

FREMONT ROSS

Coach: Cheryl Schell (106-38)

1997 Record: 16-4 (advanced to district semifinals)

Key losses: Michele Smith, Jamie Hinkle

Key Players:

Jodi Kusmer, Sr.,

P; Nicki Pelfrey,

Sr., C/P; Emily

Dowell, Sr., 2B;

Erin Lytle, Sr., CF;

Jodi Fick, Jr.,

RF/utility; Jenny

Schaaf, Jr., LF;

Tiffany Nitschke,

So., 3B; Erin Gilbert, Char Horn.



Coach Schell's outlook:

"We will have strong leadership if our seniors keep focused. Offensively we should do very well."

Schedule:

March 30	Bowling Green
April 3	Findlay
April 6	at Clay
April 8	Bedford
April 9	Margaretta
April 11	Norwalk
April 13	at Maumee
April 14	at Southview
April 17	Toledo CC
April 20	at Fostoria
April 21	Tiffin Columbian
April 22	at Napoleon
April 24	at Whitmer
April 27	Sandusky
April 28	at Notre Dame
April 29	at Findlay
April 30	at Clyde
May 2	at St. Ursula
May 4	at Bedford
May 6	Fostoria
May 7	Clay
May 9	at Elmwood
May 11	Whitmer
May 13	at Sandusky
May 14	at Port Clinton

Pelfrey, Kusmer lead Little Giants

News-Messenger reports

BOWLING GREEN— For the first time in three seasons, the weather permitted Fremont Ross' softball team to start on time, and the Little Giants took advantage by beating Bowling Green 9-1.

"We played a nice first game," said Ross coach Cheryl Schell. "We had some good hitting and defense and Jodi (Kusmer) gave us solid pitching."

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Nicki Pelfrey had two hits, two runs scored and an RBI to lead the offensive assault.

Kusmer struck out eight to earn the win on the mound and helped her cause with a double.

Kusmer shuts out Findlay



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

NICKI PELFREY of Fremont Ross steals second base Friday during the first inning of the Little Giants 12-0 win over Findlay.

Fremont Ross pitcher strikes out 13 in 12-0 win

By MICHAEL PIDANICK
Staff writer

The Fremont Ross offense hit eight singles, two doubles and two triples and took advantage of numerous Findlay miscues to score 12 runs — not that pitcher Jodi Kusmer needed much support.

The senior struck out 13 batters and allowed just five hits as the Little Giants opened their Great Lakes League season with a 12-0 win at Alumni Field.

"I'm real pleased with the shutout," said Ross coach Cheryl Schell. "Jodi did a real nice job for us."

Kusmer, who struck out eight in the Little Giants 9-1 win at Bowling Green Monday, wanted to get the shutout Friday.

"Going into the later innings I knew I had the shut out going," Kusmer said. "I knew I had to keep shooting hard."

Senior catcher Nicki Pelfrey had three hits, scored four runs

More inside

In other area softball games Friday, Clyde's Kristi Mounts struck out six batters in a 5-0 win over Lakota, and Margaretta's Missy Salyer allowed just one hit in the Polar Bear's 9-2 rout of St. Joseph Central Catholic.

■ Roundup, B2

and had three RBI to lead the offense. Junior Jodi Fick was 3-for-4 with three runs scored. Kusmer, Jenny Schaaf and Erin Lytle each had two hits for Ross.

"The kids came to park today ready to hit," Schell said. "Everyone did a nice job of hitting the ball."

The Little Giants had been taking plenty of batting practice.

"We've had a lot of practice on our hitting lately and it really paid off," said senior center fielder Erin Lytle.

Kusmer set the tone early by striking out three batters in the top of the first. In the bottom of

the inning, the Trojans made two of their five errors and Ross took a 3-0 lead.

With two out, Fick drew a walk and advanced to second on the first of six wild pitches by Findlay pitcher Courtney Ritchie. Pelfrey followed with a bloop single to right to score Fick. Pelfrey stole second and scored when Jennifer Mielke reached on an error. Mielke came in on an error by catcher Samantha William.

Kusmer opened the bottom of the second with a double and courtesy runner Ainsley Watkins scored on a wild pitch to give Ross a 4-0 lead.

In the third, Fick opened with

a single and Pelfrey tagged an RBI double to center. Pelfrey scored on back-to-back wild pitches.

Tiffany Nitschke led off the fourth with a walk and scored on a triple by Jenny Schaaf. Emily Dowell followed with an RBI ground out. One out later, the Trojans had a chance to get out of the inning, but Katie Wendt made a throwing error to prolong the inning. Lytle capitalized with a two run double to left center.

"I saw the ball off the hips," Lytle said. "I just hit it as hard as I could."

Findlay coach Kevin Haught said facing a pitcher like Kusmer will benefit his young team.

"It's great to face a great pitcher like her," he said. "We're a young team and we are going to grow. Seeing a pitcher like that really helps us learn."

Kusmer pitches another shutout

News-Messenger reports

OREGON — Fremont Ross pitcher Jodi Kusmer continued to dominate as she pitched her second shutout in four days.

Kusmer improved to 3-0 as she struck out 10 and allowed only two hits. She has allowed just one run in her three starts this season, and has struck out 31.

Nicki Pelfrey went 3-for-4, Jodi Fick was 2-for-4, and Kusmer was 2-for-3 for the Little Giants.

"In the first inning we started out on the right foot (with two runs)," said Ross coach Cheryl Schell. "Then we had some defensive problems but our pitching pulled us through."

Ross is 3-0 overall and 2-0 in the Great Lakes League. Clay is 3-2 and 1-1.

In other games Monday:

Otsego 5 Woodmore 3

WOODVILLE— Woodmore lost to Otsego in its Suburban Lakes League opener.

Tracy Lee went 3-for-4, Janelle Dangler had two singles and Laura Runion added a double for the Wildcats, who fell to 1-4 overall.

St. Joe 13, St. Wendelin 3

St. Joseph Central Catholic won its second consecutive game as it opened its Midland Athletic League season with a win.

The Streaks took control of the con-

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test with a six-run fourth inning.

Jamie Heberling, Kelly Halm and Laura Hirt each had two hits to highlight a 13-hit attack by St. Joe.

"Once we got some runs it got our confidence up and we played better," said Streaks coach Sandy Adelsperger.

Melissa Geller picked up her second pitching win of the year.

Genoa 1 Lakota 0

KANSAS — Genoa's Michelle George pitched a four-hit shut out as the Comets remained unbeaten with a thrilling 1-0 win. Lynne Clere's two-out triple scored pinch-runner Kristinna Cooley in the top of the seventh for the game's only run. George struck out two and walked no one as the Comets improved to 4-0 and won its Suburban Lakes League opener.

Columbian 5 Clyde 4

TIFFIN— Columbian took advantage of Clyde mistakes and won a battle of previously unbeaten teams.

Amanda Hoffman, Kristy Nieset and Theresa Gierhart each had two hits for the Fliers.

Northwood 14 Gibsonburg 5

GIBSONBURG— Northwood pounded out 15 hits and defeated Gibsonburg. Megan Wassill was 2-for-4 with an RBI for the Golden Bears (3-2)

Ross wins 4th straight game

News-Messenger reports

BEDFORD, Mich. — Fremont Ross pitcher Jodi Kusmer was hit harder Wednesday than she has been all year, but the defense behind her made the plays in the Little Giants' 5-1 win at Bedford.

"They sprayed the ball all over the field," said Ross coach Cheryl Schell. "But our whole defense came through."

Ross's third Great Lakes League win was their fourth overall without a loss. Kusmer has all four wins on the mound.

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Ross led 2-0 entering the bottom of the sixth, when Nicki Pelfrey's double scored Emily Dowell and Jodi Fick to give the Little Giants breathing room.

Despite the win, Schell said the Little Giants still have room for improvement, especially on the baselines.

"We made quite a few baserunning mistakes," the coach said. "We missed a few signals and had some people picked off. It's nice to see we can win despite doing that, but we have to improve as we get into the tough part of our schedule."

Bedford fell to 6-1 and 2-1.

Ross hosts Margaretta today at Alumni Field.

Ross, Bellevue win to stay unbeaten

News-Messenger reports

Jodi Fick's RBI double in the first inning provided the only run in Fremont Ross's 1-0 win Saturday against Norwalk.

Jodi Kusmer allowed just one hit and two walks for the Little Giants (5-0).

Emily Dowell started the Ross rally in the first with a one-out double off of losing pitcher Jenny Dials. Fick followed by hitting a double over the head of Norwalk's left fielder to score Dowell.

"After that they camped out at

the fence and that's where we hit it," said Ross coach Cheryl Schell, whose team managed just five hits. "It was a frustrating day of offense. We were hitting it right at people."

"The ball didn't have an eye on it to find a hole."

Norwalk's Amanda Kempf led off the third inning with a single for the Truckers' only hit. It dropped to 2-5.

Ross's position players backed up Kusmer's performance by committing no errors, helping the team overcome a lack of

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offense.

"It's nice when you play perfect defense and get a good pitching performance," Schell said.

In another game Saturday:

Bellevue 9, Clyde 2

BELLEVUE — Bellevue hit the ball hard and took advantage of Clyde's poor fielding Saturday to earn a 9-2 non-league win.

Erica Caranfa had three hits and Kristy Baptista, Julie Buck and Holly McGue each added a

pair of hits as the Redmen improved to 7-0.

"We hit ball really hard," said Bellevue coach Walter Snyder. "(Kristi) Mounts is one of the best pitchers we've seen, but we did a nice job."

The Fliers hurt their chances by committing seven errors.

"We didn't play well at all in the field," said Clyde coach Marc Marshall. "We had an error in just about every inning. This is the first time our defense has played that poorly."

The Fliers opened the scoring

with a run in the top of the first, but the Redmen scored at least one run in every inning. Pitcher Lyndsey Beamer got the win.

Amanda Hoffman and Katey Nieset each had two hits for the Fliers, who fell to 6-2.

The Redmen are off to a strong start despite losing nine players from last season's team.

"I'm really pleased with the way we have started," Snyder said. "I felt it was important for us to get off to a strong start. This is much better than I anticipated."

Pelfrey drives in 2 in Ross's 6th win

News-Messenger reports

MAUMEE — Unbeaten Fremont Ross broke open a scoreless tie with a run in the fourth inning, then added five more in the fifth Monday in a 6-0 Great Lakes League softball victory over Maumee.

"We played a good game, with no errors," Ross coach Cheryl Schell said.

The Little Giants (6-0) got two hits and two RBI from Nicki Pelfrey and a pair of hits from Jenny Schaaf. Winning pitcher Jodi Kusmer allowed just three hits.

The Panthers remained winless in five games.

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take into the rest of the season."

Gibsonburg 3, Lake 0

MILLBURY — Jenny Taulker pitched the four-hit shutout as the Golden Bears climbed to 4-2 and 1-1 in the SLL.

"We played a good game, with Jenny doing a great job pitching," Gibsonburg coach Keith Diebler said. "The whole team played very well."

Taulker also tripled for Gibsonburg, which scored all three runs in the first inning.

Lakota 1, Eastwood 0

Ross 6, Toledo CC 1

Fremont Ross remained undefeated with a 6-1 non-league win over Toledo Central Catholic.

Tiffany Nistchke had two hits and drove in two runs and pitcher Jodi Kusmer allowed just five hits as Ross improved to 7-0.

The Little Giants took advantage of nine walks issued by Toledo pitchers.

"I was very pleased with the patience our hitters showed at the plate," said Ross coach Cheryl Schell.

Jenny Shaaf scored three runs and Jen Mielke added two more.

Ross's Kusmer fires no-hitter

News-Messenger reports

FOSTORIA — Fremont Ross pitcher Jodi Kusmer continued her stellar season with a five inning no-hitter.

The Little Giants improved to 8-0 with a 20-0 win over Fostoria.

Kusmer, who has all eight Ross wins, came within a third inning walk of pitching a perfect game.

"It's a credit to our defense and great pitching by her," said Ross coach Cheryl Schell.

Emily Dowell and Niki Pelfrey each went 3-for-4 for Ross. Jennifer Mielke, Jenny Schaaf, Jodi Fick, Tiffany Nitchke and Erin Lytle each had two hits in the rout.

Seneca East 14 St. Joe 4

St. Joe managed just two hits and suffered a lopsided loss to Midland Athletic League rival hopewell-Loudon.

Erin Raubenolt and Jamie Heberling each had singles for the Crimson Streaks.

St. Joe dropped to 3-8 overall and 2-1 in the MAL. The Chief-

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tans improved to 6-3, 3-0.

Otsego 8 Gibsonburg 1

GIBSONBURG — Otsego pitcher Erin Donaldson dominated Gibsonburg in an 8-1 Knights win.

Donaldson struck out nine and walked no one in four innings of work. At one point she fanned seven Golden Bears in a row. Every Gibsonburg starter struck out at least once.

Doubles by losing pitcher Jenny Taulker and Leslie LaPlant accounted for two of the three Golden Bears hits.

Gibsonburg is 6-4 overall and 1-3 in the Suburban Lakes League. Otsego is 8-1, 5-0.

Old Fort 16, N. Baltimore 1

NORTH BALTIMORE — Old Fort ripped four doubles and totaled 14 hits in a rout of North Baltimore.

"Randi Whitman, Heather Webb, Becky Crum and Andrea Perry all doubled for the Stock-

aders, who improved to 5-1 overall and 3-0 in the MAL.

Jennifer Seigley was the winning pitcher. The Tigers had only two hits in the game.

Woodmore 5, Genoa 4

WOODVILLE — Woodmore's Sarah Kennedy was hit by a pitch with the bases loaded in the bottom of the seventh, giving the Wildcats a 5-4 Suburban Lakes League win.

Dawn Karchner, Tracy Lee and Elaine Vorderer each had two hits for Woodmore, which improved to 8-5 overall and 5-1 in the SLL.

With the game tied at 4 in the seventh, the Wildcats' Janelle Dangler walked and Genoa brought in Dana Weyandt to pitch. She walked Karchner before striking out two straight batters. But then she hit Amy Perkins to load the bases and then plunked Kennedy to give Woodmore the win.

Becky Lee was the winning pitcher.

Giants suffer first loss

News-Messenger reports

Fremont Ross's defense fell apart in the top of the seventh, allowing Tiffin Columbian to rally for five runs — four of which were unearned — and a 6-4 Great Lakes League win Tuesday.

The Tornadoes took advantage of three Little Giants errors in the inning to erase a 4-1 deficit and hand Ross its first loss in nine games this season.

"Defensively we fell apart,"

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said Ross coach Cheryl Schell. "We made poor choices, trying to get the lead runner when we didn't have to."

Columbian scored a run in the top of the fourth to take a 1-0 edge. The Giants tied the game in the sixth as Niki Pelfrey's single drove in Jennifer Mielke. Erin Lytle then reached on an error and consecutive singles Emily Dowell, Jodi Kusmer and Brittany Brudzinski gave Ross a 4-1 lead.

But the Tornadoes were able to rally off of Kusmer, who's record fell to 8-1 on the year.

Schell hopes something can be gained from this game.

"Hopefully we can learn from our mistakes and turn this into a valuable wake-up call," she said. "Defense is the most important part of the game."

Ross 14, Napoleon 2

NAPOLEON — Jenny Schaff went 5-for-5 and Fremont Ross came back from its first loss of the season Tuesday to rout Napoleon.

“It’s real nice to bounce back,” said Ross coach Cheryl Schell. “As long as you can learn something from your losses, then you are OK.”

The Little Giants collected 15 hits and improved to 9-1.

Nicki Pelfrey and Tiffany Nitschke each went 3-for-5 and Jennifer Mielke went 2-for-5 in the win.

Pitcher Jodi Kusmer improved to 9-1.

Ross loses first league game; Clyde still perfect in SBC

News-Messenger reports

TOLEDO — Fremont Ross lost its first Great Lakes League game and fell into a three-way tie for first place,

The Little Giants lost 2-1 to Whitmer and are now tied with the Panthers and Bedford.

Ross (9-2) scored its only run when Ainsley Watkins came in on a wild pitch in the fifth inning to take a 1-0 lead. But Whitmer tied the game in the sixth and scored the winning run in the bottom of the seventh.

"These are the kind of games that can make us great," Ross coach Cheryl Schell said. "I'd rather play these kind of games than have the 20-0 blowouts — that's not softball.

"Of course I'd like to be on the winning end."

The Panthers improved to 9-3.

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coach Kent Whitman said. "Our timing is a little off. We are just about there."

The Rockets dipped to 5-4 and 2-3 in the SBC, while St. Mary's is 10-2 and 4-2 in the conference.

Woodmore 12, Eastwood 1

PEMBERVILLE — Dawn Karchner and Janelle Dangler both doubled twice and singled and Sara Bowen, Becky Lee, Laura Runion and Amy Perkins collected two hits apiece for the Wildcats, who won their 10th straight game.

Winning pitcher Becky Lee went five innings and struck out five, with no walks. Sherry Swartz pitched the final two innings for Woodmore, 11-5 and 6-1 in the Suburban Lakes League.

Ross 14, Sandusky 1

Fremont Ross bounced back from a loss Friday to pound Sandusky in a Great Lakes League game.

Catcher Nicki Pelfrey tagged a three-run home run to spark the offense. She was 3-for-4 with four RBI in the game.

"We hit the ball real well," said Ross coach Cheryl Schell.

Emily Dowell was 1-for-2 and scored three times as the Little Giants improved to 10-2, 5-1 in the GLL.

Sandusky fell to 2-7.

Ross outslugs Fliers

News-Messenger reports

CLYDE — Fremont Ross collected 13 hits and downed Clyde 12-5 in a non-league game.

Nicki Pelfrey went 4-for-4 and scored three runs for the Little Giants (11-2). Jennifer Mielke went 3-for-5 with two RBI, Jodi Fick was 2-3 with three runs scored and Tiffany Nitchke was 2-for-4 with three RBI.

Pitcher Jodi Kusmer also improved to 11-2.

Amanda Hoffman was 2-for-4 and Tiffany Wettrich homered for the Fliers (13-3).

"We did a nice job today at the plate," said Ross coach Cheryl Schell. "Clyde has a nice team. They can hit the ball. This was a nice win for us."

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Fostoria.

Laura Hirt added two hits and Jessica Ash also doubled for the Crimson Streaks (6-13).

Sarah Flemming had three hits for Fostoria.

Northwood 13, Bettsville 8

NORTHWOOD — Bettsville squandered an 8-2 lead and lost to Northwood.

Charlene Soto went 2-for-4 to lead the Bobcats (3-9). Pitcher Rachel Riley took the loss.

Port Clinton 3, Gibsonburg 0

GIBSONBURG — Sarah Harman pitched a two-hit shutout as Port Clinton topped Gibsonburg.

The News-Messenger, Fremont, Ohio

Sports Editor Brian Spiess, 332-5511, ext. 142

Monday, May 4, 1998 B1

Ross starts sectional play today

10 area teams have tournament games this week

By MICHAEL PIDANICK
Staff writer

Fremont Ross enters the sectional softball tournament as the top seed, facing a team it defeated by 12 runs just 12 days ago.

All of that means nothing to coach Cheryl Schell.

"We still have to play on the field," she said. "We know we can beat any team in the state and any team in the state can beat us."

The Little Giants will play

Napoleon, a team it beat 14-2 on April 22, at 5:15 today at Bowling Green.

"We just have to go out and play good softball on the field," Schell said.

Schell said being the top-seed is not much of an advantage.

"If anything it can be used against you by opponents as motivation," she said.

Ross is one of 10 local teams scheduled to begin sectional play this week.

Five of those teams will play in the Division II bracket in Woodville. Margaretta will battle Fostoria Tuesday, top-seeded Bellevue plays Port Clinton and Lakota faces Oak Harbor Thurs-

day and Clyde plays Lake Saturday.

Top-seeded Woodmore and Gibsonburg compete in the Division III tournament at Genoa. The Golden Bears will take on Cardinal Stritch Tuesday and the Wildcats play Toledo Christian Friday.

In Division IV, St. Joseph Central Catholic faces Elmwood Saturday at Old Fort following the game between Bettsville and St. Wendelin. The host Stockaders are the only area team that does not begin sectional play this week, as they will play the Bettsville/St. Wendelin winner May 11.

Despite a 6-13 record, St. Joe

Softball sectionals

The sectional softball tournament begins this week for most area teams:

Division I at Bowling Green
Today: Fremont Ross vs Napoleon, 5:15 p.m.

Division II at Woodville
Tuesday: Margaretta vs. Fostoria, 5 p.m.

Thursday: Bellevue vs. Port Clinton, 5 p.m.

Thursday: Lakota vs. Oak Harbor, 5 p.m.

coach Sandy Adelsperger feels her young team is capable of winning the sectional.

"We have been playing a lot better lately," she said. "If we play well we certainly have a

Saturday: Clyde vs. Lake, 11 a.m.

Division III at Genoa
Tuesday: Gibsonburg vs. Stritch, 5 p.m.

Friday: Woodmore vs. Tol. Christian, 5 p.m.

Division IV at Old Fort
Saturday: Bettsville vs. St. Wendelin, 2 p.m.

Saturday: St. Joe vs. Elmwood, 4 p.m.

May 11: Old Fort vs. Bettsville/St. Wendelin winner

Sectional Pairings, B2

chance to win the sectional."

If the Streaks get past Elmwood, they will play May 12 against the winner of Saturday's game between Hopewell-Loudon and Carey.

Ross 15, Fostoria 0

Fremont Ross scored early and often in a Great Lakes League rout of Fostoria.

Emily Dowell, Jenny Schaaf and Jennifer Mielke each drove in four runs and Nicki Pelfrey drove in the other three for Ross (12-2, 6-1 GLL).

Jodi Kusmer pitched five innings to pick up the victory.

The News-Messenger, Fremont, Ohio

Sports Editor Brian Spiess, 332-5511, ext. 142

Friday, May 8, 1998 **B1**

Lytle, Kusmer put Ross in final

Little Giants rout Napoleon in sectional opener

By **MICHAEL PIDANICK**
Staff writer

BOWLING GREEN — Even a three-day wait and threatening clouds couldn't stop Erin Lytle and Jodi Kusmer Thursday from leading Fremont Ross into the Division I sectional final.

In a slight drizzle, the Little

Giants cruised to a 9-0 win over the Wildcats at Bowling Green High School in a game originally scheduled to be played Monday.

"It's a good way to start the tournament," said Ross coach Cheryl Schell. "We got some clutch hitting and we played an overall nice game."

The easy victory for the Little Giants came as no surprise. Ross topped the Wildcats 14-2 April 22 at Napoleon.

The Little Giants improved to 13-2 on the year and will face host Bowling Green at noon Saturday

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in the sectional title game.

Lytle was the hitting star for the Little Giants, as she went 3-for-3, drove in three runs, scored three times and had two stolen bases.

"I just relaxed up there and didn't think about what I was doing," she said. "As a team we really came through with the hits we needed."

Catcher Nicki Pelfrey added two hits and scored twice for the Little Giants. Jennifer Mielke

was 2-for-4 in the win.

Kusmer won her 13th game of the season as she threw a complete game two-hit shutout.

"I just relaxed and threw what I had to win the game," said Kusmer, who six and two in the game.

Added Schell: "I thought Jodi was a little faster today. She hit the corners and had her change-up going."

Napoleon (4-14) never had more than one base runner in an inning.

See **ROSS, B2**

Sectional matchups

Fremont Ross: Saturday vs. Bowling Green
St. Joe: Saturday vs. Elmwood
Clyde: Saturday vs. Lake
Gibsonburg: Tuesday vs. Northwood
Lakota: Tuesday vs. Bellevue
Woodmore: Friday vs. Toledo
Christian
Old Fort: Monday vs. Bettsville/St. Wendelin winner
Oak Harbor: eliminated
Margaretta: Saturday vs. Fostoria
Bellevue: Tuesday vs. Lakota
Bettsville: Saturday vs. St. Wendelin

Giants eliminate Napoleon

Continued from B1

The Little Giants began the scoring in the second inning. Pelfrey led off with a single and Tiffany Nitchke was hit by a pitch from losing pitcher Becky Baughman.

One out later, Lytle tagged a double to right-center to score both runners. Ashleigh Horn drew a walk and Kusmer followed with an RBI ground out.

Jenny Schaaf then lofted a fly ball to left that was dropped by Napoleon center fielder Erin Walker, allowing Horn to score.

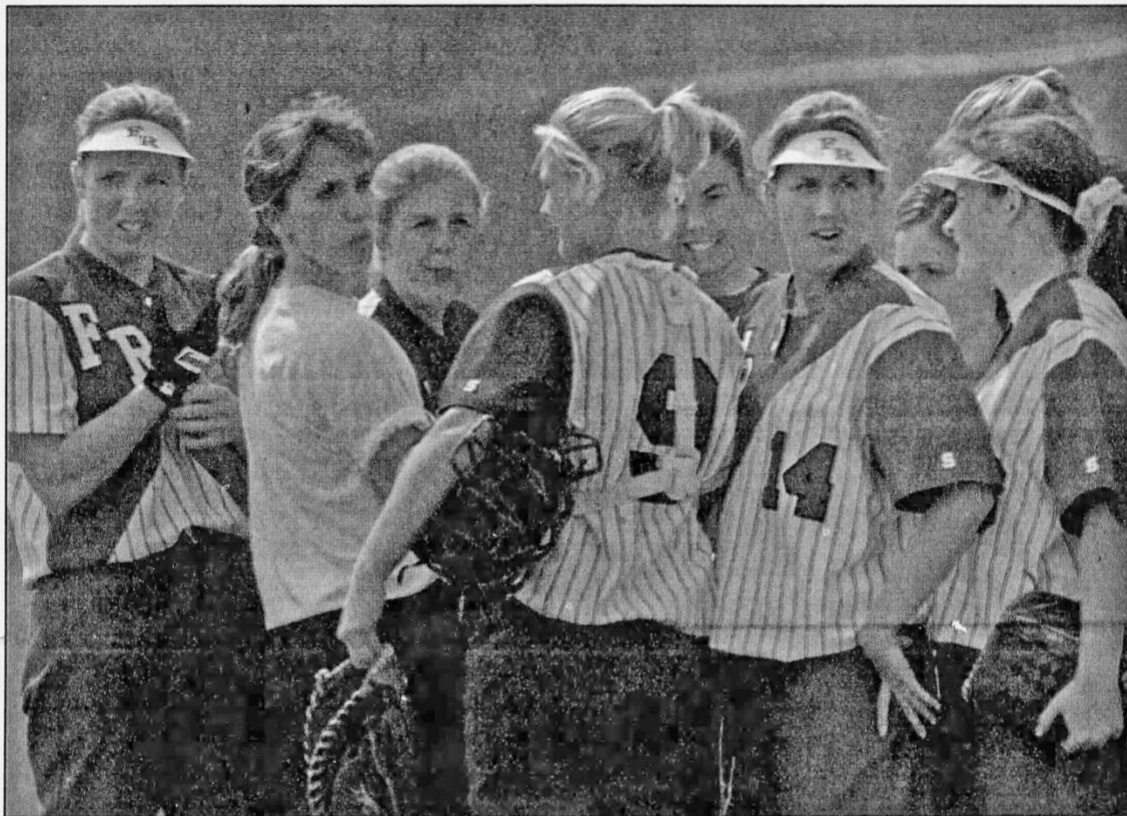
The Little Giants tacked on three more runs in the third. Jodi Fick opened with a walk and Pelfrey followed with an RBI double. Two outs

later, Lytle cracked a triple to right-centerfield to score Pelfrey. Horn drove home Lytle with a double to left field.

Ross put the game out of reach in the sixth. Lytle opened with a single, stole second and took third on a ground out. One out later, Jenny Schaaf lined a triple to right to score Lytle. Mielke closed out the scoring with an RBI single.

The Little Giants also made some key defensive plays. After Napoleon's Katherine Updegraf drew a one out walk, Pelfrey picked her off of first base from her catcher position. In the fourth, Lytle made a leaping catch to take an extra-base hit away from Updegraf.

Family pitches in for mom



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

CHERYL SCHELL, coach of the Fremont Ross softball team, talks to her players during Wednesday's 15-0 win against Fostoria.

Schell's husband, parents allow her to be coach and mom

By MICHAEL PIDANICK
Staff writer

Coaching high school softball requires a lot of time, making it difficult to be a parent and a coach.

But Fremont Ross coach Cheryl Schell and her family have found a way around that.

Schell's family not only attends the games, but they help out as well.

"It's neat having everyone there," said Cheryl Schell. "It's nice to have them around."

So while most moms will be honored during Sunday's Mother's Day holiday, Schell gets the chance to see her family's support every time the Little Giants take the field.

Bill Schell, Cheryl's husband of four years, sweeps the field in between innings.

"I enjoy working on the field," he said. "It's a hobby

and it helps Cheryl get home early. It's hard for her to be away from her kids."

Bill Schell is a high school teacher at Ross and a former junior varsity baseball and assistant football coach at the school. When he and Cheryl decided to have children, he put his coaching career on hold to take care of the kids.

"One of us had to give up coaching and since she was at the head coaching stage, it was easier for me to get out," Bill said.

The Schell children — Jessica is 2½ and Tyler is nine months — attend most of the softball games. Fortunately for Bill, Cheryl's parents are around to lend a helping hand.

"It's rough when I'm by myself," he said. "But when her mom and dad come up they can watch them too. And most of the fans know them so

they also can keep an eye on them."

Ralph and Patty Coressel travel 1½ hours from Defiance to watch their daughter coach and to spend time with the grandchildren.

"I really like having them around," Cheryl Schell said. "It's just like with the players,

it's nice for me to have my parents around. They are really neat fans."

Ralph and Patty have closely followed Cheryl's athletic endeavors as a basketball and softball player at Defiance High School and in college.

"We get to spend time with the kids and let Cheryl enjoy herself," said Patty Coressel.

Family friend Jeff McNutt handles the scorekeeping for home games, but Ralph Coressel keeps the book at many of the road games. Cheryl considers him an

adviser.

"Afterwards I call him and we kind of re-hash the game," she said. "I've always respected his opinion."

But Ralph downplayed his role.

"I think her and her coaches make most of the decisions," he said.

And Cheryl is far from an only child. The Coressels have seven children and 16 grandchildren. Since Ralph and Patty are retired they take the time to travel to see their family.

"We like to support our kids and grandkids," Ralph Coressel said. "We have family in Angola, Ind., which is about as far away (as Fremont). We travel to see them too."

Cheryl is glad everyone has the opportunity to get together.

"When I'm coaching, the only opportunity I get to spend time with them is after the games," she said.

MOTHER'S DAY

Ross advances

Ross 7, Bowling Green 1

BOWLING GREEN — Fremont Ross used its own key hitting and took advantage of six Bowling Green errors to win a Division I sectional title.

“Basically offensively we produced and defensively we outplayed them,” said Ross coach Cheryl Schell.

Nicki Pelfrey ripped a double and a triple and Jenny Schaaf went 3-for-4 and scored three times in the win. Erin Lytle added two hits for Ross (14-2).

Jodi Fick and Tiffany Nitschke each drove in two runs. Jodi Kusmer was the winning pitcher for the 14th time this season.

Whitmer 2, Fremont Ross 0

Whitmer took advantage of four Fremont Ross errors and topped the Little Giants 2-0 in the Great Lakes League.

Losing pitcher Jodi Kusmer yielded seven hits and no earned runs in seven innings.

The Little Giants (14-3) managed just four hits off of Amy Zalewski.

“We had runners on base but couldn’t get a clutch hit when it was needed,” said Ross coach Cheryl Schell.

SOFTBALL

Ross 14, Sandusky 0

SANDUSKY — Jodi Kusmer fired an eight-hit shutout as Fremont Ross walloped Great Lakes League rival Sandusky.

Kusmer struck out eight and walked three as she won her 15th game of the year.

Erin Lytle went 3-for-5 for Ross (15-3). Tiffany Nitschke and Emily Dowell each added a pair of hits.

The Little Giants play host Clay tomorrow in another GLL game.

Shelby walks by Little Giants

Woodmore gets revenge in Div. IV

News-Messenger reports

McCUTCHINVILLE — After pitching sensational softball games all season, Fremont Ross pitcher Jodi Kusmer picked the wrong time for control problems.

Kusmer walked eight batters and Shelby took advantage to earn an 11-5 win in a Division I district semifinal.

"I don't think I've ever seen Jodi Kusmer walk that many," said Ross coach Cheryl Schell.

SOFTBALL

"We just put too many runners on base. It was very uncharacteristic."

The Whippets (18-6) pounded out 11 hits, including a double and triple by Beth Newlan as they advanced to the district final against Defiance.

"The umpire had a tight strike zone and they adjusted and we didn't," Schell said. "(Kusmer) tried to get them to fish (at bad pitches) and they wouldn't do it. She started getting hit hard and became afraid to throw the ball in there."

The Little Giants managed just six hits and left nine runners on base.

"Give Shelby credit, they adjusted," Schell said. "We swung at some bad pitches."

Emily Dowell homered and Tiffany Nitschke went 2-for-4 with a double for the Little Giants.

Ross (15-4) travels to Bedford, Mich., today to face the Kicking Mules in a Great Lakes League game.

"This team needs to show some character and bounce back and win," Schell said.

"We need this game to have any chance at winning the league. The seniors deserve to win."

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SOFTBALL

Bedford 2, Fremont 0

BEDFORD, Mich. — Two first-inning Fremont Ross errors resulted in two Bedford runs and a Great Lakes League win for the Kicking Mules.

Bedford's Jennifer Diegel fired a two-hit shutout as her team improved to 11-1 in the Great Lakes League.

Jodi Kusmer went the distance for the Little Giants and yielded just four hits and no earned runs.

"After the first inning we did well," said Ross coach Cheryl Schell. "Jodi pitched a good game."