

2002 Great Lakes League...

Ross boys track chases history

Whitmer stands between Giants and first Great Lakes League title

By TIMOTHY R. WOLFRUM
Sports editor

During a team meeting Thursday, Fremont Ross boys track-and-field coach Cathy Esposito played up the Little Giants' position as underdogs heading into today's finals of the Great Lakes League meet.

It wasn't a hard sell to athletes whose school owns exactly zero GLL championships in boys track.

"It's us against the world," senior sprinter Tyrus Hamilton said as his teammates worked out on the track. "Nobody cares for Fremont Ross."

Before practice, Esposito distributed a sheet that fea-

tured a News-Messenger quote from Hamilton: "I always love coming in as the underdog."

"We are the underdogs now, and the underdog always prevails in meets like this," Esposito typed on the bottom of the sheet.

The Little Giants enter today's finals in second place, trailing host Whitmer 44-32 after finals of the shot put, long jump, 3,200-meter relay and pole vault held Wednesday. Today's field events begin at 4:30 p.m. The track finals start at 6 p.m. at Whitmer.

Ross is hardly despairing despite its current position. The Little Giants still have

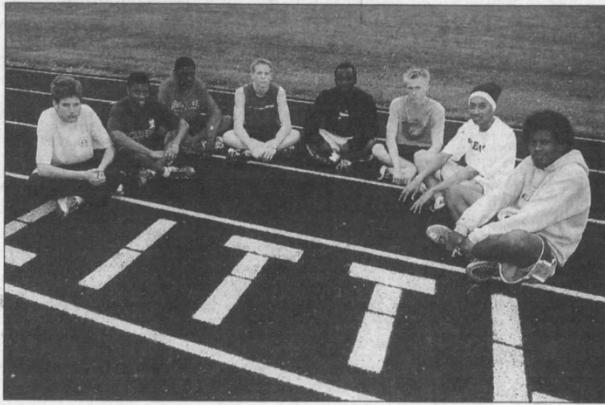
their best events — the open sprints, 400 relay and discus — ahead of them.

"We have tons of potential to score points," Esposito said. "Even though we're the underdogs, we have a lot of great athletes who haven't even competed yet."

"Whitmer, I'm of the feeling they're going to walk in too comfortable, sitting back knowing they're 12 points ahead."

Esposito, a second-year head coach and a former assistant and Little Giants runner, said she wasn't aware of Ross's boys title drought until she received league meet

See LITTLE GIANTS, B2



News-Messenger/Ben French

MEMBERS OF THE Fremont Ross boys track-and-field team get together during practice Thursday at the high school track. The Little Giants, from left to right, are Bo Hudson, Eric Edwards, Elon Simms, Myles Porter, Tyrus Hamilton, Adam Wilhelm, Torrey Lewis and Bo Martin.

Giants aim for GLL title

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information from Whitmer about two months ago.

She waited until last week to tell the team.

"I didn't believe her at first," said senior Bo Hudson, who recorded Ross's first league title by winning the long jump on Wednesday.

"I was shocked," junior sprinter Eric Edwards said. "To know we could be the first ones to win the GLL is a big surprise."

But, thanks to a so-so day on Wednesday, the Little Giants have some work to do today.

They have high hopes for Hamilton, who is peaking after victories in the 100 and 200 dashes last week at the Fremont Invitational. Freshman Adam Wilhelm set an invitational record in his first attempt at the 400 dash and will battle for an individual championship.

Hamilton is also the anchor to an ever-changing 400 relay team that currently also includes Edwards, Wilhelm and Torrey Lewis. That team also won a Fremont Invitational crown and is hopeful of winning a league title.

"I have to win," Hamilton said. "And we need some help from (third-place) Sandusky. They need to take some of Whitmer's spots for us."

Ross discus thrower Chris Kayser

is also a good bet for a high place, and Hudson will vie for a high jump title.

"We've got to work hard," Edwards said. "We've got to focus hard on what we're doing and place as high as we can."

The Ross athletes were hard-pressed to identify a weakness in the Whitmer team. The Little Giants must beat the Panthers head to head, they said. Ross won 84-65 over Whitmer during a tri-meet at home on April 16, and the Panthers finished higher by 12 points in the Bill Krause Invitational on April 29 in Tiffin.

"They're just as tough as us in every aspect," Hamilton said. "We just have to be flawless, no mistakes. We have to be the smarter team."

Although they're similar, the two teams waste little time consorting off the track.

The competitiveness was stoked in the regional meet last season when a Whitmer official insisted on the disqualification of Ross long jumper Allen Lutes when the Ross bus arrived minutes late. Lutes has graduated, but the ill will remains.

"Everything's the same. It's nuts," Esposito said. "They run the same, they throw the same, they jump the same."

"It's so much more than a rivalry. In a rivalry you respect the other team. With Whitmer, uh, it's a different feeling."

Little Giants settle for 2nd; Wilhelm wins

Whitmer boys, Findlay girls earn titles at GLL track meet

By TIMOTHY R. WOLFRUM
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TOLEDO — Just as Fremont Ross sprinter Adam Wilhelm set up his blocks for the 400-meter dash Friday at the Great Lakes League meet, Whitmer's public-address announcer read the up-to-date boys team standings.

Whitmer boasted a comfortable 98.5-61.5 margin over second-place Ross.

The Little Giants' condition was worse than critical. It bordered on hopeless.

That didn't matter to Wilhelm. Though the war may have been lost, the freshman still had his personal battle to wage.

Wilhelm started slowly but sling-shotted out of the final turn to come from behind and win the 400 Friday, turning in Ross's lone victory on an otherwise disappointing final day at the league meet at Whitmer Memorial Stadium.

"I heard it, but I wanted to go out and run hard and get us up in the points," Wilhelm said of the scoring announcement. "It's cool to win because I can try and come back and four-peat."

The Panthers boys went on to cruise to a GLL championship, their fourth in five years, with 187.5 points behind boys Athlete of the Year Chris Watkins. Watkins won the 100 and 200 dashes and ran on two winning relays for Whitmer.

Ross settled for second place at 103.5 points. Little Giants coach Cathy Esposito and Whitmer's Greg Ku-



WILHELM



ESPOSITO

bicki shared Coach of the Year honors.

Esposito said she wasn't disappointed by the loss to Whitmer, even though the Little Giants had high hopes for earning the first GLL title in boys history.

"Not when you look at that score," she said. "Any time you score more than 100 points and finish second, you can't be disappointed. They have a nice team. They're incredibly strong. They took a lot of firsts, and we took seconds. We couldn't finish the races."

Esposito agreed that Wilhelm's run — he caught and passed Whitmer's Jordan Simmons on the final turn and easily won a sprint to the finish — was the high point for the Little Giants.

Wilhelm's time of 50.74 seconds was his best of the season. He joined Bo Hudson, who won the long jump on Wednesday, as Ross's boys league champions.

"That was impressive," Esposito said of Wilhelm's race. "It's also great to see someone young and inexperienced run hard and become a league champion. He's become a 400 runner over the past two weeks."

See ROSS, B2

Ross boys take second at GLL

Continued From B1

Wilhelm started the season running the 100 and 200 dashes but asked to try the 400 before last week's Fremont Invitational. He set a meet record in his first 400 race.

"My 100 times were bad because of my slow starts," Wilhelm said. "And I was getting frustrated. I thought it might be a good idea to try the 400."

The Little Giants got three second-place finishes Friday. Chris Kayser threw the discus 140 feet, 10 inches, for second in his event, and Jeremy Framstad came in second in the 1,600 run in 4:34.90. The Ross 400 relay team of Eric Edwards, Wilhelm, Bo Hudson and Tyrus Hamilton placed second in 44.8 seconds.

The GLL girls meet was much closer with Findlay pulling away for the title with 127 points. Whitmer was second with 114 points, Sandusky third with 98 points and Oregon Clay fourth with 96 points. Ross finished fifth with 69 points.

Clay sophomore Kate Achter, who won four individual events, and Sandusky sprinter Tamala Perryman shared Athlete of the Year honors. Harry Will of Whitmer and Mark Gleason of Findlay were named Co-Teachers of the Year.

Stacy Hall turned in Ross's top girls performance, placing second in the 3,200 run. Her time was 11:57.99.

Rachel Ruiz and Adrienne Robertson each placed third as did all three of the Little Giants' relay teams. Ruiz ran a personal-best time of 49.5 seconds in the 300 hurdles, and Robertson came up with a long jump of 15-6.5.

"I thought the girls had a nice meet," Esposito said. "Their times were good. They have a long way to go to be a No. 1 team. But the potential is there. We've got two seniors and about 40 freshmen."

Ross will compete at the Division I district meet on Wednesday and Friday at Fostoria.

Gibsonburg hitting: Aaron Kaseman 1-3; AJ Steek 1-3.
Records: Lakota 1-14 (4-10 SLL).

d Perkins 5, Margaretta 2
Perkins 022 010 0 — 2 5 3
Margaretta 002 101 0 — 2 5 3
WP — Shawn Colvin. LP — Dan Mc
Odds: Margaretta hitting: McGarry 4 inn., 3
hits, 2 ER, 1 walk, 4 strikeouts.
Records: Margaretta 17-9 (4-9 SBC).

600 run: 1. Ryan Sprout (F) 1:20.00. 19

2. Greg Kierczak (W) 2:03.16. 3. Matt Salas (R) 2:03.21. 4. Framstad. (R)

2:05.26. 5. Grant Rowland (C) 2:05.80. 6.

John Ichir (W) 2:06.26.

100 dash: 1. Matt Salas (W) 22.31. 2.

Pavely (C) 22.95. 3. Grace (W) 23.42. 4.

Knight (W) 23.25. 5. Adam Wilhelm (R)

23.30. 6. Matt Salas (W) 23.34.

3200 run: 1. Espinoza (W) 10:20.47. 2.

Britt Prieslawski (W) 10:40.26. 3. Nathan

Brown (C) 10:43.32. 4. Framstad (R)

11:02.15. 5. Dan Jordan (F) 11:02.68.

6. Matt Moses (S) 1:09.78.

4x400 relay: 1. Findlay 3:27.12. 2.

Fremont 3:27.45. 3. Findlay 3:28.74. 4.

Sandusky 3:32.19. 5. clay 3:40.99.

Athlete Of The Year: Chris Esposito.

Coach Of The Year: Cathy Esposito.

Greg Kielich.

High School Girls

GLL Meet

Team Scores

Findlay 127

Whitmer 114

Sandusky 98

Clay 96

Foster 69

Fostoria 36

High School Girls

High School Girls

GLL Meet

Team Scores

Findlay 127

Whitmer 114

Sandusky 98

Clay 96

Foster 69

Fostoria 36

High School Girls

High School Girls

GLL Meet

Team Scores

Findlay 127

Whitmer 114

Sandusky 98

Clay 96

Foster 69

Fostoria 36

High School Girls

High School Girls

GLL Meet

Team Scores

Findlay 127

Whitmer 114

Sandusky 98

Clay 96

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Whitmer 114

Sandusky 98

Clay 96

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Whitmer 114

Sandusky 98

Clay 96

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GLL Meet

Team Scores

Findlay 127

Whitmer 114

Sandusky 9