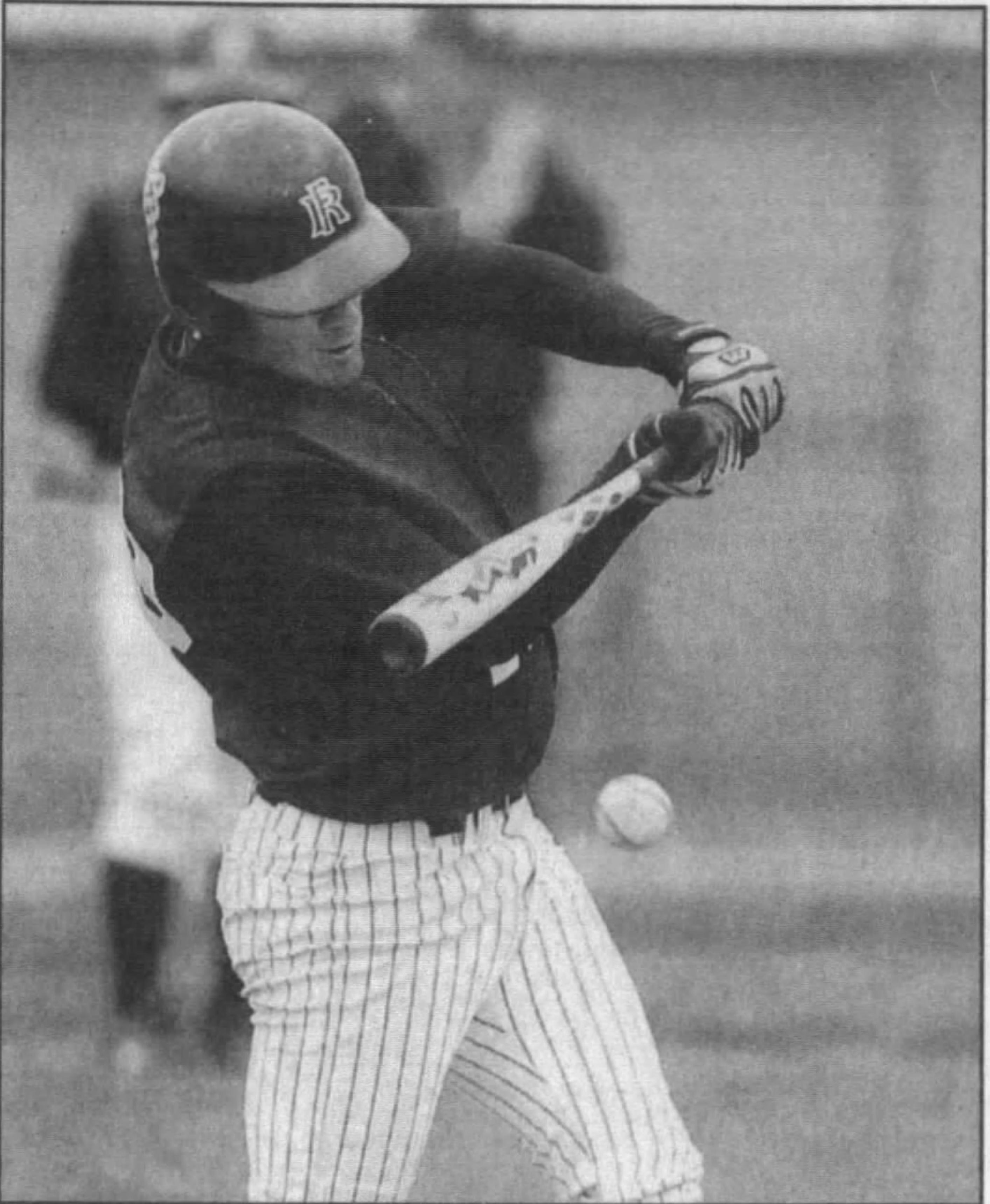


Little Giant seniors close home careers in style



News-Messenger/Charlie Longton/clongton@gannett.com

THE LITTLE Giants' Robbie Hall swings over a pitch in Saturday's GBC title clinching victory over Napoleon. Ross has won the GBC the last two years.

By KYLE TIMMONS
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Saturday was a day for the seniors on the final home baseball game at Alumni Field but it was the entire team that contributed in an 11-1 thumping of Napoleon as Fremont Ross won its second consecutive Greater Buckeye Conference title.

The Little Giants (19-6, 8-1), with seven seniors, were led by pitcher Mike Abbott who gave up just two hits in five innings while also serving up two hits. He also scored three times and drove in a run.

"All of us seniors came out at the beginning of the year and we all made goals to win the league and repeat ourselves from last year," said senior Billy Boukissen. "We really came out (Saturday) and made sure we got it done.

"It feels good to come out and prove ourselves again and prove that it wasn't a fluke last year."

Ross coach Andy Dennings echoed Boukissen's comments.

"It's a great feeling," Dennings said. "These kids have worked hard all year and it's nice to see us accomplish one of our team goals.

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"It's a great feeling. These kids have worked hard all year and it's nice to see us accomplish one of our team goals. They are a great group of kids and they came out and did what they were supposed to do."

— Little Giant coach Andy Dennings on his team's second straight GBC title.

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Ross took a 1-0 lead in the first on an RBI single by Kyle Cook, driving home Abbott who had reached on a fielder's choice.

The Little Giants then provided the offensive burst that sent the Wildcats reeling in the second as all nine starters got into the scoring act.

After Napoleon's pitcher Dustin Smith induced a ground out to open the inning, he proceeded to walk Kory Decker and followed by hitting Paul Hershey to put runners at first and second.

Cory Hull then knocked an RBI single to right between the first and second basemen before Boukissen drove a double to left center putting the Little Giants up 4-0.

Abbott continued the offensive attack ripping an RBI single to

left before Smith walked Aaron Opelt.

Cook again delivered with his second RBI of the game before Hall tallied the Little Giants final score of the inning as he hustled out an infield single.

Trent Logan and Decker each added a single in the inning as Ross led 8-0.

Abbott continued to get things done on the mound with the support of his defense.

"It was kind of hard to get warmed up because it was so cold and rainy," Abbott said. "I kind of found a groove after a little bit."

To open the third inning, Napoleon's Brandon Cramer hit a ball to shallow center which seemed to be on its way toward the Wildcats' first hit of the game but Opelt came out of nowhere and made a spectacu-

lar diving catch to provide the inning's first out.

"That was a great play," said Abbott.

Abbott continued about the support of his fellow teammates: "When someone has been down, someone's stepped up and picked them up. It's been great playing with them."

Abbott also received stellar support from the rest of the defensive cast including a nice stop by Hull on Napoleon's first single (infield hit) and later in the fourth on a line out in which Kirt Munson dove to his left to keep the ball from leaving the infield.

With the Little Giants in control at 10-1 Ross came to bat in its half of the fifth hoping to seal the conference championship.

Cook opened the inning with an infield single and moved to second on a grounder by Hall.

"I just went up and tried to hit the ball," Cook said. "The last couple games I hadn't had too many good at bats. I just went up and the pitches were outside and I just tried to take them the other way."

After a Munson out, Fremont's second in the inning, Decker drove in the game's final run to seal the deal. And a second straight league title.