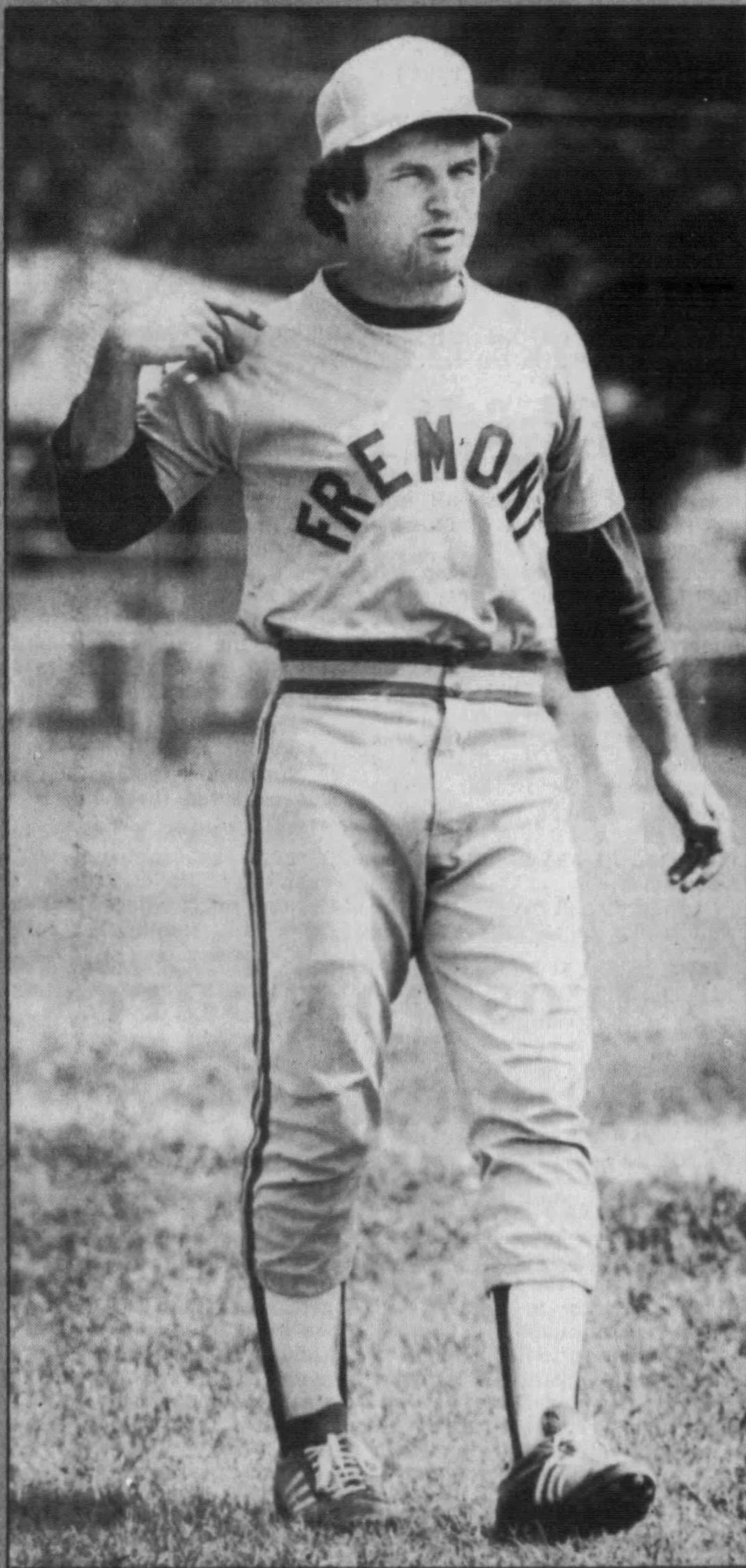


Ross snares BC baseball title



News-Messenger/Bob Marker

DAN FOUGHT, coach of the Ross High School baseball team, flashes a signal to a batter during the first game Saturday.

By BOB MARKER
News-Messenger Sports Editor

Call it a perfect ending to a rookie season. Dan Fought would probably accept any description of it because he could not ask for too much more.

Fought, the first year coach of the Ross High School baseball team, watched his team win the Western Division of the Buckeye Conference baseball race Saturday by sweeping Findlay in a doubleheader at Anderson Field.

Ross needed to win just one of the two to clinch the title but after winning the first game 9-4, the Little Giants added lustre to the division crown with a 4-3 nightcap victory.

The two wins raised Ross's BC record to 5-1. Findlay, which had to win both games to take the division title, finished conference play with a 2-4 mark.

"At the start of the season," Fought said after the wins on a hot, muggy afternoon, "I never thought we would hit the ball the way we have this season."

Findlay, 9-10, felt the brunt of that Ross hitting attack when the Little Giants exploded for five runs in the fourth inning of the first game to wipe out a 3-3 deadlock.

John Lozano walked after one out to start the winning rally. Scott Weber flied to center but the ball was dropped for the first of two consecutive Findlay errors. With runners at first and second, Lee Sanchez was safe when the Findlay third baseman threw wildly to first on Sanchez's bunt. Lozano scored on a head first slide on the play with Weber moving to third and Sanchez to second.

John White, after getting an 0-2 count, doubled to left center for two runs. Mark Miesle singled and went to second when the throw to the plate held the Ross runner at third. Chris Simmons brought both runners in with a pop-fly single to left centerfield.

Ken Henry, with help from John Stierwalt, was the winning pitcher.

Mike Hrynciw homered for Ross in the third while Larry Helms and Barry Pry homered for Findlay. Sanchez, Miesle and Tracy Turner had two hits apiece for Ross with Sanchez driving in three runs.

Ross managed just five hits in the second game as Fought put many of his regulars on the bench. Stierwalt had two hits for Ross and picked up another save after taking over for Henry, who had pitched to one batter after relieving starter Alan Humbarger.

The Little Giants had a 4-0 lead after five innings. Stierwalt's single, which got through the centerfielder for a three-base error, accounted for the final two Ross runs in the fifth.

Sanchez doubled for the Little Giants while Mike Roywon homered and Helms and Mark Ritzler doubled for Findlay.

Stierwalt is 5-1 for the season with three wins and two saves in conference play.

Ross, 14-9, has one remaining game with Clyde at the Fliers home at 4 p.m. Tuesday.

In two other area games Saturday, Port Clinton downed Huron 10-7 and Toledo Central Catholic beat Genoa 11-5.

Port Clinton 10, Huron 7

Jim Rakosky went three for three and drove in the eventual winning run to key the Redskins' victory over the Tigers in Port Clinton.

With the Redskins leading 7-6 in the bottom of the fifth inning, Rakosky nailed a two-out bases-loaded single to drive in two runs. Jeff Miller followed with an RBI single for PC's final run of the game.

Those key hits helped the Redskins even their Sandusky Bay Conference record at 5-5 and up their overall mark to 8-13.

Toledo CC 11, Genoa 5

The Irish jumped out to a 7-0 lead in the second inning and never looked back in handling the Comets in Genoa.

Toledo CC banged out 13 hits to seven for Genoa. Mark Nero and Tom Wojciechowski led the Comets with two hits each.