

1996 Football Season...

Lotycz: A local legend remembered

By MICHAEL BOSI

Staff writer

Even if the Fremont Ross football team goes undefeated in the 1996 season, the Little Giants will know they've suffered at least one loss.

Joe Lotycz.

A local legend after 45 years as equipment manager and — more importantly — a Little Giants fan, Lotycz was 75 when he passed away last April 18 while on vacation in Alabama.

Even after retiring, Lotycz could be found toiling washing the team's laundry, working with the equipment — and having a good time.

Ross has dedicated its season to Lotycz, with a black decal inscribed with "Joe" on its helmets, as well as its team program. Also, the post-

See **LOTY CZ**, Page 9 N



ROSS
COACHING
STAFF: Back
row from left:
Dan Fought,
Joe Hershey,
Jim Kettner,
Dwight Fertig,
Tony Ruiz,
Chuck
Lindsey; front
row: Joe
Bajornis, Mitch
Curliss, head
coach Rex
Radehoff, Les
Hull and Del
Enders.

Lotycz: A legend remembered

Continued from Page 2

season award formerly known as the True Grit Award will be renamed in Lotycz's honor. Plans for additional tribute are still in the works.

Some current Ross players and coaches, otherwise known as Lotycz's extended family, reflected on Lotycz.

"Joe was Fremont football. ... He lived and died with his emphasis on Fremont Ross football. He loved the kids. He loved the game of football, he wanted to do what he could for them. He loved baseball, too. ... He was, in my estimation, one of a kind: somebody that donated his time and effort. It really is too bad you don't find people like him anymore. I wish you could. It's tough to replace and, in fact, we haven't replaced him this year."

— Ross head coach REX RADEHOFF

"To the kids that treated him with respect, he treated them with the utmost. That's what a lot of people remember. He respected kids that other people didn't and that's what made Joe Joe, I guess."

— Ross assistant coach JOE HERSHY, who has taken over the equipment duties along with assistant coach Jim Kettner.

"Joe had purple blood. He still haunts the stadium. It's a good thing. He's here, he's with us. ...

Joe Lotycz field instead of Harmon Stadium."

— Ross offensive coordinator

DAN FOUGHT, who shared a cigar and watched a game film with Lotycz during one of their last meetings.

— Ross assistant coach LES HULL

"Hopefully he's in heaven and looking down on us this year for this season. ... Joe Lotycz did everything for everybody. Football and Harmon Stadium was Joe Lotycz's second love to his family, and I'll tell you, he knew every coach that he was under and he had a great respect for coaches and the coaches had a great respect for him, from washing uniforms and washing towels to making sure the weeds weren't growing on the Harmon Stadium floor. In the future that stadium should be called

— Ross co-captain DEREK THIESSEN

Playing football teaches lessons in values, desire



Harry Liggins
Guest column

played football.

I always wanted to carry on the family name. My father Harry, and uncles Tom, Larry and David all played.

Football is a way for me personally to learn more about life. It teaches discipline, and at the same time it's fun. Football teaches you to compete as well. It shows kids that all the positives that come out of football. With a lot of kids, if they're not playing football, they'd be out on the street not

learning much. It's not easy but it's worth it. Sometimes you ask yourself why you go through it. But when you walk out there on Friday nights, it makes it all worth it. It's pretty important, being in that leadership role, with all these people looking at you. There's pressure, but it's not as much as I thought it would be.

There is excitement you get when you walk out on the field. The toughest part is the practices.

My immediate goal is to get Fremont back in the playoffs again. And long-term, I'd like to play football in college. But I'm not going to leave that as my only chance to go to college.

Harry Liggins is a senior co-captain for the Fremont Ross football team.



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Spare no change for the defense



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

BRIAN BORER, a 6-foot-5, 305-pound senior, solidifies the Ross defensive line.

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

The Fremont Ross football team enters the 1996 season inexperienced at several positions — most notably inside linebacker. That might lead one to wonder if the new faces will be able to grasp the 4-4 concept that the Little Giants have employed in all of head coach Rex Radloff's 23 years.

Any plans to alter things?

Get real.

"The past 23 years that's what we've done," said Radloff. "Your key to any defense is your linebackers. You down people have to create double-team blocks and the linebackers have to make plays. It's pretty simple."

Before the team's first scrimmage, defensive coordinator Chuck Lindsey said inexperience was the main reason not every defender was hitting on all cylinders.

But Lindsey also believes he has enough talent to work with that no changes in the Ross system are required.

"Some people say, 'Well, you've got to coach to the talent you have,' but I really think these kids will mature and become good football players for Fremont Ross. I have a lot of confidence. I've just got to be patient," said Lindsey.

"We thought about (changing). We run a lot of 5-3, but Fremont Ross is a 4-4 defense."

The Little Giants, who allowed 144 points last season and never more than 22 in a game, should be solid with juniors Chris Shull and Aaron Root and senior Jim Durbin

as the defensive tackles.

On the line, small planets will be overshadowed by senior Brian Borer's 6-foot-5, 305-pound frame. Also on the line, seniors Greg Reinholt (6-4, 230 lbs.) and Kevin Mosser and juniors Keith Pert, J.R. Adkins, junior Henry Sewell make the defensive end position a strength.

Derek Thiessen, last year's leading tackler, and Jeremy Haslinger lead the outside linebacker corps, but the year's biggest surprise thus far could be sophomore Brent Agnew's emergence as a reliable OLB following a fine offensive season as a freshman.

The inside linebackers, under the tutelage of new coach Del Enders, are the most inexperienced. Enders is leaning toward some combination of sophomores Josh Liggins, Jason Billow, John Forshtay and Reid O'Brien or juniors Travis Bulger, Jesse Sandoval and Eric Lindsey to fill his holes.

"Give me a good tough-nosed football player. That's what we want now," said Enders. "Step up and make the play."

Seniors Sam Root and Harry Liggins are quick, talented defensive backs and Demitris Simms figures into the mix, but the safety spot is still uncertain.

But one thing that is a certainty is that Ross will find a way to make the 4-4 work.

"Everyone's come up with it from seventh grade on," said Liggins. "It changes, obviously, with high school football, but I think the younger guys are picking up the changes."

Enders leaves one family, joins another

Radeloff on new ILB coach: 'He has his hands full'

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

Del Enders had to leave part of his family behind at Gibsonburg High in order to join what's seemed like an extended family to him.

The new Fremont Ross inside linebacker coach, who resigned after struggling to a 2-18 record in two years as the Golden Bears skipper, is joining the program he said was like a "big brother" to Gibsonburg.

"I had the opportunity to work very closely with coach Radeloff the past two seasons," said Enders. "He was trying to be the big brother to Gibsonburg's program and he was a great help to us."

"It was just a matter of a phone call and telling him my situation and asking him if he'd be interested and he took me on board."

But while Enders will continue to teach at Gibsonburg, the move means leaving behind his son Del, a junior fullback.

"He handled it very well," said the elder Enders, a Bowling Green State University graduate.

It is by no coincidence that Radeloff acquired Enders' services for this season. The Little Giants' inside linebacker corps is by far an inexperienced one.

None of the top four candidates, Liggins, Travis Bulger, Eric Lindsey and Jesse Sandoval, have seen significant, if any, inside linebacking time.

"Right now I brought in Del because I thought he was the best candidate for the job," said Radeloff. "I've known him in the past; he works hard and he certainly has done an excellent job so far, but he has his hands full."

Enders, who benefited from a new weight room and training program during his second year at Gibsonburg, wasted no time

Ross in '95

Columbus DeSales 20, ROSS 0
Akron Buchtel 39, ROSS 0
Ross 19, SANDUSKY 16 (ot)
ROSS 28, Bedford 12
Ross 21, FINDLAY 17
ROSS 43, Oregon Clay 7
ROSS 33, Northview 0
ROSS 29, Whitmer 13
Ross 38, NAPOLEON 18
HOME TEAM IN CAPS

1996 Schedule

Aug 31 vs. Tol. Cent. Cath. t
Sept 6 Akron Buchtel
Sept 13 Sandusky#
Sept 20 at Bedford*
Sept 27 Findlay**
Oct 4 Fostoria*
Oct 11 at Clay*
Oct. 18 Sylvania Northview*
Oct. 25 at Whitmer*
Nov. 1 Napoleon*
* — GLL games
† — At Waite High
— Parents Night
** — Homecoming
— Senior Night

'It was just a matter of a phone call and telling (Rex Radeloff) my situation and asking him if he'd be interested and he took me on board.'

— Inside linebacker coach
DEL ENDERS on joining Ross

introducing himself to his new players. He wasted even less time introducing the players to a three-day-a-week training regimen during the off-season.

"It worked out very well," said Enders.

It was all in an attempt to get to know his players and his new team better.

Just like a close family.



Just can't get enough

Liggins' versatility opens up offensive options for Ross

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

It very well could be that Harry Liggins is too valuable for the Fremont Ross football team.

For now, Liggins is penciled into head coach Rex Radeloff's starting lineup as a quarterback and defensive back. But don't be surprised to see the senior sprinting a receiver's route more than a few times.

He's that fast.

"It's really something I thought of first," said Liggins.

Chances are Liggins will be calling the plays when Ross opens Saturday at Toledo Central Catholic, but crafty junior Wesley Esquivel is also knocking on the QB door.

On the other side of the ball, Liggins is one of Ross's top talents in the secondary.

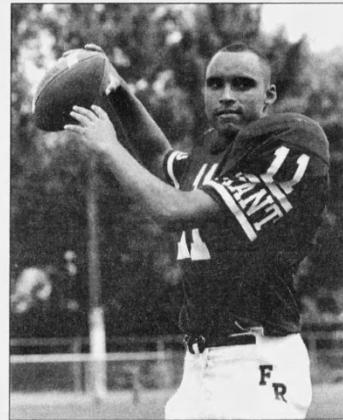
"I like Harry Liggins. He's a true corner," said Ohio Prep Football Scouting owner John McCallister, adding that he was impressed with Liggins' academic performance.

The captain's "C," shared with Derek Theissen, isn't on Liggins' sleeve for nothing.

"We are pretty experienced out of the five guys in the back, so as far as leadership and helping the other guys out that should be a strength," said Liggins.

The 6-foot, 160-pound Esquivel has demonstrated an ability to throw with command.

"Esquivel throws the ball a little better," said offensive coordinator Dan Fought. "Harry can do it anywhere. Harry can run the ball, he can be a receiver, he can do it all. So it's a nice situation to be in."



HARRY LIGGINS will be a two-way leader.

There is confidence that Esquivel is ready for his possible task.

"He's a very positive kid," said Fought.

"Mentally he's very sharp. He knows this system."

Liggins' speed is his greatest asset, making either decision the right one for the coaching staff.

"It's a real battle," said Fought. "They're both giving each other a good look."

Liggins would be used primarily in spot situations to give Ross another option.

"We have some weapons we can go to. When we put Liggins out there he gives us more of a weapon," said Fought.

Either way, Liggins is a loaded gun the Little Giants will be able to shoot at their Great Lakes League opponents.

"He's improved, he really has," said Radeloff.

"He's gotten a lot better. His biggest asset other than his passing is his ability to scramble and run. He's probably the quickest kid on the squad ..."

"We're going to utilize that speed one way or another."

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In Colors Of Your School

Offense quick to state its case

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

Many teams may not be able to keep up with the speed generated by the Fremont Ross football team's backfield this year. Question is, will Ross' own offensive line be able to keep up?

The line still bears some resemblance to last year's "Hogs," with 6-foot-5, 305-pound tackle Brian Borer and 6-6, 205-pound tight end Kevin Mosser back to bang bodies. Guard Jim Durbin (5-10, 195) is an experienced senior, and junior guard Chris Shull (5-11, 250) adds more beef.

"I think those are some key people," said head coach Rex Radeloff. "But I think left tackle will be a question mark as will backup tackle and backup guard. We're looking for someone to step in and play both."

But offensive coordinator Dan Fought believes that a little extra patience in teaching his linemen the correct mental approach to picking up their assignments will alleviate most of their problems.

"It just goes slower than what you like," said Fought. "It's the hardest job on a football field to do. An offensive lineman is as special a kid as we have because they put so much more time and so many little things count for them that nobody realizes."

Everyone's going to realize what force Ross possesses in the backfield, with senior tailback and co-captain Derek

Thiessen lugging the ball up to 30 times a game.

Thiessen is complemented by an abundance of speed, with sophomore running back Brent Agnew, who thrust himself into the spotlight last year by rushing for over 500 yards, and speedy junior Kenny Morrisette posing as legitimate ground threats.

Juniors Travis Bulger and Eric Lindsey, like the other backs, are versatile fullbacks or tailbacks.

New quarterback Harry Liggins has shown confidence and has the speed to scramble. With Wesley Esquivel a talented backup, Liggins may see some receiving time as Ross attempts to expand its options.

None of Liggins' targets possess the barnburner speed of the backfield, but junior Brett Hufford has a pair of hands that could make up for lost speed. Seniors Terry Cisco, Jeremy Haslinger and Johnny Aldridge will help provide a wrinkle when the Little Giants shy away from their obvious running strength.

It took Ross three games to score its first points in 1995, but Liggins believes his backfield will consistently keep the ball moving in the right direction.

He said, "We'd like to make more of a statement at the beginning of this season than we did last year."

Put an exclamation point at the end.

Thiessen plays with pride

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

Derek Thiessen is Fremont Ross High's most experienced tailback. He's the Little Giants' top outside linebacker.

His mission for 1996: it's no secret.

"I just have to work hard and try to get everyone else to work hard," said Thiessen. "Instead of individuals everyone has to come out as a unit because that's the only way we're going to get things done."

Spoken like a true leader. And that's exactly what head coach Rex Radeloff wants the 5-foot-10, 170-pound senior to be.

"In an I-offense, the tailback carries the load and that's the nature of the position," said Radeloff. "He's a captain so he's a leader anyway."

Ross has had some simply incredible tailbacks in its history, which they did last season. Playing in Woodson's shadow in '94, Thiessen scored just twice. But last year, he rumbled for 11 touchdowns, rushing for 1,063 yards on 195 carries.

Any comparisons of Thiessen to Woodson?

Don't even think about it.

"It was an honor to run after him," said Thiessen. "Everyone knows he's a great tailback and you can never do what he could do. You really can't because he's really a superstar."



DEREK THIESSEN rushed for more than 1,000 yards last season.

Instead, Thiessen is content to let his numbers do the talking, which they did last season. Playing in Woodson's shadow in '94, Thiessen scored just twice. But last year, he rumbled for 11 touchdowns, rushing for 1,063 yards on 195 carries.

He could carry the ball up to 30 times this season.

"Anyone that has the position to carry the ball 25-30 times a

game certainly takes a key leadership in the offense," said Radeloff.

The challenge for the Ross coaching staff will be to protect its No. 1 bulldozer.

"Yeah, we're going to get Derek the ball 25-30 times a game," said offensive coordinator Dan Fought, "but the other people like Brent Agnew, Travis Bulger and the receivers like (Brett) Hufford and (Terry) Cisco, those guys have take the pressure off of him."

The offensive numbers speak for themselves. But Thiessen's defense is work to marvel at, also.

Regardless of the magic Thiessen can turn with the ball in his hands, he and senior defensive back Harry Liggins have a heavy responsibility of keeping it out of defenders' hands.

"Derek Thiessen and Harry Liggins have got to be the leaders on the defense," said defensive coordinator Chuck Lindsey. "They've got to get these young kids and get them playing with a lot of pride — the way we play with Fremont Ross football."

Lindsey need not worry about Thiessen playing with pride.

Seniors ... don't be left out!



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The grass here really is greener

Newly-planted Harmon Stadium grass will get first test tonight

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

Even the Harmon Stadium field had to endure a tough pre-season workout in preparation for the 1996 season.

Steve Goetz, the Fremont supervisor of classified operations, pronounced the newly-planted grass in fit shape for tonight's kickoff between Fremont St. Joseph Central Catholic and Clyde.

"Essentially, what we did was we had a gentleman come in who took a tractor and plowed it up," said Goetz. "He worked it down like a field you would plant corn in last fall after the season was over. This spring we did leveling and made the seed bed ready and put grass seed on on it."

"And Mother Nature was very kind to us this spring with lots and lots of water."

Goetz performed the research in finding the right grass seed, as well as assisting in the

See BOARD, B2

50 50

News-Messenger / Andrew Morrison

Little Giants fight Irish Saturday

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

Fremont Ross coach Rex Radloff says Saturday's game will be Little Giants' 24th day of beating up on one other.

Ross will see just how much it earned its keep in practice when it opens the season against Toledo Central Catholic at Waite High School (WFRO, 7 p.m. kickoff).

The Little Giants finished last season on a five-game winning streak, earning a three-way share of the Great Lakes League championship.

"Every year's a new year," said Radloff. "Last year we graduated 22 seniors. We've got a nucleus of starters back, but every year's a new season."

Horizonians need to dig back eight years to find the last Ross-Central Catholic matchup, a 16-8 Fighting Irish win on Sept. 16, 1988.

Central brings a strong double-edged attack, with senior quarterback Boe Washington heading the offense, which operates a run-and-shoot as well as a wishbone.

"He's got good speed and throws the ball well," said Radloff of the 5-foot-8 senior. "We want to control keeping the quarterback in the pocket."

"I think he's a real threat when he scrambles. He's as much a threat running as he is throwing."

Washington's abilities will put pressure on Ross's defensive line and young linebackers.

Ross's secondary of Harry Liggins, Sam Root and Demetris Simms will have its hands full trying to lasso senior receiver

Scouting report

Fremont Ross Little Giants vs. Toledo Central Catholic Fighting Irish.

When: Saturday, 7 p.m.

Where: Toledo, Waite High School

Radio: WFRO-AM, 6:15 p.m. pregame

show (Jon Kerns)

Directions: Take the Ohio Turnpike to I-270, then to Toledo. Take the Front Street exit and turn left at end of ramp. Take Front Street to East Broadway and take a left. Waite Stadium is at the end of East Broadway.

Toledo players to watch: Offense: QB Boe Washington, RB Armando Cortez, FB Desmond Fletcher, RB Aaron Bowman; Defense: DB Rudy Matthews, LB Tim

Doucet, LB C.J. Feller, T Desmond Fletcher, DE Brandon Holmes.

Key to the game: The Little Giants would like to take the home crowd out of the game by flexing their running game muscle against an average-sized Central defense. Ross will find out just where it stands with a young defense, as Washington is a top gun, as well as an option threat.

Tonight's Games

Clyde at Fremont St. Joseph

Perkins at Woodmore

Mohawk at Lakota

Margareta at Western Reserve

Gibsonburg at Ottawa Hills

Rossford at Oak Harbor

Bellevue at Huron

Aaron Bowman, while running back Armando Cortez is small (5-5 1/2) but quick.

Ross will counter with its own quickness, with senior captain Derek Thiessen, sophomore Harry Liggins and Kenny Morrisette taking handoffs from either Liggins or junior Wesley Esquivel.

Radloff has yet to name a starting QB, with Esquivel having asserted himself quite well during scrimmages and Liggins possessing fine speed for a receiver.

Radloff expects the Fighting Irish's linebackers to apply plenty of pressure on his quarterback. "They're more of a penetrating defense than a reading defense," said Radloff.

Ross enters the game healthy, with the exception of running back/linebacker

Travis Bulger, who is "week-to-week" with a foot injury.

As Radloff enters his 11th season as head coach, he will not deliver any rah-rah type speech before the opening kickoff. Instead, the Ross coach wants his players to keep it simple.

"I just tell them to go out and enjoy themselves and have some fun — just stay relaxed," said Radloff.

"(Saturday's game) is an opportunity to hit someone other than ourselves, to showcase ourselves in Northwest Ohio with a good team on a Saturday night."

"It's payday for them. They've been putting a lot of time and effort on the practice field and it's time to reward them by going out and playing a game."

Little Giants squash Irish



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

DEREK THIESSEN of Fremont Ross is thrown down by several Toledo Central Catholic defenders in the second quarter Saturday night.

Morrisette rushes for two scores in opening win

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

TOLEDO — The annals of history will show there were some truly incredible performances in the Fremont Ross football team's 27-6 non-league victory over Toledo Central Catholic Saturday night at Mollenkopf Stadium.

■ Junior running back Kenny Morrisette ran for a career-high 205 yards and two touchdowns.

■ Senior Derek Thiessen put on a show for the first half, scoring Ross's first touchdown and rushing for 87 yards. He also had kickoff returns of 52 and 35 yards.

■ Junior backup quarterback Wesley Esquivel's first-ever var-

sity pass fell for a 45-yard touch-down connection to starting quarterback-turned-receiver Harry Liggins.

Not to be overlooked is the Little Giant defense, which devoured an extremely talented Fighting Irish attack. The "D" played its best while Ross clung to a six-point lead before blowing the game open with two fourth-quarter touchdowns.

The balance between Ross's offense and defense translated into a hard-fought opening win.

"I'm proud of the defense," said Ross head coach Rex Radloff. "They gave us ample opportunities on the offense."

Liggins started at quarterback,

but Esquivel replaced him after two series, and he will have very fond memories of his first varsity game.

Turning in the biggest play — and the last — of the first quarter, Thiessen busted up the gut for a 25-yard run. The co-captain then plowed through Central's René Thompson on the first play of the second for a 3-yard score.

After Central went three-and-out on its next drive, Liggins beat defenders Armondo Cortez and Thompson as a perfect Esquivel pass found its mark for a 45-yard scoring strike to make

Backup scores big for Little Giants

Kenny Morrisette rushed for 205 yards in the Little Giants victory Saturday. He also added two touchdowns.

His story, B2.

See ROSS, B2

Ross wins season opener

Continued from B1

it 12-0.

"I seen Harry out there and I had full confidence in him," Esquivel said. "I knew if I got it to Harry he'd catch it."

Aided by a Ross face-mask penalty, the Fighting Irish halved the lead when Aaron Bowman capped a seven-play, 66-yard cruise with a 2-yard TD run.

Thereafter, Ross limited Central to just two first downs, and the Fighting Irish offense netted just 54 second-half yards.

Ross finished with 392 offensive yards, 332 on the ground.

The Little Giants had three glittering opportunities to score in the third quarter, despite excellent field position courtesy of the defense. Ross continually forced Central quarterback Bo Washington to scramble, as the secondary of Liggins, Sam Root and Demetris Simms smothered the Irish receivers.

Agnew added an interception to squelch Central's worst drive of the night.

But the Ross attack couldn't capitalize. Two drives ended in missed field goals, while another advanced just two yards.

"I just thought, 'Give us another opportunity. We didn't get it done on a couple of opportunities, but give us another opportunity,'" said Radeloff.

That was when Morrisette put his game into overdrive, blasting off for a 70-yard touchdown run with 5:53 left in the fourth quarter and scoring 1:13 later on a 33-yard sprint.

With the victory, Ross avoided a dismal slow start like it had in 1995, when it failed to score in its first two games.

"That's our goal," said Esquivel. "We want to go out and get these first three games, and hopefully, we'll get them all."

Football

Fremont Ross 27, Toledo Cent. Cath. 6

At Toledo

Ross (1-0)	0	12	0	15	—	27
Toledo CC (0-1)	0	6	0	0	—	6

SCORING

Second quarter

FR — Derek Thiessen 3 run (kick failed), 11:57.

FR — Harry Liggins 45 pass from Wesley Esquivel (kick blocked), 10:07.

CC — Bowman 2 run (kick failed), 7:10.

Fourth quarter

FR — Kenny Morrisette 70 run (Brent Agnew run), 5:53.

FR — Morrisette 33 run (Michael Hickey kick), 4:40.

	FR	CC
First downs	11	6
Rushes-yards	43-332	35-155
Passing (Att.-Comp.)	3-7	3-7
Passing yards	60	6
Punts-Yds.-Yds.	2-47	7-185
Fumbles-lost	0-0	4-2
Penalties-yards	3-35	8-60

RUSHING — FR, Thiessen 12-87, Josh Liggins 1-5, Agnew 7-37, Eric Lindsey 2-5, Esquivel 2-1, Harry Liggins 1-(-8), Kenny Morrisette 18-205; CC, Armando Cortez 3-11, Desmond Fletcher 8-47, Boe Washington 15-34, Aaron Bowman 9-63.

PASSING — FR, Liggins 2-2-15-0, Esquivel 1-5-45-1, Hickey 0-1-0-1; CC, Washington 3-7-6-2.

RECEIVING — FR, Jeremy Haslinger 1-1, Kevin Mosser 1-14, Harry Liggins 1-45; CC, Nate Murnen 1-6, Rudy Matthews 1-(-4), Cortez 1-4.

INTERCEPTIONS — FR, Agnew, Josh Liggins; CC, Fletcher, Nate Murnen.

MISSED FIELD GOALS — FR, Hickey 2 (40, 25).

GREAT LAKES LEAGUE

League	Overall	W	L	W	L	PF	PA
Fostoria	0	0	1	0	20	12	
Ross	0	0	1	0	27	6	
Whitmer	0	0	1	0	34	0	
Napoleon	0	0	1	0	15	12	
Bedford	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Clay	0	0	0	1	7	28	
Findlay	0	0	0	1	8	26	
Northview	0	0	0	1	10	33	

Giant dose of fan spirit



News-Messenger/Michael Bosi

ROBERT AND BEVERLY WETZEL stand beside their yard decorations, all of which express their support for Fremont Ross athletics.

State Street couple doesn't hide allegiances

F

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

Friday night will be the Fremont Ross football home opener.

Or will it?

The real Ross Home opener actually took place an the beginning of August. And if you were in the vicinity of 1244 West State St., you drove right by it.

That's where Robert and Beverly Wetzel performed their annual ritual of transforming their property from residence to billboard, posting the Little Giants' schedule in their front yard and putting up their "This is Giant country" sign.

The dawn of another season can only mean one thing:

"A lot of work," said Beverly Wetzel.

Not as famous as the Hayes

Presidential Center and not nearly as distinct as the smell of the sugar beet plant, the Wetzel — er, Ross Home — is just as much a Fremont landmark.

"It's surprising how many people we've had stop right off the street and take pictures," said Robert Wetzel, a former nose-guard who graduated from Ross in 1955.

What they see is a 4-by-8 piece of plywood adorned with the Ross schedule and results centered between two Little Giants. It stands above a red-framed purple piece of AstroTurf upon which white carnations spell ROSS.

After — gasp! — Ross losses, the Wetzels pin a sad face on one giant.

"The first year we had it up,

we got beat up. I don't remember who beat us, but Pete Moore was the coach and I put the little sad face on it and I had a black armband I put on his arm," Robert Wetzel said. "I was sitting on the porch and here comes Pete. He said, 'Bob, I don't mind the sad face, but do we have to have the black armband? We only lost a game. Nobody died.'"

That was the end of the black armband. But not the tradition.

The Wetzels, married 24 years, were sure to include the school's other sports with the "Giant Country" sign hanging from the porch and "Go Ross" above the second-floor window.

It's more than a family project.

This week's battles

Turn to page B3 for information about each of this weekend's high school football games.

See WETZEL'S, B2

Wetzels boost Giants

Continued From A1

Friends Sue Sorg and Don Broshious assist in painting the signs each year.

They are still in search of a cheerleader to add to the lawn decor, and Robert Wetzel wants to paint the porch supports purple and white.

But he can't get too carried away.

"Wouldn't that look nice painted purple?" he asked Beverly Wetzel as if to marvel at an imaginary masterpiece.

"Yeah, it would look nice painted white, too," Beverly shot back.

That's about the only disagreement the two have about the Ross tribute. They both work for the Ross boosters, Robert as a 50-50 raffle ticket salesman and Beverly in a souvenir stand.

Beverly Wetzel is a 1949 graduate of Galion High but now works in the Ross cafeteria. You can bet her allegiance will be with the Purple & White Friday night.

That's when the Ross football team opens its home schedule.

The Ross Home has already opened.

Morrisette is GLL's top offensive player

Fremont Ross junior Kenny Morrisette was named Great Lakes League Offensive Player of the

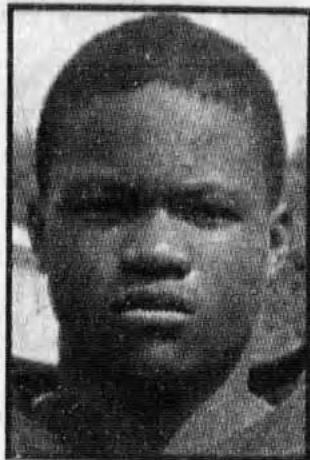
Week Wednesday by area news media.

Morrisette, filling in at running back after Derek Thiessen had leg cramps, rushed for 205 yards and two touchdowns for the Little

MORRISETTE

Giants in a 27-6 win against Toledo Central Catholic.

Oregon Clay linebacker Tom Swaya earned the GLL's top defensive honor for the week after making 10 tackles, picking off a pass and recovering a fumble in a 28-7 loss to Toledo Bowsher.



Buchtel controls Ross



JESSE SANDOVAL (43) and Tyson Liggins (back) of Fremont Ross take down Buchtel's Robert Foster with help from Tim Pearson (72) Friday night.

News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

Griffins win
trench battle
at Harmon

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

This was not the way Ross head coach Rex Radeloff wanted to find out just how far away his offensive line is from perfection.

Akron Buchtel21
Buchtel's monstrous defensive line — led by captain Mark Strickland and his four sacks — mashed its way through the young Little Giants' front five as the Griffins (2-0), last year's Division II state runners-up, spoiled Ross's home opener with a 21-7 non-league victory.

"We couldn't control the line of scrimmage. When you don't control the line of scrimmage, it's tough to run an offensive play," said Radeloff, whose team was held to 11 rushing yards.

"I don't know if we ever blocked 55 (Strickland) all night."

Subdued on offense for the first half, Ross took a 7-3 lead in the penalty-filled game only to have Buchtel storm back to tack 18 fourth-quarter points on the board.

"That's the sign of a good football team, no doubt about it," said Buchtel coach Tom Flossie. "That's when you find out who wants it and who doesn't."

The pregame festivities at Harmon Stadium on Alumni Band and Cheerleader Night included a moving tribute to former Ross equipment manager Joe Lotycz.

See BUCHTEL, B2

Buchtel exploits Ross's inexperience

Continued from B1

The team has dedicated its season to Lotycz, who passed away in April.

The teams followed the bouncing ball in the first half as Ross managed just 22 offensive yards. The Little Giants' only fumble led to Buchtel's 3-0 first-half lead.

Strickland forced a loose ball with his second sack of quarterback Wesley Esquivel, who left after a half with an injured elbow. Terrance Terrel recovered at the Ross 35. Ross, now 1-1, escaped more serious damage when a delay of game penalty knocked Buchtel back to the 9 on fourth down, forcing the Griffins to settle for Shawn Briggs' 29-yard line-drive field goal.

On three of the Griffins' four fumbles, Ross's Josh Liggins was

there, his third putting Ross on the Buchtel 13, the Little Giants' best setup of the half.

Even the entry of Week 1 hero Kenny Morissette couldn't spark the drive, as Michael Hickey missed a 27-yard 3-pointer.

The fumbling and bumbling continued in the second half. After a lateral to Kevin Harvey, Jesse Sandoval recovered a fumble and brought it back to the Buchtel 4. Two more penalties put Ross at the 24, but quarterback Harry Liggins hit a diving Brett Hufford (3 catches, 74 yards) at the 1.

Liggins sneaked in for an apparent score, but Ross's ninth penalty set them back again. On Take 2, following a pair of Derek Thiessen (19 carries, 33 yards) short-yard gains, Liggins finally bulled in with seven seconds left in the third quarter for a 7-3 lead.

Ross senior Johnny Aldridge

recovered a fumble on the ensuing kickoff. It was all for naught, it turned out, as Robert Foster (132 rushing yards) picked off a Liggins pass on the next play.

"The big play for them was the interception," said Radeloff. "When we had field position and we got the turnover, we could have gone in and scored, but we gave up the interception."

Terrel (3 yards), Marlon Ervine (57 yards) and Foster (33 yards) all scored in the fourth quarter.

The officials whistled Ross for 10 penalties and Buchtel for 11.

The flags emphasized Ross's ineptness on the offensive line.

"What happens when you're getting beat up front," said Radeloff, "is you compensate by taking penalties, by holding, and you can't do that."

One of many lessons that need to be learned.

Liggins, Ross defense on the ball

By MICHAEL BOSI

Staff writer

With 100 percent new faces at inside linebacker, the Fremont Ross football team felt that position was a question mark coming into the season.

Two weeks into the season, those question marks have become exclamation points — and the Little Giants like what they see.

In each of the first two games, the defense has kept Ross at least within striking distance. If it weren't for sophomore Josh Liggins' three fumble recoveries Friday night, Akron Buchtel may have won a more lopsided game than the 21-7 final.

All three of Liggins' recoveries came in the first half, much of the reason why Ross trailed by only three points after the first 24 minutes.

"I just saw the balls on the ground and jumped on them," said Liggins, who measures 5-foot-11, 190 pounds.

Hits on the Griffins' top backfield weapon Robert Foster resulted in two fumbles. The first was on his third carry of the game, the second squashing a Buchtel drive on the Ross 27.

"Fumbles, we had to overlook those," said Foster. "Everybody makes a mistake, but those were crucial mistakes."



JOSH LIGGINS

Liggins' third recovery put Ross in prime position to tie the game at 3 before halftime. Knocking Lamar Kimbrough back behind the line of scrimmage, Liggins pounced on the pigskin on the Buchtel 13.

"It definitely gave us momentum," said Liggins. "We knew if we got the ball to the offense close to the goal line we'd get it in."

But they didn't. Five plays later, Michael Hickey's 27-yard field goal attempt was sailing wide.

In the third quarter, another newcomer to Ross's inside linebacker corps, junior Jesse Sandoval, nearly knocked Kevin Harvey back to Akron on a lateral and returned the fumble 17 yards.

A clipping call took most of the steam out of the play, but it still set up the Little Giants' only touchdown.

Foster and speedsters Marlon Ervine and Terrance Terrel finally broke loose in the second half. "They just got outside a couple of times and we just couldn't get to them, I guess," said Liggins.

After all, Liggins had already gotten to his share.

Buchtel 21, Ross 7

At Harmon Stadium

Buchtel	0	3	0	18	—	21
Fremont Ross	0	0	7	0	—	7

SCORING

AB — Shawn Briggs 29 field goal, 2nd, 9:10.

FR — Liggins 1 run, 3rd, :07.

AB — Terrence Terrel 3 run (kick failed), 4th, 9:31.

AB — Marlon Ervine 57 run (kick blocked), 4th, 7:29.

AB — Robert Foster 33 run (kick failed), 4th, 2:47.

TEAM STATISTICS

	AB	FR
First downs	11	7
Rushes-yards	46-287	37-11
Passing (Att.-Comp.) ...	4-10	5-18
Passing yards	59	97
Punts-Yds.-Avg. ..	5-211-42.2	9-348-38.7
Fumbles-lost.....	8-5	3-2
Penalties-yards.....	11-88	10-70

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING — AB, Destin Scott 3-12, Terrence Terrel 7-33, Robert Foster 17-130, Marlon Ervine 6-77, Kevin Harvey 1-(-4), Raymond McCray 7-18, Andre Sims 1-5, Lamar Kimbrough 2-6, Sidean Watson 1-3, Joseph Smith 1-7; FR, Derek Thiessen 19-33, Kenny Morissette 9-0, Harry Liggins 2-(-19), Brent Agnew 3-23, Wesley Esquivel 4-(-26).

PASSING — AB, Reggie Taylor 1-3-8-0, Destin Scott 3-7-51-0; FR, 4-12-91-1, Esquivel 1-6-6-0..

RECEIVING — AB, Harvey 2-8, McCray 1-12, Ramon Walker 1-39; FR, Mosser 1-6, Johnny Aldridge 1-17, Huf-ford 3-74, Thiessen 1-0.

INTERCEPTIONS — AB, Kevin Fos-
ter.

RECORDS — Buchtel 2-0, Ross 1-1.

Sandusky beats Ross

Friday the 13th proves unlucky for Little Giants

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

In terms of high school football rivalries, few are bigger than Fremont Ross and Sandusky.

In terms of big plays, Sandusky turned in some truly giant ones

Friday night at Harmon Stadium.
Friday Sandusky 24
Ross 14
Next week Fremont Ross at Bedford, Friday

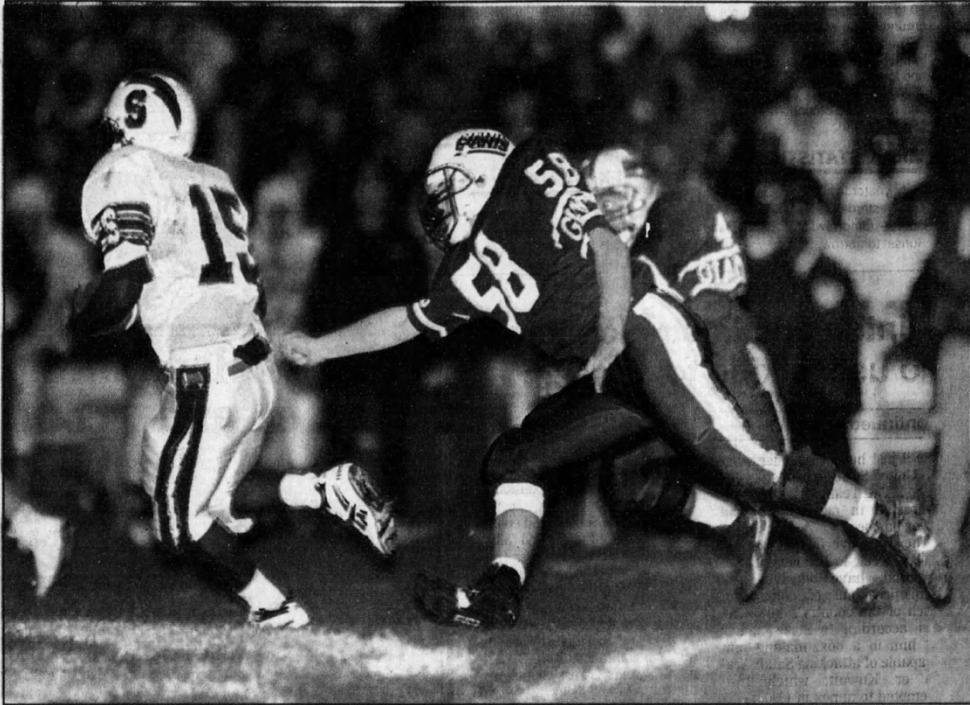
Ninety times previous had Ross and Sandusky tangled, and each year has brought a new twist. Friday night — the 13th — the Ross offense was twisted in knots as punishing Sandusky hits caused the Giants to surrender a 14-0 lead.

"The rivalry in this game is tremendous, it's like a Michigan-Ohio State game on a high school level. So you know both teams are going to hit and you better be prepared to hit," said Sandusky coach Larry Cook.

Five second-half fumbles — including two inside the Sandusky 5-yard line — paved the way to the end of Ross's three-year stronghold on the series.

"Part of that was because we got some pretty good licks in and we stripped them a couple of times," said Cook, whose team is now 3-0.

For you trixadekaphobics,



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

DARCEL IRBY of Sandusky runs just past the grasp of Fremont Ross defensive lineman Jim Durbin during the second quarter of Sandusky's win Friday.

strange things were happening with the oblong pigskin on the unlucky Friday. The only fumble lost by Sandusky led to Ross's first score. Ty Stout sacked Streak Jeremy Newell and Brent Agnew recovered at his own 36.

On the Little Giants' first play, the ball went not to tailback

extraordinaire Derek Thiessen but to Harry Liggins on a 31-yard reverse. Liggins then exploded for a 33-yard sprint on the next play to give Ross a quick lead.

The don't-blink strikes continued for Ross in the second quarter. On its first possession. Eighty of Thiessen's 91 first-half

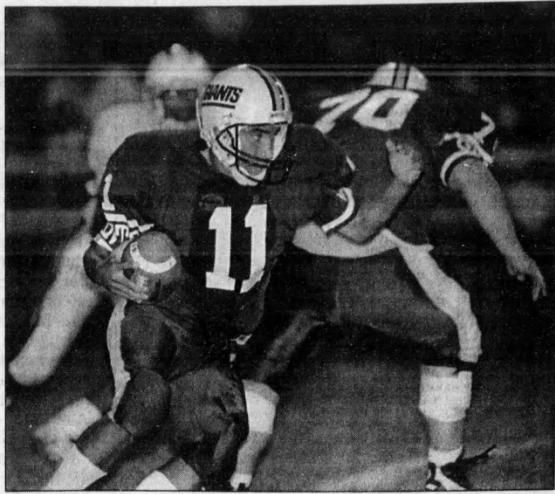
rushing yards came when he blew away three tackles and raced for the Little Giants' second score. Wesley Esquivel found Liggins wide open for the extra deuce.

"We knew that we had given up two touchdowns on big plays, but we hadn't allowed them to move

the ball consistently on us," said Cook. "We felt if we settled down and stayed with our game plan they couldn't stop us."

And they couldn't. Almost as if awe-struck by the big lead, Ross went comatose.

See BLUE STREAKS, B3



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison
HARRY LIGGINS of Fremont Ross takes advantage of a Ty Stout block during Ross's 24-14 loss to Sandusky Friday night at Harmon Stadium.

Blue Streaks end Giants' 3-year reign

Continued from B1

Darrin Williams (25 carries, 146 yards) capped a seven-play, 51-yard Sandusky drive with a 9-yard TD run with 6:14 left in the third quarter.

Questionable play-calling forced the Streaks to settle for a field goal instead of tying the game. DeMarcus Alexander (16 carries, 60 yards) and Williams found daylight to the outside to get the Streaks down to Ross's 9. But two Newell passes fell incomplete before Mike Poeschl chipped a 25-yard 3-pointer to cut the gap to 14-10 at the half.

"We lost momentum with about six minutes to go in the second quarter. We fell apart offensively and defensively and they took charge," said Radeloff.

"At halftime, I looked around at the players and I thought we were in trouble. I didn't know how we were going to respond, but I looked at the eyes of the players and it looked like we were losing instead of winning.

"I have no idea (why)."

The breakdown on Ross's second-half possessions: punt (which failed), fumble, fumble, fumble, fumble, interception, fumble.

The result: the Little Giants' second straight loss on home turf.

"We were trying to get in there

and get the ball loose so we could go in and score again," said Bobby Manuel, who planted his 6-foot-3, 275-pound frame in the Little Giants' way all night.

Newell hit Marcel Gowdy with a 3-yard toss, and Poeschl added the PAT to put Sandusky up, 17-14.

It got worse.

Thiessen fumbled on Ross's first play of the next series, and Gowdy recovered at Ross's 31. On an option, Darcel Irby — whose hits caused two Ross fumbles — aired a beautiful pass to a wide-open Orlando Williamson for a 10-point lead.

The Ross offense continued to suffer its woes, as Agnew coughed it up on the goal line and Sandusky's Damaris Walls recovered the ball in the end zone.

"We were just trying to do too much trying to come back and that hurt the team more than it helped," said Thiessen.

LITTLE GIANTS NOTES: Sandusky now leads the 101-year-old series, 49-34-8. ... A groggy Esquivel was taken to the hospital after the game for precautionary measures. ... Thiessen finished with 131 yards on 14 rushes, while Liggins had 104 yards on nine carries. ... Travis Bulger returned to the Ross line-up, but the Giants were again without tackle Brian Borer. Keny Morrisette was also out.

Sandusky 24, Ross 14

At Harmon Stadium

Sandusky (3-0) 0 10 14 0 — 24

Ross (1-2) 6 8 0 0 — 14

SCORING

First quarter

FR — Harry Liggins 33 run (kick blocked), 9:18.

Second quarter

FR — Derek Thiessen 80 run (H. Liggins pass from Esquivel), 9:13.

S — Darrin Williams 9 run (Mike Poeschl kick), 6:14.

S — Poeschl 25 field goal, 1:15.

Third quarter

S — Marcel Gowdy 4 pas from Jeremy Newell (Poeschl kick), 8:03.

S — Orlando Williamson 31 pass from Darcel Irby (Poeschl kick), 7:44.

TEAM STATISTICS

	S	FR
First downs	16	12
Rushes-yards	52-198	33-239
Passing yards	69	36
Comp.-Att.-Int.	4-9-1	5-12-1
Punts-Avg.	5-29.4	3-28.7
Fumbles-lost	2-1	6-5
Penalties-Yds.	10-105	6-66

RUSHING — S, Darrin Williams 25-146, Jeremy Newell 5-(-22), DeMarcus Alexander 16-60, Marcel Gowdy 5-13, William Conway 1-1; FR, Esquivel 3-(-15), H. Liggins 9-104, Brent Agnew 3-14, Derek Thiessen 14-131, Travis Bulger 3-12, Michael Hickey 1-(-7).

PASSING — S, Jeremy Newell 3-8-3-1, Darcel Irby 1-1-31-0; FR, Esquivel 3-6-16-0, H. Liggins 1-4-18-1, Dan Cobb 1-2-2-0.

RECEIVING — S, Darcel Irby 1-23, Marcel Gowdy 1-4, Chuck Willinger 1-11, Orlando Williamson 1-31; FR, Johnny Alridge 2-4, H. Liggins 2-3, Kevin Moss-er 1-13.

INTERCEPTIONS — S, Darcel Irby; FR, Sam Root.

**FREMONT ROSS LITTLE
GIANTS (1-2) at BEDFORD
MULES (1-1)**

When: Friday, 7:30 p.m.

Where: Temperance, Mich.

Radio: WFRO-AM 900 (Jon Kerns/Craig Snyder), 6:45 pregame.

How to get there: Take Ohio Turnpike West to Exit 4 (I-75 North). Go north on I-75 to I-475 West. Get off Exit 19 (Jackman Road). Go left onto Jackman Road and into Michigan. Take left on Dean Road to stadium.

Bedford players to watch: Senior TB Dustin Winkler, junior FB Tom Nowak, junior QB Scott Felman, senior WR Eric Dowell.

Keys to the game: For the second straight year, the Little Giants are 1-2 heading into their Great Lakes Leagues season. Bedford could be the perfect way to get back to .500; the Mules rank at the bottom of the GLL in offense and defense. Ross head coach Rex Radeloff tabbed Felman as a very accurate passer, with Dowell his top deep threat. For Ross, Harry Liggins will start at quarterback in place of Wesley Esquivel (concussion), while Brian Borer (foot) will miss his fourth week and Kenny Morrisette (personal) his second. Along with trying to hold onto the football, the Little Giants will try to revert to the simple style that was successful in Week 1 (ie: plenty of inside trapping and better pass protection).

Giants kick Mules 51 times

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

TEMPERANCE, Mich. — In hindsight, the Fremont Ross football team may have gained a lot more out of last week's 24-14 loss to Sandusky than originally thought.

Like how to force turnovers — and what to do with them.

Granted, the Bedford Kicking Mules did plenty of kicking Friday night — kicking themselves. Be it the butterfingers of Bedford — or more likely, the defensive prowess of the Little Giants — Ross turned eight first-half turnovers into a 24-point lead en

Friday	
Fremont Ross	51
Bedford (Mich.)	0

Next week

Findlay at Fremont Ross, Friday

route to a 51-0 rout.

In winning its Great Lakes League opener, Ross put on its greatest scoring display in two years.

"We knew that somebody was going to have to pay for the last two weeks, and unfortunately for Bedford it was them," said Ross head coach Rex Radloff, whose team is now 2-2.

Friday night was one to remember for senior tailback Derek Thiessen, who enjoyed a career night with five touchdowns, 98 rushing yards and an interception.

"I feel like I'm on top of the world. I just want to shout. It's a feeling you can't explain," Thiessen said.

The Little Giants gave Bedford (1-2) the same fumble fever that hounded them during last week's second-half debacle against the Blue Streaks. Bedford lost four fumbles (three in the first half) and threw six interceptions (five in the first half).



ALRIDGE

Ross's Johnny Alridge and Harry Liggins each came up with two picks, and Sam Root had another.

"The secondary, that is our strong suit, the way I look at it," Radloff said.

On Bedford's first play from scrimmage, Root picked off Scott Feldmann, and five plays later Thiessen ran through a pile for a 23-yard touchdown.

When Bedford got the ball back, Josh Liggins belted Tom

Nowak to force a loose ball, and that led to a 30-yard Michael Hickey field goal to make it 10-0.

The Kicking Mules got whooping three plays off on their next possession before Ross's Jesse Sandoval pounced on a bad snap at the Mules' 19.

A Thiessen-to-Alridge reverse gained 15 yards before Thiessen banged off the line for his fourth touchdown of the year and a 17-point advantage.

Continuing his superhuman half, Thiessen picked off Feldmann nine plays into Bedford's series.

See ROSS, B3

Ross capitalizes on Bedford turnovers

Continued from B1

The beat continued in the second quarter, as Liggins was the recipient of backup quarterback Clark Maine's first pass attempt.

On Ross's third touchdown, it was Thiessen, Thiessen, Thiessen and Thiessen again for a 6-yard run off right tackle to stake the Little Giants to a 24-0 lead.

Just 1:43 into the second half, Thiessen rambled in from 4 yards out, and his fifth score came on a 1-yard plunge.

Brent Agnew's first touchdown of the season came on a 3-yard run to make it 44-0, and Alridge capped his stellar night with a 65-yard punt return for Ross's final score.

"He had a great game," Radloff said. "The punt return at the end was super for him and he

How the leaders fared

DIVISION I	
No.1 Massillon Wash.	(4-0) def. Mansfield Sr. 36-0.
No.2 Ctr. Moeller	(4-0) def. Covington Cath. 53-28.
No.3 Canton McKinley	(4-0) def. Mentor 36-0.
No.4 Cleve. St. Ignatius	(2-1) plays Tol. St. Francis, Sat.
No.5 Tol. St. John's	(3-0) plays Indianapolis Cath. Saturday.
No.6 Troy	(4-0) def. Trotwood-Madison 69-6.
No.7 Lakewood St. Edward	(4-0) def. Youngstown-Fitch 35-0.
No.8 Brecksville	(4-0) def. Lodi Cloverleaf 28-14.
No.9 Massillon Perry	(3-1) lost to Massillon Jackson 17-6.
No.10 Sandusky	(3-1) lost to Lorain Admiral King 27-24. OT.

DIVISION II	
No.1 Cols. Waiterson	(3-0) plays Dayton Dunbar Saturday.
No.2 Akron Springfield	(4-0) def. Canton South 62-8.
No.3 Chardon	(4-0) def. Cleve. Collinwood 54-0.
No.4 Brecksville	(3-1) lost to Berea 23-21.
No.5 E. Liverpool	(4-0) def. Lisbon Beaver 27-6.
No.6 Akron Coventry	(4-0) def. Navarre Fairless 26-12.
No.7 Dayton Patterson	(4-0) def. Dayton Colonel White 28-0.
No.8 Dublin Scioto	(3-1) def. Reynoldsburg 14-13.
No.9 Lebanon	(3-0) plays Middletown Fernwick Saturday.
No.10 Chillicothe	(3-1) lost to Piketon 41-7.

really played hard. I hope he continues to improve. He's a weapon for us."

The bounding offensive potential that Ross began the season with finally emerged at Bedford Memorial Stadium Friday, as Ross sent a message to the GLL.

"We're a better team than what those two losses showed," Radloff said.

LITTLE GIANTS NOTES: Ross won by its greatest margin since a Charles Woodson-led 72-0 bashing of Oregon Clay on Oct. 21, 1994. ... The Little Giants have

never given up more than 14 points to Bedford in any of their six victories over the Mules. ... After throwing his second interception, Feldmann never regained his feet. Following a 20-minute delay, an ambulance took him off the field. ... Ross limited Bedford to 30 offensive yards in each half, while the Little Giants gained 229. ... Although he had a 30-yard field goal attempt blocked, Hickey was 6-for-7 on extra points. ... Alridge also had a 54-yard kickoff return to start the second half.

SPORT CARD SHOW

Sunday, Sept. 22

12-5

at the Tiffin Mall

Fremont Ross 51, Bedford 0

At Temperance, Mich.

Ross (2-2)	17	7	14	13	—	51
Bedford (1-2)	0	0	0	0	—	0

SCORING

First quarter

FR — Derek Thiessen 23 run (Mike Hickey kick), 10:07.

FR — Hickey 30 field goal, 7:51.

FR — Thiessen 4 run (Hickey kick), 6:27.

Second quarter

FR — Thiessen 6 run (Hickey kick), 5:54.

Third quarter

FR — Thiessen 2 run (Hickey kick), 10:17.

FR — Thiessen 1 run (Hickey kick), 5:23.

Fourth quarter

FR — Brent Agnew 3 run (Hickey kick), 10:36.

FR — Johnny Alridge 65 punt return (kick failed), 5:26.

TEAM STATISTICS

	R	B
First downs.....	10	6
Rushes-yards	40-191	29-31
Passing yards	38	29
Comp.-Att.-Int.	3-7-0	3-13-6
Punts-Avg.	1-45.0	2-30.0
Fumbles-lost	1-0	5-4
Penalties-Yds.....	6-55	5-50
Time of possession..	21:22	22:43

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING — FR, Brent Agnew 6-14, Travis Bulger 7-36, Derek Thiessen 22-98, Harry Liggins 4-28, Johnny Alridge 1-15; B, Tom Nowak 21-37, Tim Burzynski 1-3, Scott Feldmann 3-3, Dustin Winkler 2-1, Clark Maine 2-(-13).

PASSING — FR, Liggins 3-7-38-0; B, Feldmann 2-4-25-2; Maine 1-9-4-4.

RECEIVING — FR, Kevin Mosser 2-31, Terry Cisco 1-7; B, Ricki Gerbasich 1-10, Nowak 2-19.

INTERCEPTIONS — FR, Sam Root, Thiessen, Liggins 2, Alridge 2.

MISSED FIELD GOALS — FR, Hickey 30.

After one score, Alridge wants more

Ross senior gets chance for encore Friday when Little Giants host Findlay

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

It's how all addictions begin. You get a taste of something. The resulting high is so great you just can't get enough. You crave more.

That's what happened with Fremont Ross's Johnny Alridge after he scored his first career touchdown as part of an all-out effort as the Little Giants punished Bedford, 51-0, last Friday night.

Now he wants more. "It felt good to me," Alridge

said before practice Wednesday.

"Coach (Les) Hull gave me a good boost. I fumbled last time against Sandusky, and he said, 'You can do it Johnny.'

He certainly did, to the tune of the first two interceptions of his career, a 64-yard punt return for his first-ever touchdown, a 15-yard reverse scramble and a 54-yard kickoff return to start the

second half.

Echoing through the coaching staff: he deserved all of it.

"He's got some great speed and I was hoping not only for the team but for himself that he was going to have an excellent ballgame, which he had," head coach Rex Radeloff said.

"He was happy and I was happy for him that he had that type of ballgame. I was really happy for Johnny because he deserved a game like that.

High praise for a player who may have gotten a little ahead of

himself a year ago.

"Last year I would lag it around like I was going to get the start, but coach (Chuck) Lindsey — he's hard on us — told me I better work during the summer," said Alridge, a senior. "I've been there almost every practice and worked on my feet and started catching the ball, and coach Lindsey gave me an opportunity to prove that I can do it.

Alridge's offensive numbers (3 catches, 21 yards) are still well short of the Jerry Rice range, as Ross has not taken to the air

often. But the speedy Alridge has been part of a secondary, along with Harry Liggins, Demetris Simms and Sam Root, that has emerged as the strength of Ross's defense.

Alridge's skills on both sides of the ball, however, are blossoming simultaneously.

"Johnny's become a leader over the last three weeks," offensive coordinator Dan Fought said. "He wants more attention put on him and he wants more



ALRIDGE

See ALRIDGE, B2

Alridge acted on tip from coaching staff

Continued from B1

responsibility, and it's nice to see.

"Johnny has a lot of special abilities. He runs well and his hands have really developed in the last six months."

Bedford quarterback Scott Feldmann won't argue. He threw two balls right into Alridge's hands in a 2-minute, 35-second span last Friday.

"Coach Lindsey said they'd try to work me because Harry was out and they'd work me because I was the backup. I made them pay for it," Alridge said.

The two pickoffs have been firmly etched into Alridge's memory bank, too.

"I felt so good, my first interception," said Alridge. "I didn't have any last year, I almost had one. That last one I wanted the touchdown and to get away so bad."

A defender caught him that time, but there wasn't much catching Alridge in the second half, highlighted by his punt return.

"I want some more. I want a lot of them," Alridge said. "I want to catch one now, then I want to return one back from an interception."

Sounds like he's addicted.

Ross drowns Findlay

Little Giants record 2nd shutout

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

The rain isn't as wet, the air not as cold and the mud not so sloppy when you win games like the Fremont Ross football team did Friday night.

For the second straight week, the Little Giants

Friday did exactly what Ross 34 they were supposed to against Findlay 0

Next week an inferior oppo-

nent, splish-

splashing their

way to a 34-0

Great Lakes

League win over Findlay.

The Ross defense turned in its second shutout effort, limiting the Trojans (1-4) to just 15 total yards.

"You win your championships by your defense," Ross head coach Rex Radeloff said.

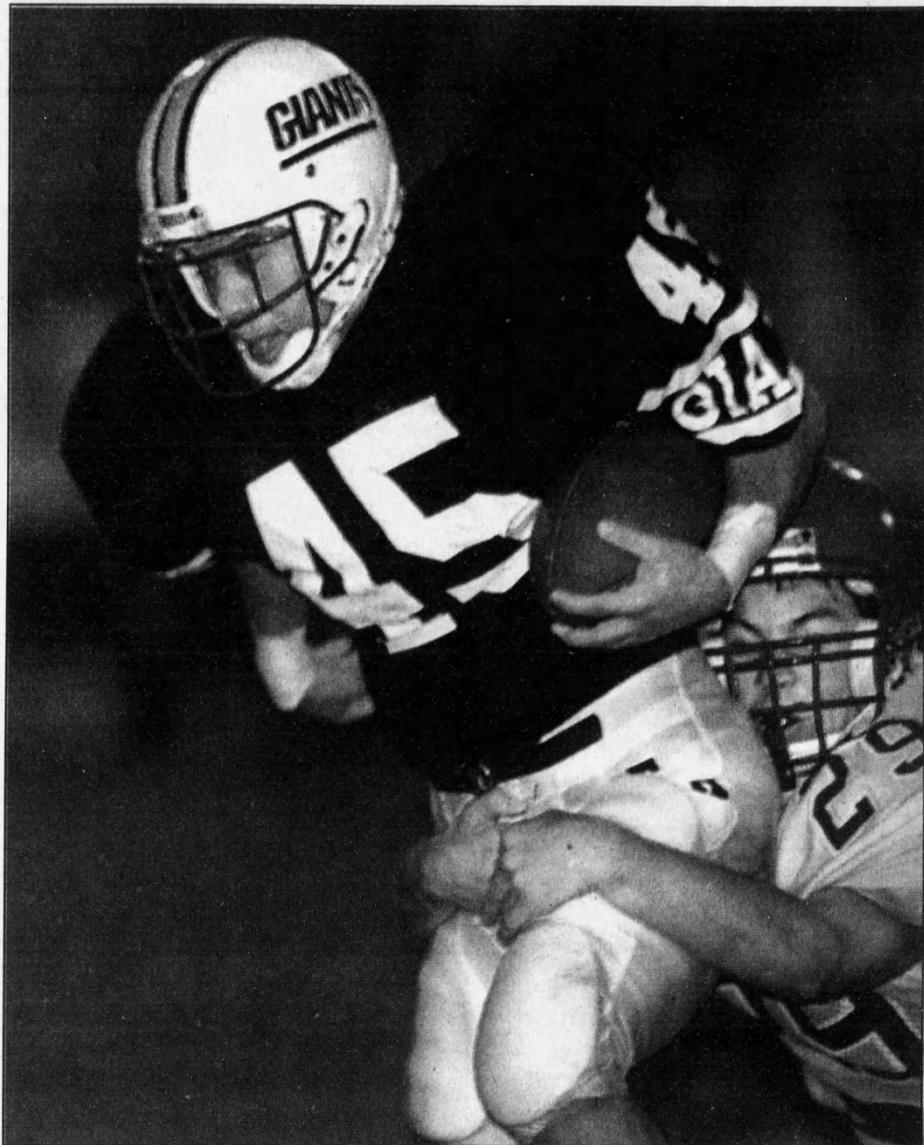
The Little Giants (3-2) have produced 85 points in the last two weeks, with the offensive line finally showing signs of maturity. In the slush, "the Hogs" cleared the way for 378 total yards.

"Our offensive line, they fired off the ball and were opening up huge holes and that gives us confidence," said senior Derek Thiessen, who led Ross with 127 ground yards.

Thiessen and Harry Liggins, showing no ill effects from a bee sting reaction earlier this week, each scored a pair of touchdowns.

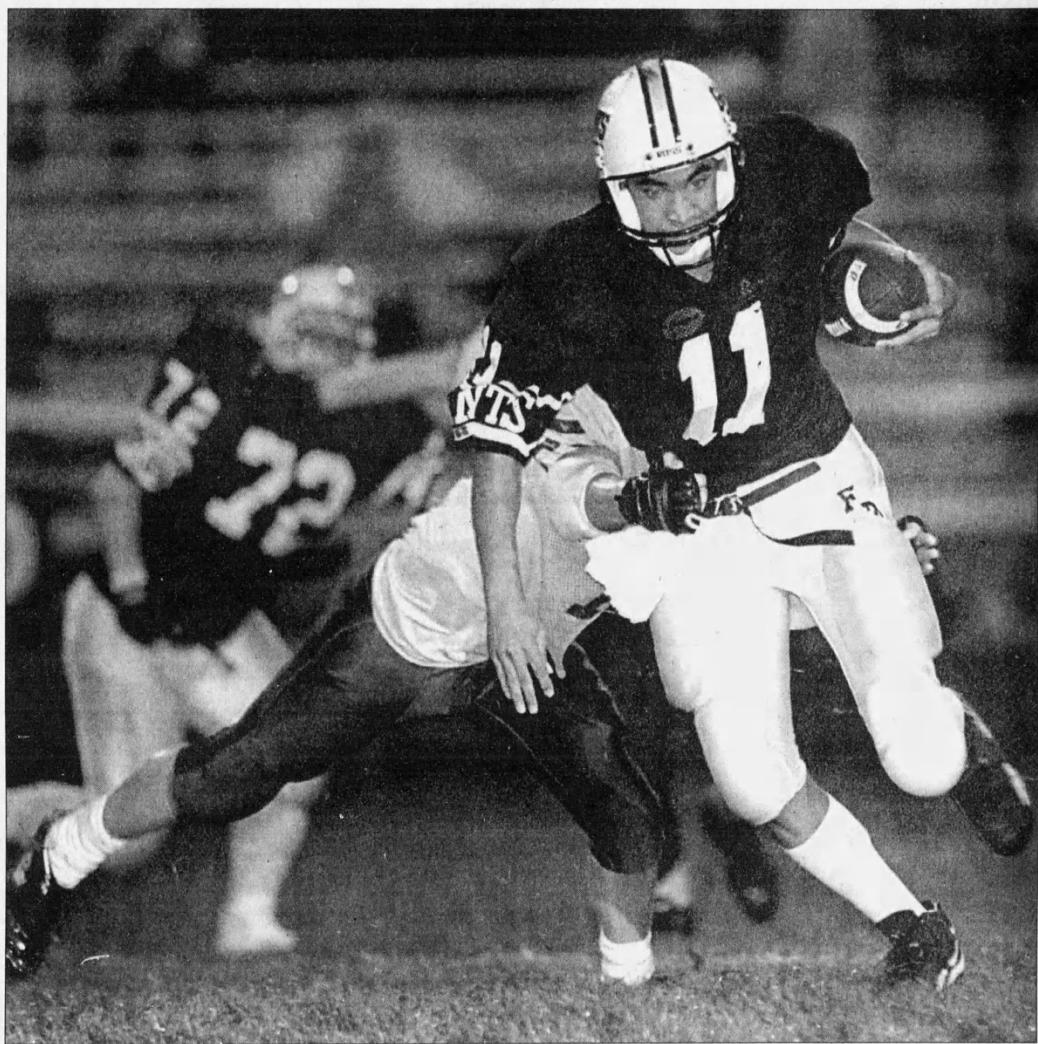
Radeloff was able to empty his bench, which paved the way for backup quarterback Dan Cobb to score his first varsity touchdown

See Ross, B2



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

DEREK THIESSEN of Fremont Ross (45) tries to break away from Findlay's Mark Bosworth during the first quarter Friday.



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

ROSS QUARTERBACK Harry Liggins eludes the tackle of Findlay's Ham Leonard as he scrambles for 3 yards on the first play from scrimmage at Harmon Stadium Friday night. Showing no ill effects from a bee sting, Liggins scored a pair of touchdowns in the Little Giants' 34-0 victory.

Ross hammers Trojans for 2nd GLL win

Continued from B1

and for inspirational junior Tatum Diedrich to see his first varsity action.

For the fans who showed up to Lake Harmon — aka Harmon Stadium — Homecoming night made memories of youth come flooding back — literally. The downpours started during the pregame ceremonies and never ceased.

Great weather for football: Pull on the jersey, find a pigskin and roll in the sty.

There were exactly half as many fumbles in the game as points scored, including six in a 10-play span as the game deteriorated into jungle ball in the waning minutes.

"In this type of weather and field conditions you're going to have turnovers, it's just going

to happen," Radeloff said. "But we were fortunate we could take advantage of them."

Ross was thankful after recovering all four of its first-half fumbles and holding a 16-0 lead at the half via a Michael Hickey field goal and touchdown runs from Liggins and Thiessen.

Hickey belted a 38-yard punt, his second of the year, with 2:11 left in the first quarter.

On Ross's next drive, Liggins grabbed a fumbled snap and Thiessen broke up the right sideline for 44 yards. A pass interference call in the end zone and a short Thiessen run later, Liggins checked off his options before bootlegging for his fourth touchdown.

Thiessen, who had 18 carries for 98 yards in the first half, scored his eighth touchdown of

the season on a 1-yard scamper with 22 seconds left. Travis Bulger (10 carries 67 yards) sparked the drive with a 23-yard rush on the first play.

In the second half, Brent Agnew (75 rushing yards) ran four times for 55 yards to set up a 1-yard plunge from Liggins to make it 22-0. With 27 seconds left in the quarter, Thiessen turned a 12-yard draw into Ross's fourth touchdown, and Cobb scored on a 1-yard keeper with 1:42 left in the game.

"We're starting to play more as a team," Liggins said. "We've got guys on both sides of the ball getting hungry."

LITTLE GIANTS NOTES: Radeloff continued his lineup shuffling Friday night. Brian Milton, a 5-foot-7, 170-pound junior, earned his first varsity start at fullback. Sophomore

right tackle Frank Kaiser was also penciled into the starting lineup for the first time. After his spectacular effort at Bedford last week, Johnny Alridge was the starting flanker. ... Runningback Kenny Morrisette returned after missing two weeks. ... Backup quarterback Wesley Esquivel, back from a concussion, switched jerseys from No. 13 to 1. ... Three Ross players crunched Findlay punter Kevin Newlove in the second quarter, drawing a roughing the kicker call but forcing Newlove from the game. ... Liggins had the only interception of the game, picking off Tony Ritzler (3-for-14, 19 yards) in the fourth quarter. ... The shutout was Findlay's first since 1991. ... Next week, Fostoria, a team Ross has not beaten in five years, comes to town.

Fremont Ross 34, Findlay 0

At Harmon Stadium

Findlay (1-4)	0	0	0	0	—	0
Ross (3-2)	3	13	12	6	—	34

SCORING

First quarter

FR — Michael Hickey 38 field goal, 2:11.

Second quarter

FR — Harry Liggins 7 run (Hickey kick), 10:37.

FR — Derek Thiessen 1 run (kick failed), 0:22.

Third quarter

FR — Liggins 1 run (kick failed), 5:16.

FR — Thiessen 12 run (kick failed), 0:27.

Fourth quarter

FR — Dan Cobb 1 run (rush failed), 1:42.

TEAM STATISTICS

	FI	FR
First downs	4	20
Rushes-yards	26-(-12)	59-328
Passing yards	37	50
Com.-Alt.-Int.	4-15-1	4-6-0
Punts-Avg.	4-30.3	0-0
Fumbles-lost	6-2	11-3
Penalties-yds.	6-57	9-80

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING — Find., Ryan Laube 2-4, Jon Legato 6-18, Tony Ritzler 7-(-28), Demetrius Ball 8-11, Jeff Love 1-1, Norman Moore 1-0, Ben Farnsworth 1-(-5), Kevin Newlove 1-(-13); Ross, Derek Thiessen 21-127, Weston Hineline 3-1, Michael Hickey 1-7, Brent Agnew 7-75, Kenny Morrisette 3-12, Travis Bulger 10-67, Harry Liggins 7-18, Johnny Alridge 1-1, Brian Milton 1-2, Dan Cobb 3-1, Aaron Coonrod 1 -(-3), John Forshtay 1-21.

PASSING — Find., Tony Ritzler 3-14-19-1, Kevin Newlove 1-1-18-0; Ross, Harry Liggins 3-5-36-0, Dan Cob 1-1-14-0.

RECEIVING — Find., Mark Bosworth 1-18, Demetrius Ball 1-8, Nick Lunn 2-11; Ross, Travis Bulger 1-13, Johnny Alridge 2-23, Brett Hufford 1-13.

INTERCEPTIONS — Ross, Harry Liggins.

Fostoria silences Ross

Little Giants lose first GLL game of year

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

First it was Akron Buchtel. Then Sandusky. Now Fostoria.

Three teams that are making their bus reservations for Massillon and the Ohio state playoffs.

And for the Fremont Ross football team, three losses.

Manhandling Ross in the second half of Friday night's game at Harmon Stadium, Fostoria (5-1, 3-0 GLL) completed the Little Giants' dubious hat trick with an 18-0 shutout.

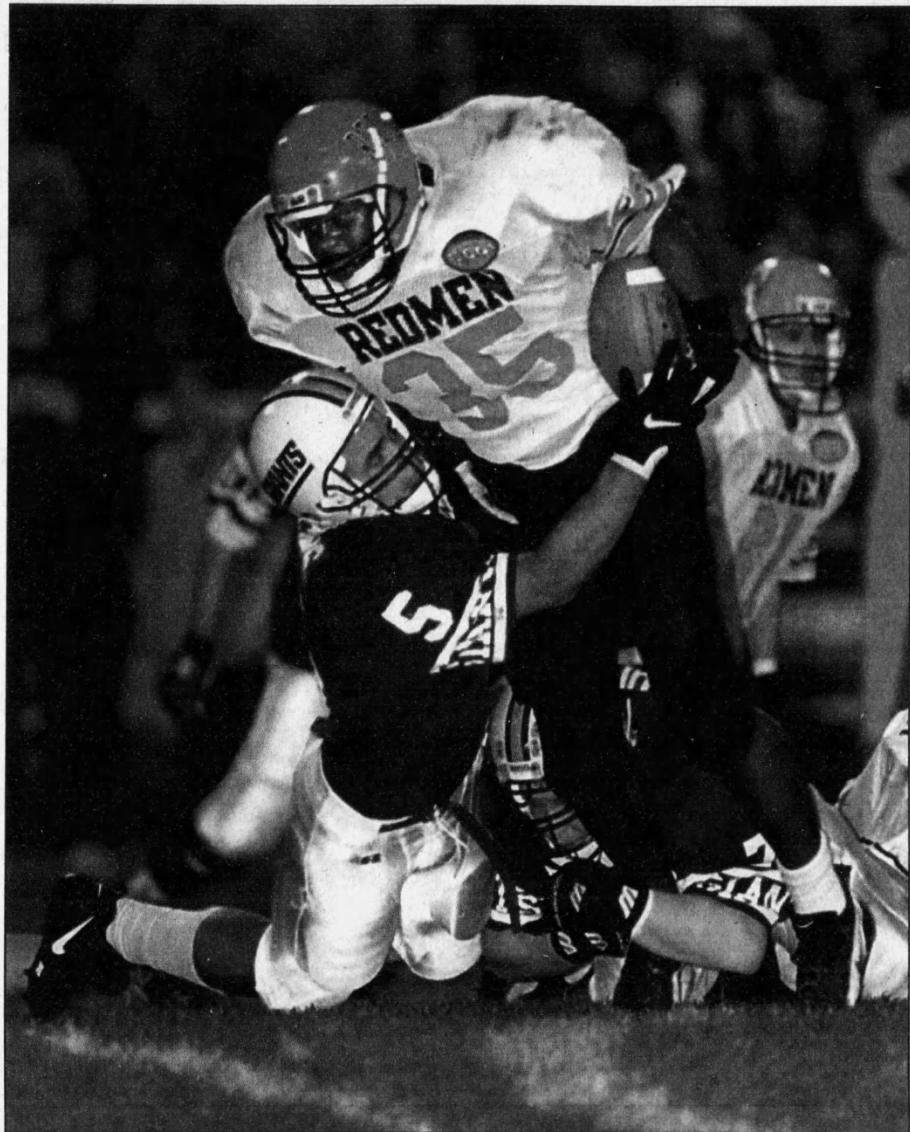
"It's frustrating. It's demoralizing," said Ross offensive coordinator Dan Fought, whose troops mustered only 95 yards, while Fostoria enjoyed 240.

"We controlled the line of scrimmage, that was the secret," said outgoing Fostoria head coach Dick Kidwell, who earned his 171st win. "They have a big offensive line but they couldn't handle our down people. Our front seven just controlled the ballgame. They tried to run, they tried to throw underneath and we made the tackles."

After praising the work of his defense, Ross coach Rex Radloff said, "Offensively, against their defense, we couldn't control them. They did a number on us. When you get shut out, what more can you say? I give them a lot of credit — they outplayed us and outcoached us."

Since it joined the Great Lakes

See FOSTORIA, B3



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

JOSH LIGGINS (5) and Chris Schull of Fremont Ross bring down Fostoria's Leo Frierson during the first quarter of the Redmen's 18-0 win Friday night at Harmon Stadium. It was the first GLL loss for the Little Giants.

Fostoria darkens Ross's playoff hopes

Continued from B1

League six years ago, Ross (3-3, 2-1 GLL) has not beaten the Redmen, who have won or shared the league championship the last five years.

Ranked 16th in the Ohio High School Athletic Association's computer rankings, Ross all but kissed its playoff hopes goodbye, and must spin near-perfect performances in its final four games if it has any aspirations of its third league co-championship.

Both offenses sputtered in the first half. Ditto for referee Jim Imbody and his Findlay-based officiating crew.

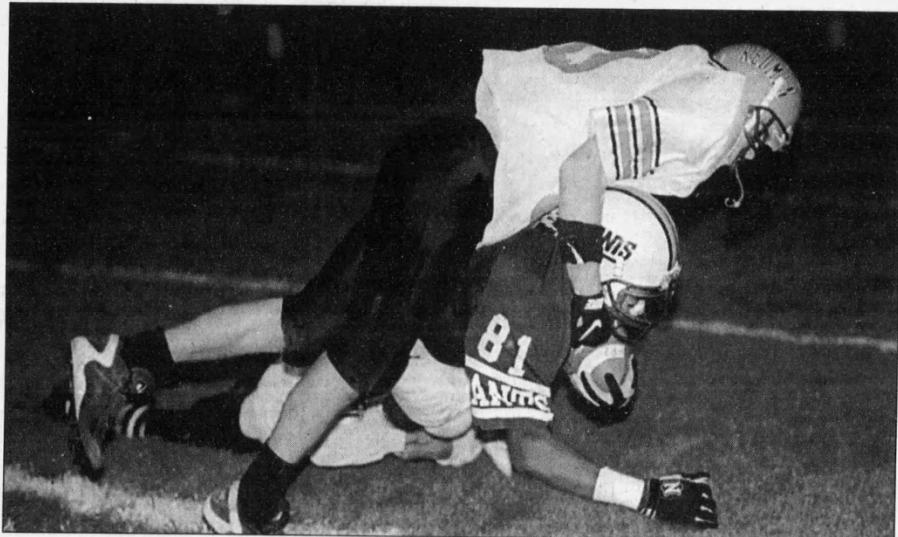
The first-half penalties were sporadic but plentiful, with Ross flagged for 50 yards, including a second-half face mask call that sparked Fostoria's best drive.

Kidwell went ballistic when the officials called a second-down intentional grounding penalty on Jeremy Young — and skipped ahead to fourth down.

But just when it looked like an official's call would be a turning point, the whistles went silent in the second half — as did Ross's fans.

For the last five years, Fostoria has won or shared the Great Lakes League title, and the Redmen, who have traditionally treated their date with Ross similar to the way the Little Giants raise their effort a decibel against Sandusky, stated their 1996 goal loud and clear, chanting "GLL, GLL, GLL" throughout their warmup.

Ross had a gloomy start, having a punt blocked to set Fostoria up at the 25. But a pair of false start penalties set the Redmen back.



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

JOHNNY ALRIDGE (81), is flattened by Fostoria's Eli Haughawout after a second-quarter reverse Friday night.

Ross collected just two first downs in the first half, although it kept its string alive of holding opponents scoreless in the first quarter.

The teams combined for just 112 offensive yards in the first half.

Finally, Fostoria placed Rich Newsome ("The best athlete in the GLL," said both Radeloff and Fought) at tailback, and he came up with key plays for the second year in a row.

"We've worked with him at tailback and we wanted to get outside a little bit, and we thought he had a little more athletic ability to get outside and he proved it," said Kidwell. "He's our weapon. We've got to get the

ball in his hands, and when the ball gets in his hands, good things happen."

Following a failed Ross punt, Newsome scooted 40 yards off a delay to set up a 1-yard touchdown plunge from quarterback Jeremy Young with 6:32 left in the third quarter.

With 6-foot-4, 257-pound tackle Malcolm Robinson and his friends on the defensive line tying up Derek Thiessen and Ross's running game, the Little Giants never got closer than Fostoria's 37 in the second half.

"I think, No. 1, they're pretty strong up front," said Fought. "They're a heck of a lot quicker than they look on film. We could

not push them forward."

In the fourth quarter, Newsome turned a short pass into a 30-yard conversion, and Wendell Young scored on a 7-yard touchdown run. Sixteen seconds later, Ryan Williams completed the scoring with a 32-yard interception return.

In its losses to Buchtel, Sandusky and Fostoria, Ross has been outscored 63-21. As of yet, the Little Giants haven't found any solutions, but they sure have identified the problem:

"Big plays," said Liggins, amidst a locker room silence that rivaled only that of the home crowd.

"We can't make them and we give them up."

Fostoria 18, Ross 0

At Harmon Stadium

Fostoria (5-1)	0	0	6	12	—	18
Ross (3-3)	0	0	0	0	—	0

SCORING

Third quarter

F — Jeremy Young 1 run (pass failed), 6:32.

Fourth quarter

F — Wendell Young 7 run (rush failed), 7:31.

F — Ryan Williams 32 interception return (kick failed), 7:15.

TEAM STATISTICS

	F	FR
First downs	14	7
Rushes-yards	33-170	35-70
Passing yards.....	70	25
Comp.-Att.-Int.	4-15-2	4-13-1
Punts-Avg.	2-34.0	5-27.8
Fumbles-lost	1-0	2-2
Penalties-yds.	7-45	4-50

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING — F, Leo Frierson 7-20, Wendell Young 13-87, Jeremy Young 5-6, Rich Newsome 7-50, Anthony Sewell 1-7; FR, Derek Thiessen 15-32, Brent Agnew 5-18, Travis Bulger 8-21, Harry Liggins 4-0, Johnny Alridge 1-5, Michael Hickey 1-3, Wesley Esquivel 1-(-9).

PASSING — F, Jeremy Young 4-15-70-2; FR, Harry Liggins 4-13-25-1.

RECEIVING — F, Eli Haughawout 1-8, Rich Newsome 2-43, Wendell Young 1-19; FR, Brett Hufford 1-9, Terry Cisco 1-6, Johnny Alridge 1-5, Jeremy Haslinger 1-5.

INTERCEPTIONS — F, Ryan Williams; FR, Derek Thiessen, Jesse Sandoval.

**FREMONT ROSS LITTLE
GIANTS (3-3) at OREGON CLAY
EAGLES (2-4)**

When: Friday, 7:30 p.m.

Where: Oregon City Complex.

Radio: WFRO-AM 900 (Jon Kerns), 6:45 p.m. pregame

How to get there: Take Route 20 West to Route 590 North. Follow Route 590 North through Lindsey, Rocky Ridge and Limestone to Route 2 West. Take Route 2 West to Oregon and Stadium Road (gas station on corner). Turn right and stay on Stadium Road until you see the high school. Turn left before the school onto Seamon Road, and the Oregon City Complex is on the left.

Clay players to watch: Senior QB/LB Tom Swaya, junior RB/LB Omar Abou-Arab, senior RB/FS Casey Leathers, senior CB Mike Mahoney, senior RB Kyle Reau.

Keys to the game: The Giants, who were thoroughly overmatched last week against Fostoria, must now seek improvement in the final four weeks of the season. Clay is an enigma; it beat a strong Napoleon team and fell to Bedford last week. Clay will throw everything, including the kitchen sink, out of its backfield, led by Reau (four TD's) and Leathers (7.2 yards per rush). Leathers has a league-high four interceptions. Ross coach Rex Radeloff is still searching for a mean streak to emerge in his team. "We've got a bunch of nice kids on this team, and Friday night when you go out on the football field, you can't be nice. You have to be aggressive and go after people on a play-to-play basis. I hope we can bring it up a notch, that's the name of the game besides athletic ability." Ross quarterback Harry Liggins (thumb, hip pointer) is questionable, and tailback Derek Thiessen practiced through an ankle injury, while a number of players are battling sickness.

Ross rejects revenge bid

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

OREGON — The Fremont Ross team still hasn't made any friends in Oregon.

On Clay's Homecoming Night, revenge was the theme throughout a packed Federici Stadium. The Eagle backers won't let the morbid memories of a 72-0 Ross victory two years ago escape their minds.

"They'll never forget that as long as life exists," said offensive coordinator Dan Fought.

That's because the Little Giants just won't let them.

Friday
Fremont Ross 32
Oregon Clay 20

Next week

Northview at Fremont Ross, Friday

Beating Clay now four straight years, including Friday night's 32-20 decision at Federici Stadium, Ross has outscored the Eagles, 175-41.

In the wake of head coach Rex Radeloff's resignation, prevention was the theme on Clay's Homecoming.

A second-half surge by the Eagles prevented a third straight

Ross blowout, and 12 points from Ross' kicker Michael Hickey, including a pair of fourth-quarter field goals, prevented an unthinkable disaster.

"There are situations when you can't get in the end zone for a touchdown, but when you come away with three points it feels good," said Radeloff of the four-sport athlete.

"The best thing about Mike Hickey is he's a competitor. He wants to succeed at what he does and that's kick the football. I don't have any doubts at all when he goes on that field that he'll



HICKEY

give it his best shot, and he did a great job tonight."

The Clay Eagles were last

a hit when the music group the Eagles was topping the charts —

in the 1970s, when the high schoolers won or shared seven Great Lakes League championships.

Unlike disco, bell-bottoms and platform shoes, though, the Eagles have yet to make a come-

back to respectability (one of their losses was to league doormat Bedford), though their third-quarter rally was very impressive.

"They just got some momentum and they capitalized on it, but then we finally came to and got our own momentum again," said Ross's Derek Thiessen, who won the battle of the top two rushers in the Great Lakes League.

Thiessen totaled 91 rushing yards and a pair of first-quarter

See ROSS, B3

Ross thwarts Eagles' charge

Continued from B1

touchdowns, while Clay's Kyle Reau mustered just 37 markers.

With 68 first-half rushing yards, Thiessen got the wheels of a very quick wagon rolling when he busted through the line untouched for a 15-yard score 4:10 into the game. A 20-yard double-reverse to Johnny Alridge set up Thiessen's 11th touchdown run of the year, a 4-yarder.

Michael Hickey booted his third field goal, from 32 yards out, to give Ross a 17-point lead.

Clay (2-5, 1-3 GLL) chained together a respectable 11-play, 68-yard drive in 5:25 that Casey Leathers capped with a 5-yard sprint to put Clay on the board.

Wesley Esquivel (4-for-10, 65 yards) hit Kevin Mosser on a short post pattern to put the Little Giants (4-3, 2-2 GLL) up 23-7. After recovering a fumble on the ensuing kickoff, Ross unleashed a creativity that may have gone a long way toward reversing last week's Fostoria result that sealed Radeloff's decision.

Alridge and Terry Cisco both narrowly missed converting double-reverse passes to Brett Huford in the end zone before the half.

Clay came out firing for the second half — thanks in part to a fumbled Ross snap — and made a game out of it when quarterback Ron Henneman cracked the gut from a yard out and Adam Pfeiffer's PAT made it 24-14.

Jeremy Haslinger hounded Henneman for 19 yards to force a safety with 4:47 left in the third quarter.

Hickey missed a 31-yard 3-pointer with 2:28 left, and Clay made it 26-20 on its next drive, as Mike Palmer beat Demetris Simms and hauled in a 30-yard

How they fared

COLUMBUS, Ohio — How the top teams in The Associated Press state high school poll fared:

DIVISION I

No. 1 Massillon Washington (6-0) plays Naperville Central High School, Ill., Saturday.
No. 2 Canton McKinley (6-0) plays Cleve. St. Ignatius Saturday.
No. 3 Troy (7-0) def. Piqua 48-0.
No. 4 Lakewood St. Edward (7-0) def. Youngs. Boardman 17-7.
No. 5 Cleve. St. Ignatius (5-1) plays Lakewood Saturday.
No. 6 Brunswick (7-0) def. Medina 21-7.
No. 7 Grove City (7-0) def. Chillicothe 52-6.
No. 8 Cir. Moeller (6-1) def. Cir. St. Xavier 48-17.
No. 9 Lima Sr. (6-1) def. Millard 52-14.
No. 10 Tol. St. John's (6-1) def. Tol. Rogers 36-6.

DIVISION II

No. 1 Cols. Watterson (6-1) lost to Cols. DeSales 7-3.
No. 2 Akron Springfield (7-0) def. Louisville 34-14.
No. 3 Chardon (7-0) def. Twinsburg Chamberlin 34-0.
No. 4 E. Liverpool (6-1) lost to Richmond Edison 35-28, OT.
No. 5 Dayton Patterson (6-0) plays Dayton Meadowdale Saturday.
No. 6 Akron Coventry (7-0) def. University School 48-22.
No. 7 Lebanon (7-0) def. Lemon-Monroe 42-3.
No. 8 Wash. CH Miami Trace (7-0) def. Greenfield McClain 28-13.
No. 9 Steubenville (6-1) lost to Zanesville 33-19.
No. 10 Dublin Scioto (5-2) lost to Upper Arlington 31-17.

DIVISION III

No. 1 Mentor Lake Cath. (7-0) def. Elyria Catholic 45-12.
No. 2 Youngs. Chaney (7-0) def. Poland Seminary 13-3.
No. 3 Beloit West Branch (7-0) def. Canal Fulton Northwest 28-6.
No. 4 Hillsboro (7-0) def. Bethel-Tate 52-3.
No. 5 Akron Hoban (6-1) lost to Cuy. Falls Walsh 19-0.
No. 6 Spring. Shawnee (7-0) def. Urbana 27-6.
No. 7 Wintersville Indian Creek (7-0) def. Weirton (W.Va.) 28-14.
No. 8 Bellevue (6-1) lost to Tiffin Columbian 35-26.
No. 9 Olmsted Falls (7-0) def. Amherst Steele 20-7.
No. 10 Jackson (7-0) def. Vincent Warren Local 64-42.

touchdown pass from Henneman (7-for-12, 106 yards).

After Ross stalled on the 19-yard line, Hickey nailed a 37-yard field goal to make it 29-20 before Ross's defense turned in its most effective series, backing Clay to its own 25 with the help of an intentional grounding penalty.

When Ross punted on its next

possession, Sam Root recovered a fumble at Clay's 24.

That staged Hickey's 32-yarder as well as a Gatorade shower for Radeloff.

"In the first half, I thought we really played well, and we came out in the second half and lost a little momentum with a fumble. Anytime you have a turnover, the defense has to go out on the field and they've got to get it done and shut them down," said Radeloff.

"I give a lot of credit to J.J. (Clay coach John Johnson), Clay came out in the second half and took advantage of a mistake early on and had momentum, but we prevailed and that's what counts."

LITTLE GIANTS NOTES: Ross made it 8-for-8 in holding opponents scoreless in the first quarter. ... Ross had a youth movement on defense, starting sophomores Jason Billow (inside linebacker), Bryson Sewell (end) and Tyson Liggins (end). J.R. Adkins was forced to the sidelines with an eye infection. ... With Clay in a no-huddle offense for its last possession, Sewell had a big sack. ... Junior Brian Milton's 65 rushing yards were a career high. ... The referees issued a warning to Clay fans who were blowing their own whistles in the game's first several series. ... Still pained by a hip pointer and thumb injury, Harry Liggins played only at halfback. ... Brent Agnew paid for his only carry, an 18-yard run in the third quarter, as he had to leave with a wrist injury. ... Casey Leathers left the game after being injured making a first-quarter interception. ... Ross returns to Harmon Stadium next week to play Sylvania Northview.

High Schools

Football

FRIDAY'S BOX SCORES

Fremont Ross 32, Clay 20

At Federici Stadium

Ross (4-3)	14	10	2	6	—	32
Clay (2-5)	0	7	13	0	—	20

SCORING

First quarter

FR — Thiessen 15 run (Mike Hickey kick), 7:50.

FR — Thiessen 4 run (Hickey kick), 0:11.

Second quarter

FR — Hickey 32 field goal, 7:32.

OC — Casey Leathers 5 run (Adam Pfeiffer kick), 2:02.

FR — Kevin Mosser 8 pass from Wesley Esquivel (Hickey kick), 0:28.

Third quarter

OC — Ron Henneman 1 run (Pfeiffer kick), 8:05.

FR — Safety (Jeremy Haslinger), 4:47.

OC — Mike Palmer 30 pass from Henneman (kick failed).

Fourth quarter

FR — Hickey 37 field goal, 7:45.

FR — Hickey 32 field goal, 2:09.

TEAM STATISTICS

	FR	OC
First downs	18	14
Rushes-yards	52-284	33-86
Passing yards	65	106
Att.-Comp.-Int.	4-12-1	7-12-1
Punts-Avg.	1-38.0	44-26.5
Penalties-Yds.	7-60	4-27
Fumbles-lost	1-1	2-2

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING — FR, Derek Thiessen 23-91, Brent Agnew 1-18, Wesley Esquivel 2-(4), Kenny Morrisette 16-83, Brian Milton 5-65, Johnny Alridge 2-17, John Forshay 1-0, Weston Hineline 1-8, Terry Cisco 1-6; OR, Kyle Reau 13-37, Casey Leathers 2-10, Tom Swaya 5-43, Omar Abou-Arab 1-0, Ron Henneman 12-(4).

PASSING — FR, Esquivel 4-10-65-1, Alridge 0-1-0-0, Cisco 0-1-0-0; OR, Henneman 7-12-106-1.

RECEIVING — FR, Brett Hufford 2-41, Alridge 1-16, Kevin Mosser 1-8; OR, Adam Pfeiffer 5-58, Sal Rizo 1-8, Mike Palmer 1-30.

INTERCEPTIONS — FR, Sam Root; OC, Leathers.

MISSED FIELD GOALS — FR, Hickey 31.

Troops rally for Radeloff

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

OREGON — There was almost a glow around Fremont Ross coach Rex Radeloff during the Little Giants' game at Oregon Clay Friday night — and not just from the Gatorade shower he received as the clock ticked down on Ross's 32-20 victory.

Judging from his jovial demeanor, one would have thought Radeloff was among the teenagers riding in the Clay Homecoming entourage.

Twenty-four hours removed from announcing that he would resign at the end of the season, Radeloff was a cool customer as he began his farewell tour of the Great Lakes League.

Introducing, he's The Coach Formerly Known as Rex.

Hey, this lame-duck stuff isn't so bad after all.

"Hell, I haven't slept as well as I did (Thursday night) in a long time," said Radeloff before winning his 70th game as Ross head coach.

The attention Radeloff anticipated he would receive in light of his announcement never came.

"I didn't receive a single call," said Radeloff.

Offensive coordinator Dan Fought said Radeloff's mood had a trickle-down effect on the Little Giants.

"The kids were in a good mood (Friday)," said Fought. "(Radeloff) was relaxed today, and I think he's happy with the decision and looking forward for something else to fulfill."

Friday night's outcome — but more important Ross's effort — filled Radeloff with satisfaction.

"I didn't doubt what their attitude was going to be," said Radeloff. "I knew they were going to go out and play hard, and they go out to play the game."

"They don't go out to play for me or Mom and Dad, they go out to play because they're part of the program."

I wasn't anticipating them playing 80 percent or 60 percent or 50 percent, I anticipated them giving it their best shot. They're going to do that no matter who's at the helm."

Ross's effort — especially in the first half — was a testimony

to the team's ability to remain focused through Thursday's shakeup.

"The kids are having fun," said assistant coach Les Hull.

"Everyone knew we had a game tonight and we needed to focus on the job at hand and not on what happened (Thursday). And we're going to focus for three more weeks."

Still, the uncertainty of the program's future direction hasn't slipped by the players.

"I'd say we were somewhat concerned," said quarterback Wesley Esquivel. "We're all just wondering who's going to be the head coach next year."

"After so many years of Mr. Radeloff, it's going to be difficult with the change."

The dedications are piling up for the Little Giants. They were already playing in the name of late equipment manager Joe Lotycz. Now, throw in the seniors and Radeloff.

"We were a little surprised by the announcement, but it just pulls us together closer as a team," said kicker Michael Hickey.

Little Giants clobber 'Cats

Six players score TDs in 63-0 win

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

Now we know the Fremont Ross football team is in no hurry to expedite coach Rex Radloff's exit.

But it sure didn't look like it

Friday
Ross63
Northview0

Scoring seven of their nine touchdowns on drives lasting less than two minutes, the Little Giants wasted no time against Great Lakes League lackey Sylvania Northview, 63-0, at Harmon Stadium.

"Every once in a while you've got to have one like that," said Radloff.

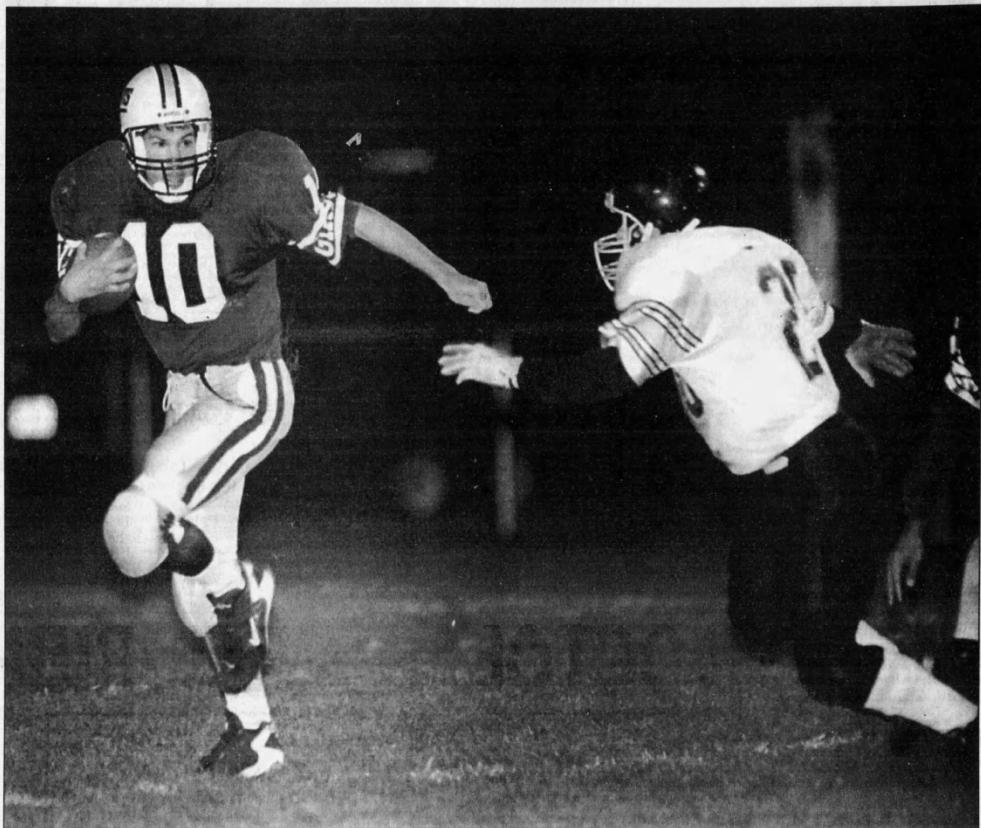
It's only two games but it still qualifies as a winning streak.

The faint light at the end of the tunnel is the GLL title, for which Ross still can hold out hope. Obviously, the Little Giants need to win their remaining games, but they also need Toledo Whitmer, next week's opponent, to defeat Fostoria in the last week of the season.

"It feels good to still have a chance," said Harry Liggins, who threw his first two touchdown passes of the season. "We'll come out hard next week, have a good week of practice and take care of business on Friday."

It's hard to say Ross (5-3, 4-1 GLL) humbled the 'Cats. At 1-7,

See ROSS, B3



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

BRETT HUFFORD of Fremont Ross outraces Sylvania Northview's Tim Szparko on his way to a 79-yard touchdown Friday night at Harmon Stadium. The touchdown, which came on a reverse, was one of nine for the Little Giants in the 63-0 win.

Ross scores early, often

Continued from B1

Northview would be in last place in most leagues on the planet if not for lowly Findlay — the only team it has beaten.

With 377 rushing yards and 95 more in the air, Ross dominated exactly the way it should have controlled a team that has surrendered 229 points.

"We sure did," said Johnny Alridge, who had two first-half touchdown receptions. "We came out playing hard. Coach said play hard, and now we're preparing for Whitmer next week."

In the first half alone, Derek Thiessen ran for two touchdowns and Johnny Alridge caught a pair of touchdown tosses (one each from Liggins and Wesley Esquivel) as Ross enjoyed its highest scoring half of the season.

Radeloff has said coaching was no longer a joy. Surely, Friday night as an exception, with his team scoring on its first five possessions.

"We weren't going for the big play, but those plays are designed to score and that's what we did," Liggins said.

Thiessen (106 rushing yards) widened his individual scoring lead on the rest of the GLL with his 12th touchdown, giving Ross a lead 1:42 into the game.

Northview had Ross stopped on a third-and-5 play, but a late-hit foul set up a 48-yard dash from Thiessen.

Entering the night, no other GLL player had more than six scores.

Ross then exploited the league's worst pass defense (1,128 yards) when Liggins hit Alridge from 20 yards on a post pattern.

Northview punted after four plays, and on Ross's first play of its next possession, Brett Hufford took a reverse from Thiessen and



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

JIM DURBIN of Fremont Ross (right) drops Sylvania Northview quarterback Jeff Bair for a loss during the first quarter Friday night at Harmon Stadium. The Little Giants beat the Wildcats 63-0, improving their record to 5-3.

rode a great block from Alridge for a 79-yard touchdown run.

A 5-yard Liggins-to-Terry Cis-
co toss made it 28-0.

Ross tacked on 14 second-quarter points via Esquivel's 30-yard bomb to Alridge and Thiessen's 2-yard plunge.

As the first-half time ticked down, with Ross up 42-0, a wise-cracking press box observer noted the Northview fans had one advantage on a chilly, drizzly evening: They had warmer hands from sitting on them so long.

In the second half, Kenny Mor-
risette (66-yard run), Liggins (35-
yard interception return) and
Scott Pearson (40-yard recep-
tion) couldn't help but score as

Ross tried in vain to exercise some semblance of restraint on Northview.

Pearson's score was his first.

The disgust on the Black & Gold sideline was too evident: an assistant coach was ejected in the third quarter, and after the game, head coach Eric Keller herded his team onto the bus for what was sure to be a miserable 60-mile ride back to Northview.

On the opposite end was Rade-
loff.

Though not about to change his mind about leaving, he's still 2-
for-2 since The Announcement.

"I'm happy," he said. "The kids had a great time (Friday night). They had a lot of fun."

LITTLE GIANTS NOTES —
The Little Giants are 10-for-10 against Northview since the teams began their series. ... Junior J.R. Adkins started at right guard after missing last week's Clay game with an eye infection. Jeremy Haslinger got his first start at outside linebacker. ... Ross's 63 points scored were its most since it laid a 72-0 beating on Clay Oct. 21, 1994. ... Ross survived four fumbles, losing just one. Morrisette, who rushed for 83 yards, had two of them. ... Sam Root had one of Ross's interceptions. It was his third. ... Thiessen now has 717 rushing yards for the year, and is averaging 89.6 per game.

Ross 63, Northview 0

At Harmon Stadium

Northview (1-7)	0	0	0	0	—	0
Ross (5-3)	28	14	21	0	—	63

SCORING

N First quarter

FR — Derek Thiessen 48 run (Michael Hickey kick), 10:48.

FR — Johnny Alridge 20 pass from Harry Liggins (Hickey kick), 6:58.

FR — Brett Hufford 79 run (Hickey kick), 2:55.

FR — Terry Cisco 5 pass from Liggins (Hickey kick), 0:19.

Second quarter

FR — Alridge 30 pass from Wesley Esquivel (Hickey kick), 10:06.

FR — Thiessen 2 run (Hickey kick), 4:45.

Third quarter

FR — Kenny Morrisette 66 run (Hickey kick), 9:42.

FR — Liggins 35 interception return (Hickey kick), 3:57.

FR — Scott Pearson 40 pass from Esquivel (Hickey kick), 1:07.

TEAM STATISTICS

	SN	FR
First downs	7	17
Rushes-yards	43-114	38-377
Passing yards	6	95
Comp.-Att.-Int.....	1-12-2	4-6-0
Penalties-yards.....	4-60	1-15
Punts-Avg.....	7-31.3	1-25.0
Fumbles-lost	1-0	4-1

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING — SN, Jeff Bair 3-(-3), Nick Miller 15-6, David Healy 13-65, David France 4-13, Costa Petros 7-33, Jason Harsh 1-0; FR, Derek Thiessen 12-106, Brian Milton 3-48, Harry Liggins 1-8, Kenny Morrisette 9-83, Aaron Coonrod 2-2, Wesley Esquivel 2-4, Brett Hufford 1-79, Travis Bulger 3-9, John Forshay 4-24, Demitris Simms 1-14.

PASSING — SN, Bair 1-12-6-2, Harsh 0-1-0-0; FR, Liggins 2-3-25-0, Esquivel 2-3-70-0.

RECEIVING — SN, Owen Johnson 1-6; FR, Alridge 2-50, Cisco 1-5, Scott Pearson 1-40.

INTERCEPTIONS — FR, Sam Root, Liggins.

Ross beats Whitmer in OT

Victory sets up potential 3-way tie for GLL championship

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

TOLEDO — Who says Fremont Ross can't beat good football teams?

Refusing to follow the path of failure they took against Akron Buchtel, Sandusky and Fostoria, the Little Giants erased a 14-3 deficit for a 23-17 overtime victory over Great Lakes League rival Whitmer Friday night at Whitmer Memorial Stadium.

Harry Liggins, who passed for 112 yards, scored on a 16-yard

	Friday
Fremont Ross (OT)	23
Toledo Whitmer	17

Next week

Napoleon at Fremont Ross, Friday

option run in the extra session after Ross's defense, which more than matched the league's No. 1 defense stride-for-stride, pushed the Panthers back on their OT attempt.

"We don't give up," said Liggins. "One thing we don't do is give up. When it was 14-3, I

looked in everyone's eyes, and everyone's eyes told me we were still in the game, no doubt."

Whitmer nearly scored in overtime, but the officials ruled Mike Biesiada's fourth-down catch was out of the end zone. Two plays later, Liggins ended Ross's most intense victory of coach Rex Radeloff's

final season.

"In overtime, I didn't know what to expect, I really didn't," said Radeloff. "But I knew we would play them as tough as possible on defense, and the one thing we hadn't run all night was the option and that's what we scored on."

With one game left, the Little Giants, winners of three straight, will be playing for more than pride in next Friday's finale



LIGGINS

See ROSS, B3

Ross still has chance at GLL title

Continued From B1

against Napoleon.

A Whitmer victory at Fostoria would create a three-way tie for the GLL championship, creating a carbon copy of last year.

But Whitmer coach Jeff Robbins insisted his team was not looking ahead at its tilt with the Redmen.

"Heck no. No way. No way. We haven't beaten Fremont in a while, and we knew it was going to be a man's game, a war," said Robbins, whose team had not given up more than 17 points in a game in the first eight weeks.

Ross (6-3, 5-1 GLL) left the field chanting "GLL, GLL, GLL," but nearly kissed any GLL hopes goodbye in the first half Friday night.

Whitmer (7-2, 5-1 GLL) took a 14-3 lead on touchdown runs from last week's GLL Defensive Player of the Week Andy Boyd (1 yard) and Charles Moses (3 yards).

Ross's Michael Hickey snapped the Panthers' three-week shutout string with a field goal at 7:28 of the second quarter.

As expected, Whitmer's speedy defensive line mummified Ross's rushing game, holding the Little Giants to 52 first-half ground yards. Derek Thiessen had little luck, mustering just 25 yards on 13 carries.

Ross dodged several first-quar-

ter bullets.

The Little Giants took a fourth-down offside penalty on Whitmer's first possession. But they were able to stuff the Panthers for three more plays.

Ross also survived losing its 17th of 30 fumbles.

Radeloff wanted to test Whitmer's secondary, also ranked first in the GLL. But the Panthers passed that test, with Boyd grabbing his fourth interception of the year on Ross's first play of the second quarter.

That gave Whitmer the ball at the Ross 30, and on the heels of his own 30-yard run and a 7-yard plow from 205-pound fullback Mike O'Brien, Moses put Whitmer on the board.

Sparked by Liggins' completions to Johnny Alridge and Kevin Mosser and a pass interference call on Whitmer, Ross drove 59 yards on its next drive but had to settle for a 28-yard field goal from Hickey, his sixth of the year.

Eric Grover returned the ensuing kickoff 42 yards to spark a 9-play, 38-yard drive that Boyd capped with a keeper.

A fired-up Ross defense forced Whitmer to punt after its first possession of the second half, giving Ross its best field position. The Little Giants capitalized with three of their most dazzling plays of the game.

Alridge ran his second reverse

for 15 yards, and Terry Cisco followed with a leaping catch for 9 yards. Liggins then hit a diving Brett Hufford in the left corner of the end zone for a 23-yard touchdown pass to bring the Little Giants within four.

Three minutes, eight seconds later, Thiessen set Alridge up for another reverse. This time Alridge unloaded a perfect 70-yard bomb to Hufford (114 receiving yards) to put Ross up with 5:25 left in the quarter.

"Whitmer's an aggressive defense, and when you play against an aggressive team you've got to make plays like that," Liggins said.

In the fourth quarter, Ross survived three interceptions, including Boyd's second and third of the game, but could not prevent Whitmer from tying it at 17 on Brian Bigelow's 29-yard field goal with 85 seconds left.

LITTLE GIANTS NOTES: Whitmer's last win over Ross was in 1992, a 26-20 overtime decision. ... With two straight three-interception efforts, Boyd now leads the GLL with six pick-offs. ... Demetris Simms had an interception in the fourth quarter that gave the Little Giants time for two more plays before the end of regulation ... Ross's last overtime game was Oct. 6, 1995, a loss at Fostoria. ... Ross finished perfect in four road games this year.

Ross 23, Whitmer 17 (OT)

At Toledo

Ross (6-3, 5-1)	0	3	14	0	3	—	23
Whitmer (7-2, 5-1)	0	14	0	3	0	—	17

SCORING

Second quarter

TW — Charlie Moses 3 run (Brian Bigelow kick), 11:13.

FR — Michael Hickey 28 field goal, 7:28.

TW — Andy Boyd 1 run (Bigelow kick), 3:10.

Third quarter

FR — Brett Hufford 23 pass from Harry Liggins (Hickey kick), 8:33.

FR — Hufford 70 pass from Alridge (Hickey kick), 5:25.

Fourth quarter

TW — Bigelow 29 field goal, 1:25.

Overtime

FR — Liggins 16 run.

TEAM STATISTICS

	FR	TW
First downs.....	12	11
Rushes-yards	28-121	51-168
Passing yards.....	182	32
Comp.-Att.-Int.	11-23-4	2-9-1
Punts-avg.	2-44.0	6-30.0
Penalties-yards	9-65	8-60
Fumbles-lost	3-1	0-0

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

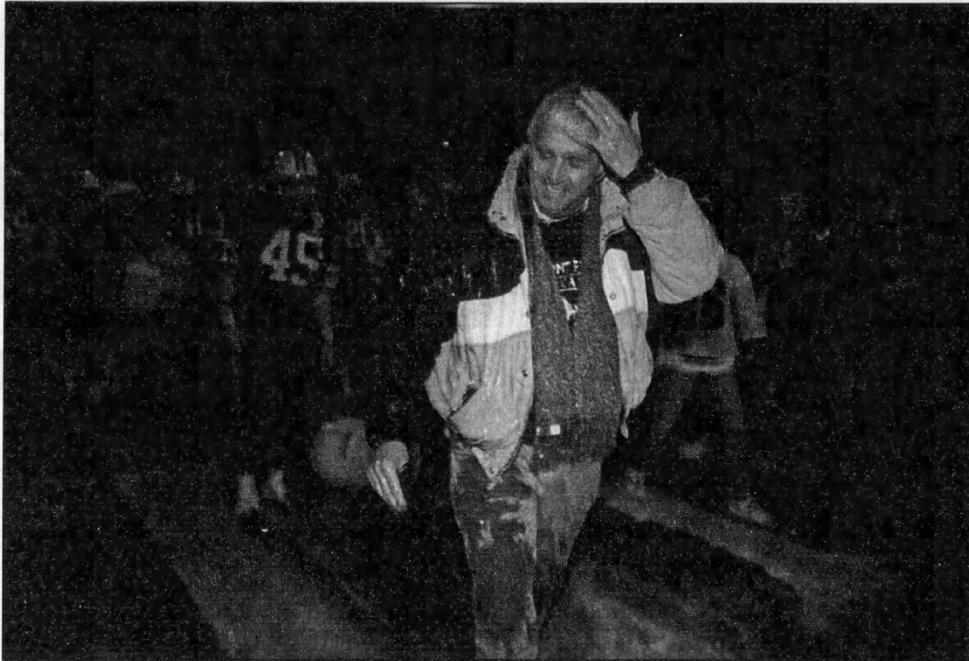
RUSHING — FR, Derek Thiessen 17-58, Harry Liggins 2-19, Kenny Morissette 2-3, Johnny Alridge 2-32, Travis Bulger 4-12, Terry Cisco 1-(-1); TW, Charlie Moses 16-65, Mike O'Brien 7-22, Eric Grover 7-23, Preston Lajiness 1-5, Rob Hutka 1-4, Jeff Horton 2-4, Andy Boyd 12-10, Rico Young 7-35.

PASSING — FR, Harry Liggins 10-21-112-4, Johnny Alridge 1-2-70-0; TW, Andy Boyd 2-9-32-1.

RECEIVING — FR, Kevin Mosser 2-35, Johnny Alridge 2-20, Terry Cisco 2-14, Brett Hufford 5-114; TW, Mike O'Brien 1-21, Jay Wiseman 1-11.

INTERCEPTIONS — FR, Demetris Simms; TW, Andy Boyd 3, Lajiness.

Radeloff leaves a winner



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison
REX RADELOFF wipes away the gatorade dumped on him after coaching his final game for Fremont Ross Friday at Harmon Stadium. Ross won 28-14.

Ross beats Napoleon in final game

By MICHAEL BOSI
Staff writer

In the end, they won not one but four for The Gipper.

Just past the midway point of the 1996 season, Fremont Ross head coach Rex Radeloff signed off after 23 years of coaching the Little Giants.

Friday

Ross 28

Napoleon 14

Ross finishes

second in the

GLL because of

Fosteria's 6-0

win against

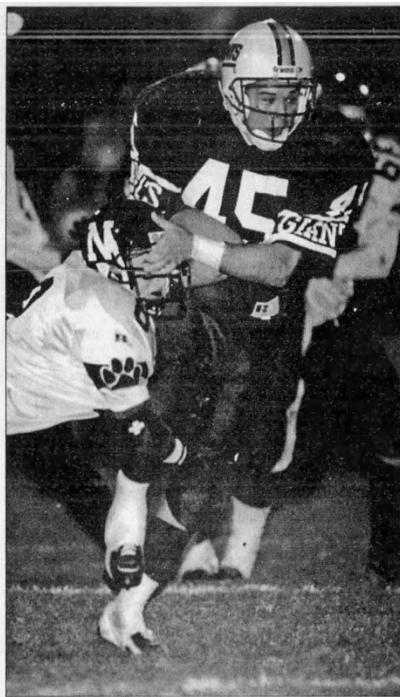
Toledo Whitmer.

But pack it in his troops did not. They sucked it up. They threw caution to the wind. They clapped their red slippers together. Most important, they won four more games after The Announcement.

And Rex rode off into the sunset — or at least the ice bath — with his team's respect.

"He's put 23 years into this program and we wanted with all our hearts to send him out with a win," said senior Harry Liggins after Friday night's season- and Radeloff's career-ending 28-14 win over Napoleon. "It was pride

See RADELOFF, B3



DEREK THIESSEN of Fremont Ross gets away with a facemask as he fends off Napoleon's Ryan Cramer during the second quarter of Ross's 28-14 win Friday at Harmon Stadium. Thiessen rushed for four touchdowns and 159 yards in the game, giving him totals of 17 and 955 this season.

Radeloff ends Ross career on 4-game win streak

Continued from B1

all around. We didn't want him to go out with a loss."

They did, however, want their coach to go out a wet warrior. Armed with the Gatorade bucket, receivers Brett Hufford and Terry Cisco hunted Radeloff down after the final gun, and they were right on target with their shot.

If there were any going-away parties happening at Harmon Stadium Friday night, the Senior Night festivities did a good job of hiding them.

"It felt like any other ball game, it really did," said Radeloff.

But that wasn't necessarily a good thing.

"Standing on the sidelines and watching it and coaching it and just the perspective of what was occurring, there's no doubt there's time for a change, there really is."

"I just hope for more enthusiasm and spirit. We've got great fan support — but they're not very vocal. I hope they come out and become very vocal for these young men because they deserve it. The student body's great, but the community, overall, has to get more enthusiasm, and maybe a new coach will bring that."

There was no spotlight shining on Radeloff. This lacked the glitz and glamour of the Cardinals' Ozzie Smith's retirement tour, a Beatles tour or even a tour of the Hayes Presidential Center.

Don Paul of Ford fame got a halftime presentation. The athletic boosters announced that the Ross soccer team will get a new soccer field. But for Radeloff, who will go down in the Ross annals with a 73-40 career mark as head coach: Nothing. Nada. Zilch.

Still, his desire to go out with bang was quite visible.

The killer instinct was still there. To wit: Ross attempted an on-side kick after taking a 21-0 lead late in the first half.

Ross almost came unglued thanks to a valiant Napoleon charge, but two fourth-quarter interceptions from Liggins and Demetris Simms prevented disaster.

Even in his bitterness about what he felt was a poor official's call, Napoleon coach John Snod found time to praise Radeloff.

"Congratulations to coach Radeloff on a great career," Snod said. "Certainly the league's going to miss him, and I just wish him all the best."

For Radeloff, the best may be yet to come. He can finally shed weight of two straight 73 seasons and shortcomings against the toughest league rivals off shoulders.

He'll even deny that the Little Giants laid their gouts on the line just for him Friday night.

"They were not out there playing for me, they were out there playing for Fremont Ross and the tradition of football. They weren't out playing for me, they were playing for themselves to go out as a winner that last game," Radeloff said.

"You always remember your last game, whether you played or coached it, high school or college. I wanted them to go out with good feelings about that last game which they did."

And so will he.

Ross 28, Napoleon 14

At Harmon Stadium

Napoleon	0	0	7	7	—	14
Ross	7	14	0	7	—	28

SCORING

First quarter

FR — Derek Thiessen 43 run (Michael Hickey kick), 1:21.

Second quarter

FR — Thiessen 9 run (Hickey kick), 6:33.

FR — Thiessen 3 run (Hickey kick), 1:55.

Third quarter

N — David Rittenhouse 3 run (Matthew Russell kick), 4:07.

Fourth quarter

N — Jeremy Desgranges 13 pass from Adam Vance (Russell kick), 11:55.

FR — Thiessen 11 run (Hickey kick), 7:06.

TEAM STATISTICS

	N	FR
First downs	15	19
Rushes-yards.....	31-13	39-215
Passing yards	254	128
Comp.-Att.-Int.	16-27-2	8-15-1
Punts-Avg.	4-35.0	2-46.0
Penalties-yards	13-104	7-75
Fumbles-lost	1-1	4-0

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING — N, Adam Vance 10-(37), Ben Snyder 2-(13), David Rittenhouse 14-40, Todd Kruse 5-23; FR, Derek Thiessen 27-159, Kenny Morissette 3-47, Johnny Alridge 1-(4), Harry Liggins 4-(-2), Travis Bulger 2-7, Brett Hufford 1-16, Sam Root 1-(-8).

PASSING — N, Vance 16-27-254-2; FR, Harry Liggins 9-15-128-1.

RECEIVING — N, Jeremy Desgranges 6-119, Kirby Gerken 1-11, Kirk Spieth 2-26, Todd Kruse 1-14, Jared VanAusdale 1-5, Nathan Nemire 4-66, Allan Armes 1-8; FR, Hufford 3-51, Terry Cisco 3-27, Alridge 1-25, Thiessen 1-24.

INTERCEPTIONS — N, Kruse; FR, Liggins, Demetris Simms.

MISSSED FIELD GOALS — FR, Hickey 42.

RECORDS — Napoleon 5-5, 3-4 GLL; Ross 7-3, 6-1 GLL.



High Schools

Football

All-Northwest Team

COLUMBUS, Ohio — The 1996 Associated Press Northwest All-District high school football team as selected by a media panel from the district (by position, with high school, height and weight):

DIVISION I

First Team

OFFENSE — Ends—John Alexander, Toledo St. John's, 5-foot-11, 170 pounds, Junior; Jake Soliday, Mansfield Sr., 6-3, 185, Sr. Linemen—Clete Hawk, Lima Sr., 6-5, 245, Sr.; Tom Crone, Ashland, 6-2, 245, Sr.; Mike Prosser, Mansfield Madison, 6-3, 260, Sr.; Nick Tice, Tol. St. Francis, 6-0, 285, Jr.; Nathan Woolard, Tol. St. Francis, 5-11, 200, Sr. Quarterback—Jeff Soliday, Mansfield Sr., 6-3, 185, Sr. Backs—John Lane, Tol. Start, 6-0, 183, Sr.; DeMario Suggs, 5-10, 180, Sr.; William Bratton, Lima Sr., 5-11, 205, Sr. Kicker—Nick Lotz, Findlay, 6-2, 207, Jr.

DEFENSE — Linemen—Lincoln Young, Sandusky, 6-1, 265, Sr.; Luke Ulmer, Tol. St. John's, 5-10, 250, Sr.; Brent Price, Tol. St. Francis, 6-1, 255, Sr.; Ken Connell, Ashland, 6-2, 235, Sr. Linebackers—Jim Barker, Lima Sr., 6-2, 252, Sr.; Doby Lantz, Mansfield Madison, 5-9, 200, Sr.; Andy Vierthbeck, Tol. St. Francis, 6-0, 205, Sr.; Mike O'Brien, Tol. Whitmer, 5-11, 205, Sr. Backs—Curtis Cooper, Tol. Bowsher, 5-9, 165, Sr.; Joe Sellers, Lima Sr., 5-10, 175, Jr.; Josh Peterson, Mansfield Madison, 6-1, 170, Sr. Punter—Justen Briggs, Ashland, 5-10, 205, Jr.

Offensive player of the year — William Bratton, Lima Sr.

Defensive player of the year — Jim Barker, Lima Sr.

Coach of the year — Leonard Rush, Lima Sr.

Second Team

OFFENSE — Ends—Craig Montgomery, Mansfield Sr., 6-0, 180, Sr.; Domon Watkins, Lima Sr., 6-1, 205, Sr. Linemen—Tim Debo, Mansfield Sr., 6-4, 300, Sr.; Jon Edwards, Tol. St. John's, 6-0, 270, Sr.; Jason Beier, Tol. St. John's, 6-1, 230, Jr.; Jerry Cooper, Tol. Waite, 5-10, 180, Sr. Quarterback—Dave Dzierwa, Tol. St. John's, 5-9, 145, Jr. Backs—Derek Thiessen, Fremont Ross, 5-10, 170, Sr.; Darrin Williams, Sandusky, 5-11, 178, Sr.; Justin Fisher, Tol. Bowsher, 5-11, 180, Sr.

DEFENSE — Linemen—Tony Cippen, Tol. St. John's; Scott Stachowiak, Tol. St. Francis; Charles Griswold, Tol. Woodward; Celi Cox, Ashland. Linebackers—Aaron James, Lima Sr., 6-1, 195, Sr.; E.J. Cutliff, Mansfield Sr., 6-0, 190, Sr.; Jesse Sandoval, Fremont Ross, 5-11, 180, Jr.; Brad Schlager, Tol. St. John's, 5-10, 205, Sr.; Jermaine Norwood, Tol. St. John's, 5-10, 205, Sr. Backs—Harry Liggins, Fremont Ross, 6-1, 170, Sr.; Andy Boyd, Tol. Whitmer, 6-2, 180, Sr.; Kenny Rife, Mansfield Sr., 5-6, 150, Sr.

Honorable Mention

Mark Bosworth, Findlay; Jimmy Morris, Lima Sr.; Nick Christoff, Lima Sr.; Howard Glover, Tol. Woodward; Justin Lerrick, Mansfield Madison; James Beverly, Mansfield Madison; Mike Hotz, Tol. St. John's; Dave Bine, Tol. Whitmer; Sam Root, Fremont Ross; Paul Spenthoff, Tol. St. John's; Derrick Diggs, Tol. St. Francis; Rico Young, Tol. Whitmer; Renzo Orozco, Tol. Whitmer; Chris Shepard, Tol. St. Francis; James Topping, Tol. St. Francis; Tom Carney, Tol. Rogers; Darrion Washington, Tol. Rogers; Scott McCallum, Tol. Woodward; Zac Bletz, Mansfield Sr.; Phil Hawk, Ashland; Kevin Stamper, Mansfield Madison; Troy Lawhorn, Mansfield Madison; Shannon Kiser, Mansfield Madison; Paul Ramirez, Tol. St. John's; Mike Tipton, Tol. St. Francis.

High Schools

Awards

Ross football awards

Captains: Harry Liggins, Derek Thiessen

Outstanding offensive lineman: Brian Borer

Outstanding Offensive Back: Derek Thiessen

Outstanding defensive lineman: Chris Shull

Outstanding defensive back: Sam Root

Most improved senior: Johnny Alridge

Most improved junior: Jesse Sandoval

Joe Lotycz True Grit: Derek Kolbe

Outstanding First Year Player: Tyson Liggins

Most Valuable Player: Derek Thiessen

1996 All-GLL Team

First Team

Offense

Player (School)	Gr.	Ht.	Wt.
Kyle Reau (Clay)	Sr.	5-10	170
Malcolm Robinson (Fostoria)	Sr.	6-5	255
Derek Thiessen (Ross)	Sr.	5-10	170
Dave Birie (Whitmer)	Sr.	5-11	205
Adam Vance (Napoleon)	Sr.	6-1	200
Kevin Heintschel (Clay)	Sr.	6-1	220
Dustin Walker (Bedford)	Sr.	5-7	155
Leo Frierson (Fostoria)	Sr.	6-2	285
Brad Flowers (Napoleon)	Sr.	6-2	245
Andy Boyd (Whitmer)	Sr.	6-2	180
Jason Lewis (Fostoria)	Sr.	6-1	230

Placekicker

Mike Hickey (Ross)	Jr.	5-10	160
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Defense

Player (School)	Gr.	Ht.	Wt.
Richard Newsome (Fostoria)	Sr.	6-1	180
Todd Kruse (Napoleon)	Sr.	6-1	200
Harry Liggins (Ross)	Sr.	6-2	180
Marc Bosworth (Findlay)	Jr.	5-9	160
Tim Burzynski (Bedford)	Sr.	6-3	205
Brian Blakeman (Napoleon)	Sr.	5-10	175
Mike O'Brien (Whitmer)	Sr.	5-11	205
Sawn Root (Ross)	Sr.	6-0	160
Omar Abou-Arab (Clay)	Jr.	5-11	210
Jesse Sandoval (Ross)	Jr.	5-11	180
Eli Haughawout (Fostoria)	Sr.	6-0	167

Punter

Adam Pfeiffer (Clay)	Sr.	6-3	185
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Second Team

Offense

Player (School)	Gr.	Ht.	Wt.
Ryan Freshour (Fostoria)	Sr.	6-1	170
Ron Henneman (Clay)	Jr.	6-2	170
Nick Lotz (Findlay)	Jr.	6-2	208
Demetrius Ball (Findlay)	Jr.	5-11	188
Chris Wilson (Whitmer)	Sr.	6-0	175
Brian Borer (Ross)	Sr.	6-5	305
Rico Young (Whitmer)	Sr.	5-11	165
Wendell Young (Fostoria)	Sr.	5-11	173
Chris Shull (Ross)	Jr.	5-11	250
J.R. Adkins (Ross)	Jr.	6-1	170
Brett Hufford (Ross)	Jr.	6-3	175

Defense

Player (School)	Gr.	Ht.	Wt.
Mike Doogs (Fostoria)	Sr.	5-9	165
Adam Leal (Whitmer)	Sr.	5-8	160
Casey Leathers (Clay)	Sr.	6-1	185
Ben Snyder (Napoleon)	Jr.	5-10	170
Josh Leiter (Fostoria)	Sr.	6-2	190
Jeremy Desgranges (Napoleon)	Sr.	6-0	170
Dan Steingraber (Clay)	Jr.	5-10	165
Ricki Gerbasich (Bedford)	Sr.	6-3	195
Rene Orozco (Whitmer)	Sr.	5-9	215
Jordan Harris (Northview)	Sr.	6-0	180
Dan Koschik (Bedford)	Sr.	5-10	205

Honorable mention

BEDFORD — T.J. Rogers, Chad Detrick, Joe Albring, Eric Dow, Joe Vaillant, Tom Nowak. CLAY — Jason Kanthak, Mike Redd, Mike Mahaney, Mike Foust, Dustin Ulrich, John Dobos. FINDLAY — Dustin Marshall, Jon Legato, Ham Leonard, Nick Lunn, Jim Arnold, Ben Bucher. FOSTORIA — Ryan Williams, Ted Jagucki, Cory Echelberry, Eric Howard, Chad Howard, Jeremy Young. ROSS — Johnny Alridge, Terry Cisco, Tyson Liggins, Josh Liggins, Aaron Root, Brett Agnew. NAPOLEON — Neal Gerdeman, David Rittenhouse, Nick Eberle, Nick Young, Brian Wade, Ross Durham Jr. NORTHVIEW — Ryan Connell, Nick Henning, Nick Ciesinski, David Greginer, David Healy, Steve Siefert. WHITMER — John Yates, Theron Tonéy, Charles Moses, Mike Biesada, Preston Lajiness, Shad Stewart.