

2011 Limited Season Review

OREGON CLAY25-25-25

FREMONT ROSS14-14-14

FREMONT — McKenzie Schneider led the Little Giants with 17 digs in Thursday's loss to the Eagles. Melanie Edris was 11 of 30 in assist opportunities and Jen Kiser had 5 kills for Ross.

Records: Ross — 1-2 (0-2 TRAC).

Next: Ross vs. Elmwood, Monday.

VOLLEYBALL

Ross can't keep up with Toledo Central Catholic

By Nick Marlow

News-Messenger correspondent

FREMONT — While Toledo Central Catholic was faster, bigger and more experienced in a 25-14, 25-14, 25-15 sweep over Ross on Thursday at the Purple Pit, the Little Giants went down swinging.

“We played really aggressively,” said Fremont coach Lauren Blasko. “We’ve had a really difficult time lately with playing down and getting frustrated. As soon as there’s any sign of adversity we’ve been giving up. But we fought through that entire game.”

The Irish came out in the opening set and jumped out to a 20-8 lead on nine kills. Ross battled back and closed the gap to 24-14, before the set ended on a hitting error by Fremont’s Danielle Honaker.

And that was the story of the evening; while Ross never stopped attacking the net, they simply were not efficient.

On seven Ross errors — five attacking — Central jumped to a quick 16-6 lead in the second set. Ross would make a late surge and cut the score to 19-15 before aiding a six-point Irish run with two additional hitting errors to end the set.

Of the 23 Little Giants errors, 19 were failed attacking attempts; and with only eight kills on the night, they could not endure these mistakes.

“Our hitters were just chomping at the bit,” Blasko said. “They’re all really young, inexperienced hitters. They were early every time. They were either getting blocked because they were so early they couldn’t see it, or they were hitting it out.”

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Ross

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While Central, too, committed several errors, they were able to sustain these mistakes with an abundance of kills from its front row. The Irish backed up 12 attacking errors with 26 kills.

“(Abby Wietrzykowski) and (Jennifer Kowalski) have been playing with me for three years,” said Irish coach Melissa Belcher. “It’s nice to have both of them in the front row always ready to get a kill when we need it.”

The two outside hitters combined for 17 of the Irish’s 26 kills, uncorking assists from their setters throughout the match.

Ross libero Mckenzie Gallagher battled the Irish front row, attacking the best she could.

“It’s pretty frightening seeing those big girls come up at you, but I had to step in, defend my blockers and do my job,” she said.

Were it not for Gallagher’s 19 digs, the kills discrepancy between the two teams would have been even more lopsided.

Central’s service game was also impressive. With five aces — four coming from libero Kaitlin Bronlkowski — the Irish forced Ross out of its zones throughout the match.

The Irish completed the sweep by taking the third set 25-15 on nine kills and nine Fremont errors.

Volleyball:

Defiance 25-25, Fremont Ross 23-19

Perrysburg 25-25, Ross 23-9

Tiffin Columbian 25-25, Ross 20-10

Melanie Edris had 21 kills and 16 digs but Ross lost three matches at the Central Catholic Irish Invitational.

Mckenzie Gallagher added 17 digs for the Little Giants.

McKenzie Schneider leads Ross over Lake

By Kevin Shields
Sports writer

MILLBURY — Fremont Ross coach Lauren Blasko always knows what she can expect out of her right-hand man.

Or in this case, her right-hand woman.

Senior outside hitter McKenzie Schneider is Blasko's equal on the volleyball court for the Little Giants. And whatever her second-year head coach needs done, she is willing to do it.

Schneider had 24 digs and 11 kills Monday as Ross swept Lake 27-25, 25-15, 26-24 in a non-league match.

"She's played a huge part on our team," Blasko said. "She's our leader and one of the few who has been consistently talking on the court for us."

'HITTING TO HEAL'

» **When:** Saturday. Freshman game starts at 10 a.m.

» **Where:** Ross High School.

» **Details:** The Fremont Ross volleyball team will hold its annual "Hitting to Heal" Kids Helping Kids charity volleyball game Saturday when it plays host to Sandusky in a non-league game. All proceeds will go to Alexa's Butterflies of Hope for The Alexa Brown Foundation. All the money raised will stay in the area and help with the costs incurred by the families of the children affected by the Clyde Cancer Cluster.

"I can tell her anything from, 'you better get this girl's head out of her butt' or 'this and that.' She's just really good at pulling everybody up."

Schneider had three kills and a block as the Little Giants (2-9) battled back from an early 5-0 deficit in Game 3. Her tip that landed for a kill started an eight-point service run with Molly Mosser serving

that gave Ross a 15-13 lead.

The lead widened to 18-14 after two kills and Melanie Edris' block.

"We've had a difficult time so far with just staying mentally up for a whole game," Blasko said. "That's something we've been working on. And even though it wasn't the prettiest volleyball out there tonight, we

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PREP ROUNDUP

Golden Bears fall in VB, despite Lyndsey Perales' stellar effort

News-Messenger reports

GIBSONBURG — Lyndsey Perales tallied 16 points, three aces, nine assists and five digs for Gibsonburg, which fell 26-24, 25-23, 25-21 to Cardinal Stritch on Monday in a Toledo Area Athletic Conference volleyball match.

Meredith Morgan added 11 kills and seven blocks for the Golden Bears (3-7, 3-3). Sadie Sneider had 11 assists and Elena Mancha had seven points and 13 digs.

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Schneider

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fought through it.

“Normally if we’d had a 0-5 start, we would roll over. But we pushed through it and stayed focus.”

Lake cut the advantage to two twice, before a three-point run started by another kill from Edris gave Ross a 23-18 advantage. The Flyers cut the lead to 23-22 when Schneider made a diving dig to keep a ball in play that led to Ross getting a 24-22 lead.

But it was far from over as a kill from Lake’s Courtney Sutter and a block by Whitney Griffey tied the game at 24.

Ross was awarded a point on a hitting error to get the serve back. And that’s when Mckenzie Gallagher put away the game with a hard-hit serve that couldn’t be dug out by the Flyers.

The ace gave the Little Giants’ a much needed ego-boost.

“This is a big confidence-booster for us,” Schneider said. “We’ve been struggling with our league games and this was a non-league game we knew we could come out and win.

“We just had to work hard and get it done. That’s what we did.”

Gallagher ended her night with four aces, including two during an eight-point service run in Game 2 that saw Ross jump out to an 11-2 lead.

Edris had 13 kills and 26 digs for the Little Giants, while Mosser had 20 assists.

“Our hitting was really good,” Schneider said. “We finally got our timing down.”

Schneider’s hitting especially was on. Her kill was the final point of Game 2.

“I’ve been struggling with my timing a lot, but that was on tonight,” Schneider said.

After going 16-10 in year one, Blasko’s team is young and full of inexperience. Not to mention, they’ve seen much improved competition in their league since joining the Three Rivers Athletic Conference.

“This is a good point for our team to start from,” Blasko said. “Hopefully we’ll see some better play from now on.”

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Ross volleyball team starts slow in TRAC loss to Whitmer

By Kevin Shields
sports writer

FREMONT — Coming into the season, Fremont Ross volleyball coach Lauren Blasko said she wouldn't mind seeing all her squad's games go to five games.

She believed in her team's conditioning, and thought it could outlast anyone on the court. Thus far, her team has tried to hold

to that. Only her players have been forgetting to pace themselves enough to reach that fifth game.

Instead, the Little Giants have been too busy trying to setup their own version of the "big comeback," digging themselves an early deficit where the only way to reach that fifth game is by having a touch of the dramatics.

That happened again Thursday night at

the Purple Pit, as Toledo Whitmer dominated the first two games and made Ross have to rally again. But, after battling back to force a fourth game, the Little Giants didn't have enough dramatics in them to get to a fifth, falling to the Panthers 25-21, 25-13, 25-27, 25-19 in a Three Rivers Athletic Conference match.

"It's been taking us so long to warm up that we're always playing at a deficit, in-

stead of just working that hard from the start," Blasko said. "Then we're always having to scramble. Our girls like to be dramatic and have that big comeback win. It just hasn't been working our way."

Allie Missler's kill gave Whitmer a 20-11 advantage in Game 1 after Ross (2-10, 0-7 TRAC) — with Molly Mosser serving —

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Volleyball

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battled back from an 8-4 deficit to tie the game at 8-8. A block from Cassie Wolesslagel, an ace from Danielle Honaker and two kills from McKenzie Schneider cut the deficit to 20-15. The lead was just 23-19 then after two more Schneider kills.

But the run came too late.

"We need to start coming out stronger," Schneider said. "We're not coming out with too much fight. Then as soon as we get down, we're ready to fight back. But we can't be putting ourselves in the hole like that."

The Panthers scored eight of the first 11 points in Game 2, recording four service runs of four or more points en route to a 24-8 lead.

Then the Little Giants started to show that fight, running off five straight points before a kill from Whitmer's Shelby Swartz ended the game.

"We knew from the end of Game 2 that we were pushing harder and that we could beat them," Schneider said. "So we came out with a lot of energy in Game 3 and we were able to get it done and fight for the points we needed."

Schneider had four kills in the first 32 points as Ross built a 17-12 edge. Whitmer answered with a run to take the lead at 20-19, and then it led 24-23 on a tip for a kill by Missler.

But the Panthers had few answers for Schneider, who picked up two straight kills to give the Little Giants a 25-24 edge. The game ended on a block from Allison Ackerman.

"We were definitely a resilient team tonight," Blasko said. "It's almost impossible to come back from two losses and make it to a fifth game. But these girls fought so hard. Our defense was wonderful in that third game."

Ross never led in the fourth game, keeping the score within a few points, before the Panthers

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pulled away at the end.

Schneider finished with a personal-best 20 kills to lead the Little Giants' offense. Melanie Edris had eight kills, 25 digs and 16 assists, while McKenzie Gallagher added 25 digs.

Volleyball

Fremont Ross tops

Lima Senior

Melanie Edris tallied eight kills and 10 digs as Fremont Ross cruised to a three-game sweep of Lima Senior in a Monday Three Rivers Athletic Conference match.

Sophomore Allison Ackerman had five kills for the Little Giants.

“The team played very well tonight,” Ross coach Lauren Blasko said. “They were very consistent, and they were finishing strong. This was our Senior Night and I was very proud of my seniors — McKenzie Schneider and Danielle Honaker — this year. The team worked hard to get their first conference win.”

FINDLAY.....25-25-26

ROSS11-14-24

FINDLAY — McKenzie Schneider had 7 kills and 12 digs in Thursday’s loss to the Trojans. Riley Minich and Melanie Edris each had 5 kills for the Little Giants.

Records: Ross 4-12 (1-7 TRAC).

Next: Ross at Fostoria, Monday.

nition, as was McKenzie Schneider and Melanie Edris in volleyball. Both were given honorable mention all-TRAC honors, while Schneider earned a first team all-District 6 selection and Edris was on the second team.

DISTRICT 6 VOLLEYBALL

Area volleyball players named to all-district teams

News-Messenger reports

McKenzie Schneider of Fremont Ross was recognized first-team all-District 6 in Division I by the Volleyball Coaches Association.

Margaretta's Katie Nesbitt was first-team in Division III.

The Little Giants' Melanie Edris was second-team.

Bellevue's Leslie Raifsnider was second-team in Division II.

The Polar Bears' Makayla Win-

dau was second-team while Ali James was honorable mention.

Clyde's Missy Setzler was third-team while Rachael Smetzler was honorable mention in Division II.

Old Fort's Kristin Bender was third-team in Division IV.

St. Joseph Central Catholic's Amanda Binder was honorable mention in Division IV.

Oak Harbor's Katelyn Tice was honorable mention in Division II.

Volleyball

THREE RIVERS ATHLETIC CONFERENCE ALL-CONFERENCE TEAMS

- » **Player of the Year:** Cassidy Croci (sr./St. Ursula).
- » **First Team:** Cassidy Croci (sr./St. Ursula); Kayce Krucki (jr./Findlay); Shelly DeHenning (sr./Notre Dame); Jen Kowalski (sr./Central Catholic); Madison Strall (sr./St. Ursula); Maddie Burnham (jr./St. Ursula); Abby Wietryzkowski (sr./Central Catholic); Allison Twining (jr./Findlay); Morgan Fioritto (jr./Notre Dame).
- » **Second Team:** Kaitlin Bronikowski (jr./Central Catholic); Kristen Kayser (sr./Clay); Katie McKernan (jr./St. Ursula); Abby Stine (jr./Findlay); Payton Bowyer (jr./Notre Dame); Jane Emmenecker (jr./Central Catholic); Kim Crawford (sr./Clay); Emma Schleucher (jr./Findlay).
- » **Honorable Mention:** Makahla Jacobs (sr./Central Catholic); Tiffani Hobbs (sr./Central Catholic); Taylor Kovach (jr./Clay); Katey McQueary (sr./Clay); Bria Bronston (jr./Findlay); Emily Lauth (jr./Findlay); McKenzie Schneider (sr./Fremont Ross); Melanie Edris (jr./Fremont Ross); Morgan Thompson (sr./Lima Senior); Jazmine Thomas (sr./Lima Senior); Maddy Smyth (so./Notre Dame); Lisa Urbanski (sr./Notre Dame); Emma Ronstadt (sr./St. Ursula); Erin Williams (sr./St. Ursula); Allie Missler (Whitmer).
- » **Coach of the Year:** John Buck — St. Ursula.