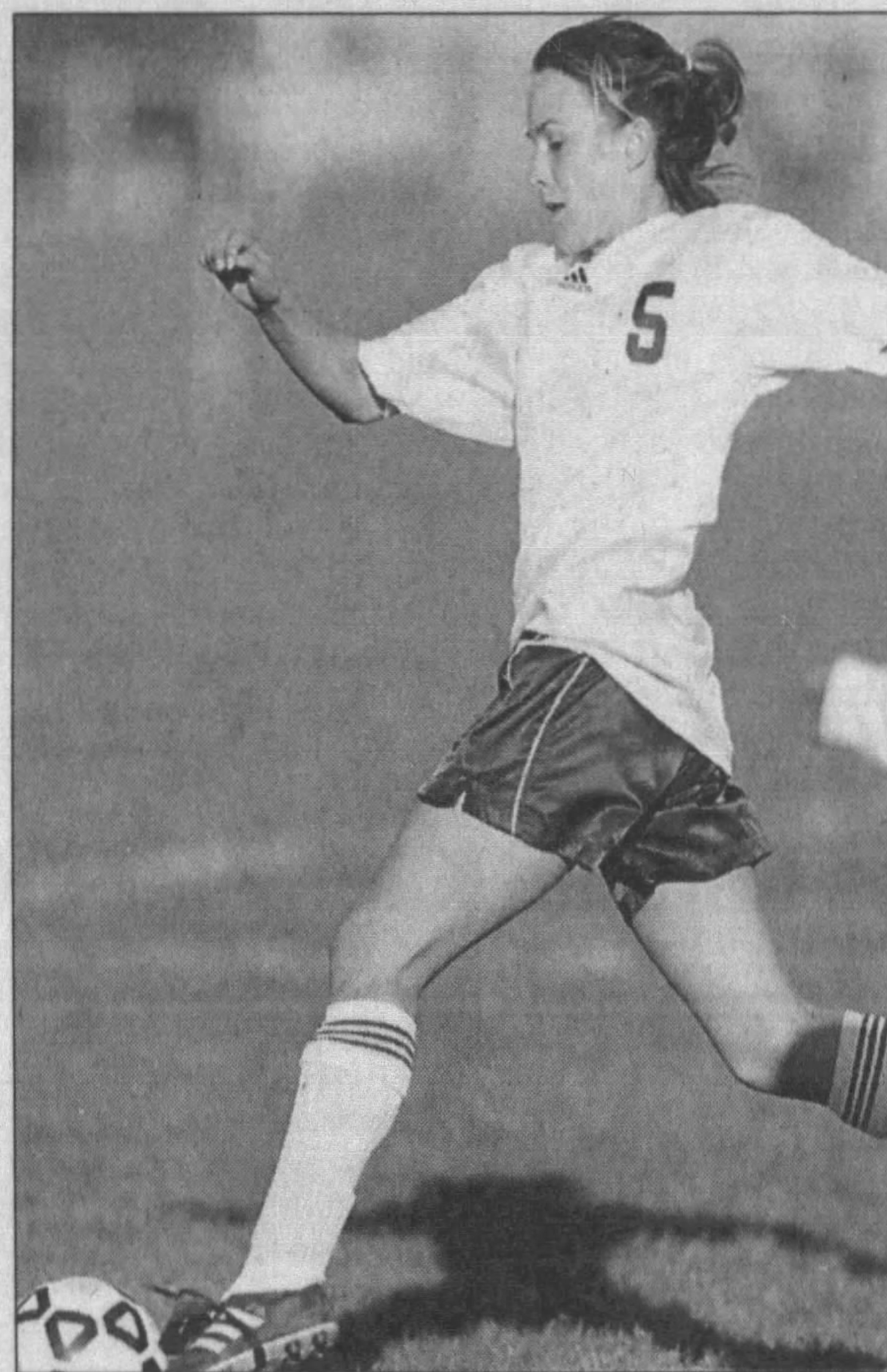
Still, after losing 3-2 to Clay earlier this season, Ross showed improvement against an evenly-matched opponent.

"We played really well tonight, I'm really proud," said Ross defender Allyson Hickey. "We definitely played 80 minutes."

Hickey spearheaded a defense that bent, but never broke in front of goalkeeper Christina Szymanowski, who recorded her fourth shutout of the season.

"They seemed to hang with it, they're pretty good under pressure," Szymanowski said of her defense.

See **ROSS, B2**



News-Messenger/Liz Margerum

JOHANNA WEARSCH pushes the ball upfield in Ross's 0-0 tie with Oregon Clay on Monday.

Ross ties Clay 0-0, finishes third in GLL soccer race

Continued from B1

"I thought our defense played a heck of a game tonight, we marked up tight, we were talking," McVeigh said.

While Clay seemed to hold an edge in sustaining an offensive attack in the Ross end, the Little Giants showed more big-play ability. Even with regular center halfback Brittney Werling and forward Wearsch switching spots because of Werling's bruised tailbone, Ross generated a ton of quality scoring chances by pushing the ball ahead quickly to its swift forwards.

"We have so much speed up front," McVeigh said. "I usually have Johanna up front, Alison Clark and Marie

Erchenbrecher, and I think we're faster than any team we've played this year. We usually send a ball through and they run after it, that's how we get the majority of our goals."

More often than not this season, the first-year Little Giants have been outscoring opponents. Heading into next Tuesday's sectional game against Mansfield Madison, Ross is 9-5-1 overall, 4-3-1 in the GLL, a better-than-expected showing, considering half of the players on the Ross roster had not played organized soccer before this season, according to McVeigh.

"We've surprised a lot of people," Hickey said. "Most first-year teams get like one win, and here we are with

nine. I think we surprised a lot of people in the community."

Like her goalkeeper, for instance.

"Yeah, I am (surprised)," said Szymanowski. "We're doing really awesome. After never playing together before, coming in and beating Whitmer and teams like that, that says a lot for us."

The season has had a few rough spots — like a loss to Findlay in the team's first GLL game — but aside from two games with the powerful Trojans, Ross lost just one league game by a one-goal margin.

"I think everybody's overall skill has improved, and our team is so supportive of one another, it's a great feeling," said Wearsch. "I think

all of us came in with an open mind. We didn't know what to expect, and we're glad it turned out this way."

So is their coach, who is encouraged that his starting lineup includes just two seniors, and three athletes apiece from the junior, sophomore and freshman classes.

"The first thing I said is, 'There's no expectations of you guys, but we're not going to use that as a crutch. If we play bad, it's not just because we're inexperienced, we're not going to use that as an excuse,'" McVeigh said.

"They should be proud of themselves, how far they've come, for how far they've come since (the season opener against) Sylvania Southview to where we're at now is just amazing."