

1998 Sectional Tournament

Sectional, or district?

Ross, St. Joe face tough openers

By SCOTT TAPPA
Sports editor

Saturday's Tiffin Columbian volleyball sectional provides a veritable Murderers' Row of northwest Ohio powers to stare Fremont Ross in the face.

Sandusky. Ashland. Bowling Green. Mansfield Madison.

And that's not even including the Little Giants' first-round opponent, Tiffin Columbian.

"At the meeting, a few coaches said, 'Wow, this is like a district,' " said Ross coach Maggie Bliss. "Whoever comes out of sectionals is going to be happy."

VOLLEYBALL

Madison (19-1) is the runaway No. 1 in the latest Ohio coaches poll, while Great Lakes League champion Sandusky is ranked 12th.

First up for Ross (11-10) is Columbian (16-4), which beat the Little Giants 15-13, 15-12 Saturday. Bliss said she was pleased with the way her team battled back from early deficits, but not with its poor serving.

"In the first game we dug a hole, 4-1, then started to come back," she said. "The second game was the exact same thing. Good serving would have made all the difference.

"They play nice defense. I just got done watching tape, and we had a lot of really long volleys."

Middle blocker Erin Moore is the Tornadoes' top threat, said Bliss.

"She's a really nice player," she said. "They run a nice slide with her, run a quick with her."

Ross has had to fight the flu bug, as middle blocker missed some practice Wednesday with the flu, as did defensive specialist Brittany Brudzinski.

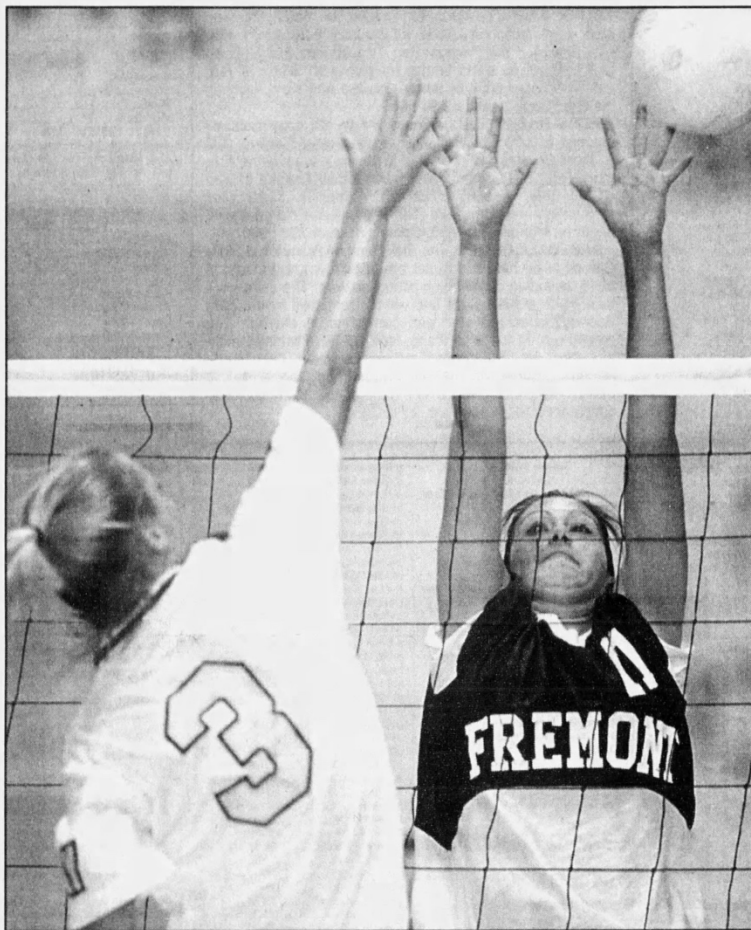
Even Bliss was out with the flu earlier this week.

Still, the coach expects everyone to be healthy by Saturday, and ready to give the hosts a run for their money.

"We need to play smart," Bliss said. "Tiffin can put the ball just about anywhere, but if we can play our game, we'll be fine. We were happy with the draw."

St. Joseph Central Catholic faces an equally difficult road in its Division IV sectional, held Saturday in Old Fort. The Crimson Streaks open with the 19-3 Stockaders, led by Randi Whitman.

St. Joe ended its regular season Thursday night with a 15-6, 15-12 loss to Cardi-



News-Messenger file photo/Frank Beier

REBECCA BROWN and Fremont Ross enter a difficult volleyball sectional Saturday in Tiffin.

nal Stitch. Kelly Halm was 9-of-10 in service reception, Molly Yeager was 21-for-21 setting and Annette Kupka had seven blocks for St. Joe (13-9).

Should the Streaks make it past Old Fort, undefeated, top-ranked Hopewell-Loudon looms in the second round.

The 22-0 Chieftains, led by middle blocker DiDi Reynolds (an Ohio State recruit) and setter Carrie Norris (a Pittsburgh recruit), beat St. Joe 15-2, 15-2 in mid-September.

Bettsville (3-16) also faces a daunting task in the Old Fort sectional, with Tiffin Calvert (17-2) waiting in the second round should the Bobcats beat Fostoria St. Wendelin (8-13).

Bettsville ended its regular season with a 15-11, 15-5 loss to Arcadia on Thursday.

Also in Division IV, Gibsonburg (17-5) is

the second seed in the Northwood sectional, behind the top-seeded hosts. Northwood (16-6) plays the winner of the Danbury (10-11) - Ottawa Hills (5-13) matchup.

In Division II, Clyde (13-9) travels to the Oak Harbor sectional as the No. 2 seed behind Eastwood of the Suburban Lakes League.

The Fliers take on Fostoria (6-13), and should they advance, would face the winner of the Oak Harbor (4-14) - Bellevue (10-11) matchup.

In Division III, Sandusky Bay Conference champion Margaretta (19-3) is the top seed in the Huron sectional, and after a first round bye faces the winner of the Seneca East-Edison matchup.

Also in Division III, Lakota (3-18) plays Swanton (7-12) at Millbury, while Woodmore (9-10) plays Genoa (8-13).

Ross falls in sectional opener

News-Messenger reports

TIFFIN — Fremont Ross made too many costly mistakes, and fell to Tiffin Columbian, 15-9, 13-15, 15-6 Saturday in the Div. I sectional.

“We missed a lot of serves,” said coach Maggie Bliss. “They just weren’t where we needed them to be. We have a lot of young kids (Ross started two freshmen and two sophomores) and they were nervous and that showed.”

Jodi Fick had 19 kills, Rachelle Domiray had nine

VOLLEYBALL

digs, five kills, seven service points and an ace and Rebecca Brown was in on three blocks.

Rachelle did an excellent job,” Bliss said. “She was our high server.”

The loss marked the end of the high school volleyball careers of seniors Fick and Brittany Brudzinski. Bliss credited them with leading the team all season.

“They definitely deserve a lot of credit,” she said. “We had a young team and they really did a great job of handling them. They showed a lot of patience and leadership. I’m proud of what they did for us.”