

1999 Season Review

Ross wins opener



News-Messenger/Travis Johnson

REBECCA BROWN, 11, approaches Jessica Fick's set in Fremont Ross's 16-14, 16-14 win over Margaretta on Tuesday.

Giants inconsistent in first win

By **SCOTT TAPPA**
Sports editor

Tuesday was a big day for Fremont Ross volleyball player Krissy Lotycz.

"It's the first day of school, going out to the big high school," the sophomore said. "It's the first game of the season, and that marks how we play."

If that's the case, the Little Giants' opening night 16-14, 16-14 win over Margaretta could be marked with one word: inconsistent.

"Inconsistency," said Ross coach Karrie Gardner. "We've got to work on playing more consistently."

Over two tight games, Ross and Margaretta rode

Volleyball

momentum swings like two kids riding a see-saw. For instance:

■ In the first game, Ross jumped out to an 8-2 lead, only to see their guests score 10 straight points.

■ Later in that game, with Margaretta holding a 14-12 and serving for the game, Ross held on and scored four straight points to win the game. Lotycz came up with a block and two kills to close it out.

■ In the second game, Ross jumped out to an early lead, kept the margin at around 4-5 points and served for the game at 14-9. Margaretta stormed

back to tie it at 14-14, but the Little Giants held on to close out the match 16-14.

"As far as openers go, I thought we looked nervous, just like you'd expect," Gardner said. "I think our youth showed, especially in that first game. We've got four sophomores out there, three have varsity experience, but they still have a lot to learn."

The first thing Ross had to learn was how to stop Margaretta middle hitter Jessica Van Ness. In the first game, Van Ness led the Polar Bears with seven kills, and her 22 attempts were 13 more than her

See **LITTLE, B2**

Little Giants get opening win over Margaretta

Continued from B1

closest teammate, despite playing part-time.

"We talked and talked and talked about how that girl hits to the middle," Gardner said. "In volleyball that's one of the most vulnerable areas, she's got a nice shot to the middle and it took us awhile to figure that out. Toward the end of the first game, when we started coming back, that's when we started figuring it out."

Also toward the end of the first game, Ross started to figure out how to put balls down. After the long scoreless spell, setter Jessica Fick got the ball to Erin Barr for a kill that cut Margaretta's lead to 14-13.

Lindsay Cobb's block tied the score at 14-14, and Lotycz

hit through a block and off a block to clinch the game.

"I don't think we were playing to our potential," Lotycz said. "We have a lot of talent, and we don't use it all. Some days we go out there and have good games, some days we don't."

Cobb continued to be a force at the net in the second game. Her kill to push Ross's lead to 8-4 prompted a Margaretta timeout, and her kill directly after a Margaretta timeout gave Ross game point at 14-9.

"I thought we played pretty well, since it was the first game," Cobb said. "I wish we would have had a little breather, because we were all really nervous."

Gardner praised the play of Rachele Domiray, who had five kills. Cobb led Ross with

seven kills, Lotycz had six, Erin Barr had five and Jessica Fick had 27 assists. Van Ness finished with 13 kills and four blocks, and teammate Laura Hawn had eight kills and six blocks.

Margaretta coach Bill Cramer was pleased with the way his team came back in both games.

"We were down in the first game and made a nice comeback, we were down in the second game and made a nice comeback," he said. "We're a pretty young team, but we're making progress every time we play."

So is Ross, and Lotycz is looking forward to seeing the results.

"I know we can do better than this," she said.

Ross tops Monroeville;

News-Messenger reports

MONROEVILLE — The Fremont Ross volleyball team traveled to Monroeville on Tuesday and came home with a 15-12, 15-11 victory.

The Little Giants (2-0) were led by Jessica Fick with eight points and Erin Barr with seven kills.

Ross opens its Great Lakes League season Thursday with a home match against Oregon Clay.

The Fliers were led by Rachel Crooks with 10 points and 11 kills. Also for Clyde, Rachel Dick had 11 points and five kills and Katie Crockett had 11 kills.

The Fliers (3-3) host Sandusky Perkins on Thursday.

Gibsonburg 15-15, Genoa 8-12

GIBSONBURG — Heather Hill had 11 points, six kills and seven aces to lead Gibsonburg to a 15-8, 15-12 Sub-

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Ross starts strong, fades against Clay

By **SCOTT TAPPA**
Sports editor

The way Fremont Ross volleyball coach Karrie Gardner sees it, it's not pre-game jitters or early-match sluggishness that plagues her team. It's just the opposite.

"We came out ready to play in the first game," Gardner said after her team dropped a 15-10, 9-15,

6-15 decision to Great Lakes League rival Oregon Clay on Thursday. "I don't know how to teach them to sustain it. This is three games in a row that we started out up 8-2 and it ends up being close.

"They're too inconsistent, they've got to get a lead and hold it. Basically, there was no heart, no guts out there. Nobody looked

like they wanted to win it, except for Clay."

The Little Giants (2-1, 0-1) came out hot, taking leads of 4-0 and 8-2 early in the first game behind the serving of Krissy Lotycz and Rachelle Domiray.

"We knew they were going to come out the way they did, they really played well in the first game, we were a little bit on our

heels," said Clay coach Dave Habegger.

Clay (3-0, 1-0) scored six straight points to knot the score at 8-8, but with Tiffany Garcia serving, Ross scored five straight points to seize control.

"There were three runs," Habegger said. "They won the two important runs, the

See **ROSS, B2**

Ross wins first game, loses last two against rival Clay

Continued from B1

first one and the last one, and we got the middle. That wasn't good enough."

Lotycz, Lindsay Cobb and Rebecca Brown all had multiple kills in the first game for Ross, and Brown had a pair of blocks.

"I thought we passed well in that first game, and we hit well, the setter really mixed up

the offense," Gardner said. "In the second and third game, offensively, we just froze up."

At the same time, Clay's offense warmed up as setter Betsy Revenaugh began going to her middle hitters more, specifically Andrea Warner, who racked up a match-high 16 kills.

"Both our middles, they couldn't stop either of them," Habegger said. "At the beginning of the second game I told

our setter to get the ball to our middles, and they responded. They were pretty much unstoppable."

The third game was the best-played of the three, with both teams siding out well at the outset. Through eight turns serving by each team, Ross had scored two points, Clay one.

But Shelley Andrzejewski served five straight points, prompting two Ross timeouts,

to help Clay pull away in the third game.

Lotycz led Ross with nine kills, Domiray had an efficient seven kills in 10 attempts, Cobb had four kills, Erin Barr had three kills and three aces and Jessica Fick had 26 assists. Brown had four kills and five blocks.

"I thought Rebecca Brown blocked well," Gardner said.

Ross plays at Fostoria next Thursday.

Little Giants beat Fostoria in GLL

News-Messenger reports

FOSTORIA — Fremont Ross improved to 3-1 with a 15-13, 10-15, 15-6 win over Fostoria in a Great Lakes League match.

Erin Barr had nine points and Tiffany Garcia had nine service points for the Little Giants.

The Little Giants have two home GLL matches next week, Tuesday against Toledo Whitmer and Thursday against defending champion Sandusky.

Volleyball

Hopewell 15-15, SJCC 1-12

BASCOM — St. Joseph Central Catholic gave defending state champion Hopewell-Loudon a battle, but fell 15-1, 15-12 in the Midland Athletic League.

Tiffany Binsack had four digs and six service points for the Crimson Streaks (6-2)

Otsego 15-15, Woodmore 2-6

ELMORE — Woodmore fell to 0-6 with a 15-2, 15-6 loss to the Knights at Woodmore High School.

Allyson Dishong had four points on 6-of-7 serving and Leslie Arndt went 18-for-20 serving for the Wildcats.

Clyde 15-15, Edison 1-6

CLYDE — Rachel Dick had

eight digs and Laura Hawn also had an ace.

Margaretta is 5-5, 3-2.

Gibsonburg 15-15, Elmwood 9-3

GIBSONBURG — Gibsonburg improved to 7-1 with a 15-9, 15-3 win over Elmwood.

Lexe Warren had seven points and a kill, Megan Wasil had six points and four kills, Emily Walter had five points, three kills and three

Ross, St.

News-Messenger reports

Jessica Fick was the top server for Fremont Ross as the Little Giants beat Toledo Whitmer 15-4, 15-6 in Great Lakes League volleyball action.

"We played more aggressively tonight and took Whitmer out of its offense," said Ross coach Karrie Gardner. "We were able to put some players in different positions than they traditionally play."

Ross plays defending GLL champion Sandusky at the Purple Pit on Thursday.

Little Giants beat Sandusky in t

Barr serves two aces for victory

By SCOTT TAPPA
Sports editor

The Fremont Ross volleyball team had been in this situation before.

Thursday night at the Purple Pit, the Little Giants burst out of the gates for an easy first-game win over highly-touted Sandusky, but saw their guests grab both a lead and momentum in the second game.

This time, Ross didn't lose.

The improving Little Giants (6-3, 3-1) came back to take a dramatic 15-6, 18-16 win over the defending Great Lakes League champions.

"This is huge," said Ross junior Rachele Domiray, who had five kills to go along with a strong floor game. "Sandusky's on top, they won it last year, if we didn't win this we were out of it, so this was huge."

After an efficient 15-6 win in the first game, Ross fell behind 11-3 in the second before rallying to tie the score at 15-15. After the teams traded points, Ross sophomore Erin

Volleyball

Barr served consecutive aces to close out the win.

"I was aiming for the right side, because they have weaker players over there," Barr said. "I really thought I was going to miss that serve, because I had missed that one before, but I had confidence I could do it."

In addition to her two aces, Barr led Ross with nine kills. Krissy Lotycz had 19 assists, Jessica Fick had six kills and four aces and Lindsay Cobb had three blocks.

The Little Giants also passed the ball consistently, putting Lotycz in position to run the team's new-look offense smoothly. Starting last Thursday in a win over Fostoria, Lotycz has been setting instead of Fick, with the latter moving to weakside hitter.

"I thought we needed to have a more aggressive offense," said Ross coach Karrie Gardner. "Jessica's an excellent weakside hitter, teams don't expect you to have a nice hitter like that on the weak side, she can really cut the ball left, cut the ball right."

"It's a 5-1 with Krissy set-

ting all the time, but we've got Jessica in the back row, and she can set if we need her to. She's a good setter, so we want to be able to use her it just gives us another setter."

Lotycz, who played the position last year, said the transition has been comfortable.

"Coach told me coming in that I was going to be playing outside and setting, and she told me to be ready," she said. "I was ready, I told her the job's going to get done, because they need me, and I need them."

See ROSS, B3

Ross holds off Sandusky for GLL win

Continued from B1

In the first game, Ross jumped out to an 8-1 lead, as Fick served three straight aces. Rebecca Brown served four straight points to give Ross a 14-3 lead, and Cobb's kill ended the game.

"This is the team we expected to be, this is a team that showed up ready to win," Lotycz said.

The second game was not as smooth, as the potent Sandusky combination of Sheena Devese and Kenya Graves staked the Blue Streaks to an eight-point lead.

Fick, Barr and Janell Kingsborough served points to cut the deficit to 12-6, and with Lotycz serving, three straight Sandusky errors made it 13-9.

"We learned from our other games," Domiray said. "In other games, we'd get down on each other and lose, but this time we kept the momentum going."

Two Barr kills made it 14-12, forcing Sandusky to take its second timeout. Another Fick ace and two more Streaks errors tied the score a 15-15. Fick had a tip kill to give Ross the lead, but Sandusky knotted the score again, setting the

stage for Barr.

"I'm hoping this is a turning point for us," Gardner said. "This is the first time everything came together for the kids at one time, they really battled back in that second game. I think they learned a lot about the kind of team they can be."

Ross has a big weekend ahead, with matchups against No. 1 Mansfield Madison and No. 5 Stow on the schedule.

"This is a nice win going into a weekend like that, hopefully the kids will have some confidence," Gardner said.

aces.

Gibsonburg hosts Northwood in an SLL game Tuesday.

In other high school volleyball action Saturday:

Ross goes 1-2

MANSFIELD — Rebecca Brown had nine kills as Fremont Ross beat No. 7 Stow 6-15, 15-9, 15-9 on Saturday.

At the same tournament, No. 1 Mansfield Madison beat Ross 15-6, 15-5, and the Little Giants dropped a 15-6, 15-6 decision to Galion.

Erin Barr had nine kills in the loss to Galion for Ross

(7-5). The Little Giants travel to Findlay on Tuesday before a rematch with Oregon Clay on Thursday.

Woodmore wins two

TOLEDO — Woodmore won a pair of games, beating Danbury 15-4, 11-15, 15-5 and Woodward 15-2, 15-6.

In the Danbury win, Mindy Whiting had 13 points, Leslie Arndt had nine points and Abby Richard had six kills. In the Woodward win, Kim Schroeder had nine points and Cori Moenter had seven points.

News-Messenger reports

Clyde outlasted Margaretta 15-7, 10-15, 15-10 in the Sandusky Bay Conference.

For the Fliers (10-4, 7-1), Rachel Crooks had 10 kills and 13 service points, Katie Crockett had seven points and seven kills, Rachel Dick had seven kills and Jill Lamson had seven points.

For Margaretta (7-6, 5-3), Jessica Van Ness had 15 kills.

Findlay 9-15-15,

Ross 15-13-13

FINDLAY — Rachelle

Domiray had 13 kills but Findlay beat Ross 9-15, 15-15, 15-13 in the Great Lakes League.

Lindsay Cobb had 11 kills, Krissy Lotycz had eight points and Kira Wojdyla had seven points for Ross (7-6, 3-2).

Gibsonburg 12-15-15,

Northwood 15-7-11

NORTHWOOD — Wendy Mathia's 20 kills and four aces led Gibsonburg to a 12-15, 15-7, 15-11 win over Northwood in the Suburban Lakes League.

Also for the Bears (11-1, 9-1), Emily Walter had four points

Clay 15-15, Ross 8-6

OREGON — Oregon Clay knocked off Fremont Ross 15-8, 15-6 in the Great Lakes League.

For Ross, Erin Barr had four kills and Rachelle Domiray had four service points for Ross (7-7, 3-3).

Ross shows its progress in win over Fostoria

Quick start spurs Little Giants

By SCOTT TAPPA
Sports editor

Back on Sept. 16, the Fremont Ross volleyball team took a re-vamped lineup to Fostoria, and the Redmen took the Little Giants to three games before succumbing.

Tuesday at the Purple Pit, Ross showed just how far it had come in those three weeks, pounding Fostoria 15-3, 15-8 in a Great Lakes League match.

"I think we've learned to play together, we've learned to trust each other on the court more,"

said Ross sophomore Erin Barr, who led all hitters with nine kills.

The current lineup, which has Krissy Lotycz setting most of the time and previous setter Jessica Fick hitting most of the time, is looking better and better.

"I would say we've come a long way," said Ross coach Karrie Gardner. "The first time we played them, it went three games, and that was part of the adjustment, people feeling uncomfortable. I think you can tell that now, the kinks have been worked out, and we handled them a lot easier."

Lotycz served a pair of aces to start the match, and the outcome was never in doubt as Ross improved to 8-7 overall, 4-3 in the

Volleyball

GLL.

"She has a very tough serve," Gardner said. "When you watch it from the side it doesn't look like anything, but it moves and it's hard to pass, that's why we have her serve first."

"That definitely set the tone. After taking us to three last time I think they thought they had a chance to beat us, and you start off with two aces like and it deflated them pretty quick."

Lotycz had 19 assists in the win, Lindsay Cobb had five kills and three blocks, Rachelle Domiray had five kills and two aces and Tiffany Garcia had three aces.

"Tiffany Garcia, she plays so well," Gardner said. "People probably wonder why she doesn't start, but you need people who can come off your bench and make things happen, she's so consistent."

"Lindsay did a nice job at the net blocking, I thought, and Erin was a little more consistent hitting than she has been."

At one point Barr converted eight straight kill attempts, helping Ross overcome a slow start to the second game.

"The last couple practices, (Gardner) had me come in and work more on hitting, and it's helped me out a lot," Barr said.

Ross plays at Toledo Whitmer on Thursday.

News-Messenger reports

TOLEDO — Erin Barr had four kills and eight points as Fremont Ross knocked off Toledo Whitmer 15-8, 15-7 in a Great Lakes League volleyball match Thursday.

Jessica Fick served for 10 points for the Little Giants, who improved to 9-9 overall and 5-3 in the GLL.

Sandusky 15-15, Ross 9-7

SANDUSKY — Fremont
Ross fell to 9-10 overall and 5-4 in the Great Lakes League with a 15-9, 15-7 loss at rival Sandusky.

Tiffany Garcia served for five points and Lindsay Cobb recorded four kills for the Little Giants.

Ross will host Findlay on Thursday at the Purple Pit.