

Little Giants think they have right combination

Better defense, hitting must support untested varsity pitching staff

BY JEFF ARENZ
Sports writer

FREMONT — The 2009 edition of the Fremont Ross High School varsity baseball team has a combination of experience and youth.

Eight lettermen return for coach Mark King, who in his first season guided the Little Giants to a 12-13 overall record and a 6-4 Greater Buckeye Conference mark in 2008.

On the flip side, Ross's untested pitching staff will need some time to develop.

Among the eight lettermen, five are position starters. Seniors Brad Woleslagel (catcher), Kodie Stout (center field), Josh Mendoza (third base) and sophomores Derek Aldrich (shortstop) and Jake Hiestand (second base) have established roles for the Little Giants.

"Brad is an experienced ballplayer who has been on the varsity level three years," King said. "I believe the catching position is the quarterback on our ballclub. He's going to handle a lot of our pitching and the set up of our defense."

Woleslagel, Ross's second-leading home run hitter last season, earned first team All-GBC at first base in 2008, while King's son, Jared, was a first-team All-GBC

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catcher before graduating to Ohio Northern University. Stout, a second-team All-GBC performer, was the catalyst to the Little Giants' offense from the lead-off spot. Mendoza, who hit .322 and collected 22 RBI in 2008, also gained All-GBC recognition.

Aldrich and Hiestand were brought up from the junior varsity level last season to solidify Ross's defense, which at times in 2008 was its greatest downfall. Aldrich moves over from third base to his regular position, shortstop, after junior Cody Foos decided not to play baseball this season.

"Derek came up about one-third of the way through the season and Jake came up at the mid-way point," King said. "Derek hit in the .290s and Jake hit in the .390s, and they both played great defense for us."

The Little Giants were averaging almost four errors a game at the start of the 2008 season.

"We think we're going to be very strong, defensively," King said. "I think it's going to be one of our big suits. We're preaching to our pitchers to let opposing teams put the ball in play because we will field it."

Senior Tyler Hasselbach could be a valuable asset for the Little Giants because he has the ability to be a designated hitter, play the corner outfield spots and serve as Woleslagel's backup at catcher. Juniors Jay Cominsky (first base) and Cory Rohrbacher (starting pitcher) return after getting some varsity experience last season.

Sophomore Allen Lewis (left field) and freshman T.J. Harkness (right field) are newcomers to the Ross varsity team who bring the dynamic of speed. They're going to aid Stout, who will have more help tracking down fly balls in the gap.

Stout, Lewis and Harkness also bring bases-tealing ability to the Little Giants' lineup.

Other players battling for time in the varsity lineup include Brandon Graeter (utility) and Derek Waggoner (catcher/infielder).

Dexter Foos and Cameron Hord will get a shot at the top two spots in the Little Giants' pitching rotation after the graduation of power hurler Ryan Damman and with the departure of Foos, another heat-thrower. Rohrbacher is penciled into the rotation's third spot.

"Pitching is going to be our question mark going into the season because it's unproven," King said. "Although we don't have a proven power pitcher, we have the depth of eight or nine guys who can hit their spots and mix up pitches."

Other players who may be put into a relief pitching role include Aldrich, Graeter, Harkness, Lewis, Mendoza, Stout and Woleslagel.

Hitting should be a strength for the Little Giants, who return experienced batters in the top six places in the order. Stout leads off, followed by Aldrich and the interchangeable power bats of Mendoza and Woleslagel in the No. 3-4 slots. Cominsky and Hiestand are penciled in next before the bottom third of the order is still being determined.

"I'm looking at Stephen, Brad and Josh to carry much of the offensive load for us," King said. "I think we have the capability to hit Nos. 1-9. We have different kinds of hitters, but each one of them can hit."

The Little Giants, who ended up in a second-place tie with Napoleon (14-11, 6-4), finished two games behind GBC champion Findlay (16-9, 8-2). Sandusky (8-15, 5-4) was fourth in the league standings, followed by Marion Harding (12-12, 3-6) and Lima Senior (1-20, 1-9).

Ross opens the 2009 season March 31, with a non-conference game at Delta at 4:30 p.m.



WOLESLAGEL



STOUT



MENDOZA

SEE LITTLE GIANTS I 7

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BASEBALL GIANTS SUFFER SETBACK

Brad Wolesslagel had two hits and drove in two runs but Fremont Ross's baseball team fell to Delta 5-3.

Josh Mendoza doubled and scored one run while Steven Stout had two hits and scored one run for the Little Giants.

HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL ■ PERKINS 9, FREMONT ROSS 1

Errors don't help Little Giants in non-league loss

BY JOHN CLEVINGER

News-Messenger correspondent

FREMONT- Despite a wonderful pitching performance by Cameron Hoard, the Fremont Ross baseball team surrendered 5 errors in the field, allowing 5 extra runs for the Perkins Pirates in a 9-1 non-conference win on Thursday.

"Cameron did a great job on the hill," said Ross coach Mark King. "For him to only give up four earned runs against a team with the caliber of Perkins says a lot. We just need to stop committing so many errors in the field. We can't expect a good outcome with four and five errors a game."

The scoring started for the Pi-

rates (2-0) in the first inning when Matt Gundlach scored on a past ball by the Giants (0-3) after three straight singles loaded the bases for the Pirates. Two more hits led to two more runs as the Pirates took a 3-0 lead after the first.

In the second, Little Giants pitcher Cameron Hoard settled down and started sitting the Pirates down. After striking out the first two hitters of the inning, Hoard then got Gundlach to ground out to short to end the inning and keep the game in reach for the Giants. Hoard took the loss for the Little Giants, going the distance with five strikeouts and three walks.

The trouble for the Giants would start in the third inning

where the defense committed three errors, but only allowing one run to make the Pirates lead 4-0.

"We did a lot of positive things today," said Hoard. "But, we still need to cut down on our errors. Perkins is a very tough team with very tough hitters."

Perkins scored consistently from the third inning to the seventh inning, scoring five more runs off of two more Ross errors. But a one run lead would have sufficed as Tyler Dix and the Pi-



HOARD

rates defense took care of the home half of baseball.

Dix, who is usually the team's number one catcher took a no-hitter into the sixth inning as the Pirates kept adding on the runs.

"Tyler had a very good game on the mound," said Perkins coach Ray Neill. "I'm also very proud of our outfield after today's game, it's so hard to play the field with the wind blowing like this."

"I just went out and threw strikes, and my defense did the rest for me," said Dix, who took the win for the Pirates, pitching five innings with three strikeouts, one walk and one hit surrendered.

The Little Giants bats didn't get anything going until the sixth inning when lead-off hitter Jake Hi-

estand singled to end the no-hit campaign and later scored to cut the Perkins lead to 8-1.

"Jake is a very coachable player. He learns a lot and is very aggressive at the plate, and that's what were looking for in our lead-off man," King said. "Every game he gives us his all, he's always giving 110 percent."

After losing the no-hitter in the sixth, Spencer Bryant came in relief for Dix. He pitched two innings two walks and three hits.

"We're a young team that makes young mistakes," said King. "I'm extremely confident in my players that we will right this ship. It only takes one night for things to change, we just need to play better defense."

Ross posts victory; SJCC, Woodmore slice twin bill

News-Messenger reports

FREMONT — Dexter Foos scattered four hits and the Fremont Ross offense erupted for 12 runs as the Little Giants won their first baseball game in 2009 on Saturday at Alumni Field.

Ross (1-3 overall), which played as the visiting team on its home field, knocked off non-conference foe Huron 12-1 in a five-inning game that was originally scheduled as an away doubleheader.

"We're extremely relieved to get that first victory," Ross coach Mark King said. "We had to right our ship after making 14 errors in our first three games. The defense played errorless baseball Saturday."

Foos (1-1) allowed one earned and walked one with six strikeouts. He was backed by an offense that featured three hits from Jake Hiestand, two hits apiece from Josh Mendoza, Derek Waggoner and T.J. Harkness. One of Waggoner's hits was a double.

The Little Giants grabbed a 6-0 lead after one-half inning and led 9-1 after three. Ross tallied three more runs in the final two frames for the win.

Hiestand, Mendoza, Harkness



FOOS



HIESTAND

and Brandon Graeter all scored two runs apiece. Mendoza and Allen Lewis each drove in a pair of runs.

"This team has too much young talent young to keep making mistakes," King said. "It was a matter of time before we became aggressive and made plays to pick up our first victory."

Ross returns to the diamond at 4:30 p.m. today at Fostoria.

SJCC 5-1, WOODMORE 3-2

WOODVILLE — St. Joseph Central Catholic split a non-conference doubleheader against Woodmore on Saturday.

In Game 1, Travis Walker threw a complete game 5-3 win for the Crimson Streaks (3-2 overall), allowing three runs (one earned)

SEE ROUNDUP | B2



Jonathon Bird | News-Messenger

Fremont Ross' Cameron Hord pitches against Port Clinton on Wednesday. Hord got the win for the Little Giants.

Little Giants rally, beat Redskins

BY KEVIN SHIELDS

News-Messenger correspondent

FREMONT — Staying aggressive at the plate is something Ross baseball coach Mark King has been trying to stress to his young team.

In the fifth inning on Wednesday against Port Clinton, the Little Giants finally started to get aggressive at the dish. After falling behind in counts early on and not swinging at strikes, Ross got bolder with the aluminum in their half of the inning, plating three unearned runs to break a tie on the way to a 5-2 victory.

All of those fifth inning runs came off the bat of Ross catcher Brad Woleslagel, who hit a three-run homer after two PC errors kept the inning alive. The senior took a first pitch fastball from the Redskins' Matthiessen Nisch Quan over the fence in left for his lone hit, as he would finish 1-for-3.

A total of six different batters would record hits for the Little Giants (2-3), who had three hits in their final two at bats after hav-

PHOTO GALLERY

For more photos from the game, visit www.thenews-messenger.com

ing just three base knocks through four.

"We have to stay aggressive and put the ball in play," King said. "I thought we sat on our heels and had some bad approaches at the plate today, but then Brad stepped up in the fifth and got aggressive and gave us a huge lift."

Ross's inability to hit was backed up, though, by solid defense and pitching. The Little Giants defense helped strand eight Redskins (1-4) runners to just four for Ross.

Cameron Hord (1-1) went the distance for the Little Giants, picking up win No. 1 on the season, allowing just two runs on five hits with six strikeouts. He was backed up by a defense that committed just two errors — a reason for coach King to be excited.

"Our defense killed us the first three games of the year," King said.

"The last two games now (both wins) we've had a total of two errors.

"We've been preaching defense to this team the whole time ... we don't have a pitching staff who is going to throw it by everyone. We need to throw strikes and play solid defense to be successful as a team and that's what we did today."

The Ross defense kept PC off the board in its first two at bats, allowing a struggling offense a chance to gain an early lead.

Derek Waggoner reached on a walk to open just ahead of Derek Aldrich, who ripped a double to left center to put two runners in scoring position. Two batters and two outs later, both were brought home on a two-RBI single by T.J. Harkness, as Ross took a 2-0 lead.

PC answered back quickly however, plating two runs in the top of the third. Josh Fravel and Nisch Quan both recorded RBI in the inning, as the Redskins evened the game up at 2-2.

Redskin starter Derek Colston and Hord would then retire six of the next seven batters to keep the game scoreless.

Colston would go four innings giving up two runs on three hits with four strikeouts and three walks for PC. He gave way to Nisch Quan, who threw the final two innings and was eventually saddled with the loss allowing three runs (all unearned) on three hits with a strikeout.

"I thought our pitchers pitched real well," Port Clinton coach Tracy Bodi said. "We gave two runs the one inning and then the home run, but I thought Derek (Colston) and Matthiessen (Nisch Quan) both threw well."

Nisch Quan wasn't helped though in his effort, Ross got their fifth going thanks to dropped fly ball in center field. A fielder's choice and base hit later, Ross had two on with one out. Josh Mendoza then hit into another fielder's choice to third, but after making an unassisted putout, PC's Cody Gray misfired a throw across to first allowing the inning to stay alive for Woleslagel.

"We aren't hitting good enough to give teams extra outs," Bodi said of the errors.



Jennifer Young-Bower | News-Messenger correspondent

Fremont Ross's Derek Waggoner covers first base during a game against Bowling Green on Thursday at Alumni Fields.

Bobcats rally, beat Little Giants

BY JEFF ARENZ
Sports writer

FREMONT — Bowling Green hitters blasted Fremont Ross relievers Cory Rohrbacher and Derek Aldrich during the sixth and seventh innings of a 12-4 non-conference victory Thursday at Alumni Fields.

The Bobcats (4-1 overall) broke a 4-all tie in the sixth by plating eight runs on nine hits in the final two innings. Bowling Green's rally came as Fremont Ross (2-4 overall) appeared to have the momentum after Derek Waggoner hit a two-run home run in the fifth to knot the game at four.

"Our last two pitchers got the ball down the middle of the plate flat," Fremont Ross coach Mark King said. "You have to credit Bowling Green for turning on the ball and putting it all over the

field."

Kendrick Hemle and Nick Rodesky did most of the damage against the Little Giants. They combined for six of the Bobcats' 16 hits, including a pair of home runs — in the fifth (a two-run shot by Hemle off Rohrbacher) and seventh (a three-run bomb by Rodesky off Aldrich).

"In those earlier innings, I knew that our hitters were just missing and were hitting the ball right at some guys. We just couldn't seem to find the open areas," Bowling Green coach Doug Merrill said. "What changed in the last half of the game is we started



FOOS

to find the gaps."

Ross starting pitcher Dexter Foos threw four solid innings and left with a 2-1 lead after pitching to a pair of Bowling Green hitters in the fifth. King decided to bring in Rohrbacher after Foos allowed a double to Rodesky and walked Tony Dible.

Hemle's shot capped a three-run fifth that handed Bowling Green a 4-2 lead. It came one hitter after the Little Giants failed to turn a possible inning-ending double play, which allowed Derek Batt to reach on a throwing error and Rodesky to tie the contest at 2.

Waggoner's two-run blast to left field also plated Brad Woleslagel as Ross rallied with out in its fifth, when the Little Giants forced a 4-all deadlock.

But Matt Milligan and Caleb Roe hit back-to-back RBI-dou-

bles in the Bowling Green sixth and Roe scored on Rohrbacher's wild pitch as the Bobcats grabbed a 7-4 lead.

Aldrich relieved Rohrbacher in the seventh, but served up a Rodesky's three-run blast that cleared the wall in deep left-center field. Batt and Hemle added RBI-singles for Bowling Green, which took an eight-run cushion after 6½ innings.

"I need to take away some positives every night," King said. "Defensively, we're improving every night and we swung the bats better than we did yesterday. And Dexter through a great game for four innings. He's earned the right to be our No. 1 pitcher and I needed to save him for the conference game against Findlay on

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LITTLE GIANTS FROM B1

Tuesday.”

Foos, who gave up two runs (one earned) in four innings, pitched himself into and out of trouble.

Matt Ruehl led off the game with a first-inning triple and scored on Joe Sickler's infield ground-out. But Foos had a 1-2-3 second frame and struck out Batt on a changeup with the bases loaded in the third.

Lead-off hitter Stephen Stout electrified the Little Giants in the first by driving a solo home run to left field. Ross broke a 1-all tie in the fourth, when a sacrifice fly off the bat of T.J. Harkness plated Tyler Hasselbach.

Milligan, who relieved Bobcats' starter Tony Dible, earned the victory by pitching scoreless frames in the sixth and seventh innings.

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Strong pitching lifts Little Giants to win

BY JEFF ARENZ
Sports writer

SANDUSKY — It wasn't pretty, but Fremont Ross outlasted Sandusky 10-8 in a Greater Buckeye Conference baseball game Friday at Jaycee Park.

Little Giants reliever Cameron Hord pitched out of a no-out, bases-loaded jam in the sixth inning before throwing a 1-2-3 seventh frame to help Ross improve to 3-4 overall and 1-0 in the GBC.

"I walked in there, I hit the first guy and I didn't know what to think," Hord said. "Then, I knew the team was counting on me. So, I had to step up."

Hord, who relieved starter Dexter Foos, entered the game with none out in the sixth, Sandusky runners at first and second and the Little Giants leading 10-5. Hord loaded the bases by hitting

Mike Drake and allowed an RBI single to Trey Keegan before Eric Jordan and Alan Rhodes reached on two of the six errors committed by Little Giants' infielders.

Tony Jones, Kendrick Aaron and Drake scored unearned runs as the Blue Streaks cut the Ross lead to 10-8.

But Hord began to settle down. After rebounding to strikeout Cameron Weaver and Davion Caston, Hord forced Seth Perdue into hitting an infield popup between the mound and the third base line.

"Once I got the confidence going, I was pumped to get out there in the seventh inning and finish them up," said Hord, who earned his first save of the season after making two starts.

Sandusky fell to 5-4 overall and 0-1 in the GBC. Of the eight runs

scored by the Blue Streaks, only three were earned.

"This is what we needed, even though it wasn't a pretty victory," Ross coach Mark King said. "It

was a very well-pitched game by our pitchers. I'm very satisfied with them because they did a fantastic job (pitching around extra baserunners and out of trouble)."

Blue Streaks coach Matt Martin agreed it was a sloppy game on both sides.

"It seemed like neither team wanted to win," Martin said. "We can't make those errors, especially since the kids know they



HORD

have to make those plays."

Ross built a 5-0 after 2 1/2 innings without the aid of a hit. Sandusky starter Zak Esposito hit a pair of Little Giants, issued four walks and was the victim of his defense, which committed six errors, including two miscues apiece in the second and third innings.

The Blue Streaks made it 5-3 in the third on a double by Aaron and RBI-singles from Keegan and Rhodes, who, with runners at the corners, intentionally got into a run down to allow Jordan to score.

A double from T.J. Harkness and RBI singles from Jay Cominsky and Derek Aldrich produced three runs and an 8-3 Ross lead in the fourth. But Brady Smith and Marcus Cobbs scored Sandusky runs on Aaron's two-run single in the bottom half of the frame.

The Little Giants grabbed a 9-5 lead after Stephen Stout hit a double to deep center field in the fifth and scored when Jake Hiestand reached on an error. It became 10-5 Ross on Derek Waggoner's RBI single.

Foos earned the win for the Little Giants by lasting five innings, allowing seven runs (three earned runs) on four hits with five walks and five strikeouts.

"I'm preaching to my team that we need to improve every night, and we did that on the mound and at the plate," King said. "This is a young team that is loaded with talent."

Ross hosts Defiance and Tiffin Columbian in a split doubleheader at 11 a.m. today at Alumni Fields.

E-mail Jeff Arenz at arenzj@gannett.com.

DEFIANCE 5, FREMONT ROSS 4

FREMONT ROSS 14, TIFFIN COLUMBIAN 2

FREMONT — A split doubleheader for Fremont Ross produced a split decision for the Little Giants at Alumni Fields on Saturday.

Defiance led 4-1 after two innings and 5-2 after four frames before Ross's two-run fifth-inning rally fell short.

Brad Wolesslagel hit a home run and drove in two runs for the Little Giants, who received two hits from Derek Aldrich. Cameron Hord suffered the pitching loss after allowing five runs on five hits in four innings.

The Little Giants, who improved to 4-5 overall after drub-

bing Tiffin Columbian, led 10-1 after three innings.

Allen Lewis earned the pitching win by working five innings, allowing two runs on two hits with seven strikeouts.

Derek Waggoner and Josh Mendoza led Ross's 16-hit attack with three hits each. Aldrich, T.J. Harkness and Jake Hiestand chipped in two hits apiece. Wolesslagel knocked in three runs and hit a double.

OAK HARBOR 7-6, DANBURY 3-7

Alex Bores allowed one earned run while striking out one and walking two in seven innings as Oak Harbor's baseball team beat Danbury 7-3 in Game 1 of a doubleheader.

The Rockets' Phil O'Shea and

BASEBALL FROM B1

(double), Jay Cominsky, Josh Mendoza, Brandon Graeter and Derek Aldrich.

“At the plate, we’re taking aggressive swings,” King said.

Ross led 4-0 after three innings before the Little Giants erupted for three fourth-inning tallies.

Dexter Foos threw five shutout innings before yielding three earned runs to the Wildcats in the final two frames. He allowed nine hits and three walks with five strikeouts in a complete game victory.

Little Giants reach .500 after stopping Napoleon

News-Messenger reports

FREMONT — The Fremont Ross Little Giants won a 7-3 decision against Napoleon during a Greater Buckeye Conference baseball game Thursday at Alumni Fields.

Ross (5-5 overall, 2-0 GBC) has rebounded to capture five victories in its last seven games after beginning the season 0-3.

“Our young lineup has been getting better and better with each game,” Ross coach Mark King said. “We’re starting to play

tough defense after having three stellar diving catches against Napoleon. The kids are buying into what the coaches are sell-

ing to them because they are gaining confidence.

And the bottom line is that this didn’t panic after the 0-3 start.”

Brad Woleslagel and Jake Hiestand each had two hits in the Lit-

tle Giants’ 10-hit attack. The other hits came from T.J. Harkness (double), Stephen Stout



HIESTAND



WOLESLAGEL

SEE BASEBALL | B2

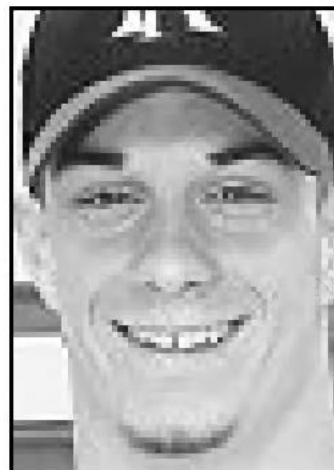
BASEBALL

Brad Woleslagel homered and knocked in five runs as the Fremont Ross baseball team run-ruled Lima Senior 12-1 in a Greater Buckeye Conference matchup Friday.

Alan Lewis went the distance for the Little Giants (6-5, 3-0 GBC), striking out one, walking four and hitting three batters.

TJ Harkness went 2-for-4 with a double, two runs and an RBI. Stephen Stout scored three runs, and Jake Hiestand scored a run and knocked another in. Brandon Graeter went 2-for-2 with a run and an RBI.

"I think we're starting to gell as a team," said Ross coach Mark King. "Our defensive intensity has picked up and we're having aggressive at-bats and that turns into wins."



WOESLAGEL

SPLIT FROM B1

second with a solo home run. He was the only hitter on either team to hit a home run in each game and was walked during his final three times at the plate.

Despite going 0-for-1, Diefenthaler walked four times and scored the go-ahead run for the Rockets on an infield groundout by Phil O'Shea in the second. O'Shea went on to collect

a single and an RBI double.

Oak Harbor (6-6 overall) received a balanced attack with five different hitters having two hits apiece. In addition to O'Shea, Warnke and Alex Pavlica each had a single and a double, Grof and D.J. Everett each hit two singles. Dillon Stiger added second-inning single.

"You have to give Oak Harbor credit for hitting the ball," King said. "It was like playing in Candlestick

Park (the former home stadium of the San Francisco Giants, which was known for having swirling wind patterns). I think both teams benefitted from a few wind-blown hits."

Harkness, Stout and Cominsky led Ross (7-6 overall) at the plate with each collecting a single and a double. Graeter, who had five hits in the twin-bill, including a pair of singles in the nightcap, is 7-

for-8 during his last three games.

Hiestand added a double for the Little Giants, while Rohrbacher chipped in a single.

Warnke picked up the pitching victory in relief of Everett, who lasted only 1 1/3 innings and allowed five earned runs on five hits with one walk and three strikeouts. Warnke was more effective for Oak Harbor, giving up two earned runs on five hits

with one walk and four strikeouts in 3 2/3 innings.

The Rockets chased Ross starter Mendoza from the mound after 2 innings. He gave up nine runs (eight earned runs) on nine hits with three walks and one strikeout.

Harkness worked two relief innings before Aldrich threw one relief frame.

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Ross splits with Rockets

BY JEFF ARENZ
Sports writer

FREMONT — A stiff wind to left field created havoc for pitchers and fielders while Fremont Ross and Oak Harbor hitters teed off during a non-conference baseball doubleheader Saturday at Alumni Fields.

The result was a split for the Little Giants and Rockets, who played a pair of 10-run rule contests. Ross recorded a 15-5 win in Game 1 before Oak Harbor posted an 18-7 victory in Game 2.

The teams combined for 45 runs and 47 hits in 10 innings. Amazingly, just four errors were committed.

GAME 1

The bottom half of the Little Giants' batting order generated 10 hits and scored 10 runs, helping Ross to overcome a 2-0 deficit after one-half inning with a pair of five-run frames in the second and third.

No. 6 hitter Jake Hiestand collected three singles and No. 9 hitter Brandon Graeter ripped a single, a double and a triple in three at-bats as the Little Giants built a 10-3 lead after three innings and a 13-4 edge through four frames. No. 8 hitter Tyler Hasselbach went 2-for-2 with a second-inning two-run home run and a fourth-inning single. No. 7 hitter Josh Mendoza added a single and a double for Ross.

Little Giants' Stephen Stout and T.J. Harkness combined for seven RBI. No. 2 hitter Stout drove in four runners, two on a second-inning triple and two with a third-inning home run. Lead-off hitter Harkness cleared the bases with a three-run, third-inning double.

Derek Aldrich (single, double) and Brad Waggoner (two singles) each added two hits for Ross.

Cory Rohrbacher was the winning pitcher after scattering five runs and seven hits over five innings. He walked two and struck out three. Alex Bores took the loss by allowing nine earned runs on nine hits in 2 1/3 innings. He walked one and struck out none before being relieved by Greg Diefenthaler.

"In Game 1, we had good intensity and great at-bats," Ross coach Mark King said. "Cory did what he had to do to get a win for us. These kids are starting to develop into what we want and they are seeing success."

Despite starting 0-3 this season, the Little Giants 7-3 during their last 10 games. Ross hitters



Doug Hise | News-Messenger correspondent
Fremont Ross shortstop Derek Aldrich throws to third to try and pick off Oak Harbor's lead runner during Game 2 of a non-conference doubleheader Saturday at Alumni Fields.

did not strikeout once during Game 1.

Anthony Lattimore had two hits — a single and a solo home run — for Oak Harbor, which received a single and a double from Diefenthaler. Josh Warnke tripled and scored in the third, while Ryan Groff singled during the Rockets' two-run first and Damion McAtee hit an RBI single in the fifth.

"In Game 1, Ross hit the ball well and their bats found the holes and, in Game 2, we hit the ball well and our bats found the holes," Oak Harbor coach Rob Schmoeller said. "That's about all you can say about a day like this. It was really tough to play defense, but we didn't commit any errors."

The Little Giants had one error in Game 1 and three more in Game 2.

GAME 2

The Little Giants grabbed a 3-2 lead after one inning, but the Rockets answered with 11 tallies during their next two frames. Oak Harbor, which was ahead 13-5 after three innings, was in control for much of the game.

Lattimore tied the contest at 3 by leading off the Oak Harbor

SEE SPLIT | B4

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS ROUNDUP

Ross baseball, softball teams top GBC ladder

News-Messenger reports

MARION — Leading 7-6 after five innings, Fremont Ross broke open a Greater Buckeye Conference game at Marion Harding on Tuesday.

The Little Giants scored four times in the sixth to take a five-run edge before securing an 11-7 win against the Presidents during a game that was moved to Marion because of wet field conditions in Fremont.

Ross improved to 8-6 overall and tops the GBC with a 4-0 record.

T.J. Harkness, Josh Mendoza and Derek Aldrich all went 2-for-3 for the Little Giants. Mendoza added two RBI and Aldrich knocked in three runs and hit a double. Jay Cominsky had an RBI for Ross, which received a pair of RBI from Jake Hiestand.

Little Giants' pitcher Dexter Foos fired a complete game victory, allowing six earned runs on nine hits with five walks and four strikeouts.

SOFTBALL

Fremont Ross 2, Marion Harding 0

MARION — Fremont Ross plated two runs in the first inning and made them stand up during a Greater Buckeye Conference victory at Marion Harding on Tuesday.

Jordyn Gallagher threw a six-hit shutout for the Little Giants, allowing one walk and striking out eight.

Christy Meggitt and Casey Clark (1-for-3) scored runs for Ross, while Tayler Redinger went 1-for-3 with an RBI. McKenzie Schneider lifted the Little Giants' five-hit attack with a pair of singles and Tashia Novitsky chipped in a hit.

Ross improved to 8-5 overall and is tied with Findlay atop the GBC standings with a 4-0 mark.

EASTWOOD 12, LAKOTA 1

PEMBERVILLE — Eastwood

SEE ROUNDUP | B4

ROSS FROM B1

T.J. Harkness and Brad Woleslagel would both collect two RBI in the inning, as the Streaks led 6-5 after four. Harkness would finish 2-for-4, while Woleslagel finished 2-for-3 with a double and a team-leading three RBI.

After Sandusky re-upped its lead with two runs in the top of the fifth, Ross took a 10-8 lead with another five-run inning.

"We hoping to get (Ross) down and keep them down, but they're a good team," said Sandusky coach Matt Martin. "It felt good to jump out on them early ... we tried to play a little small-ball after that and it shot us in the foot a bit."

Down two runs the Streaks plated a single run on Foos in the sixth, while new relief pitcher Brady Smith kept Ross at bay for the final two and 2/3 innings.

"We're 4-1 in the league and tied with them," said King. "So we're far from out of the league ... we just need to get back at it next week."

Little Giants' league lead evaporates with loss

BY KEVIN SHIELDS

News-Messenger correspondent

The Fremont Ross baseball team may look back at the end of the season and wish it had the first two innings back of Friday's game with Greater Buckeye Conference rival Sandusky.

Ross, leading the GBC coming into the game, spotted the second-place Blue Streaks six runs (four unearned) in the first two innings before battling back to tie Sandusky, and then take the lead. Unfortunately for the Little Giants, though, a two-run top of the seventh for Sandusky would wind up being too much to overcome, as Ross fell 11-10 and saw its league lead expire.

"We didn't come out prepared," said Ross coach Mark

King. "You can't come out in a game like this with all these conference ramifications on the line and spot a team like (Sandusky) six runs — especially a team that plays as well as they play."

A costly throwing error by Ross third baseman Josh Mendoza on a ball hit by Trey Keegan brought the game-winning run across for Sandusky. Zak Esposito, who led off the Sandusky innings with a walk, was able to come around and score from second as Mendoza's throw to first sailed over the head of first baseman Jay Cominsky.

The game-winning play for the Streaks (12-5, 4-1) came one play after Mike Drake tied the game at 10 all with an RBI-double to left.

"Walking the lead-off guy and

then giving up the double down the left field line was heart-breaking," said King.

"To come back and be three outs away from a big victory ... it was tough to let things slip.

"But I'm extremely proud of my kids that they came back and that they fought all the way back to not only tie it, but take the lead."

Still it was the first two innings that cost the Little Giants (8-7, 4-1) the most. Errors, something the Little Giants haven't had cost them games since the beginning



WOLESLAGEL

of the year, would be the main culprit.

Ross starter Cameron Hord, coming back from injury, would take the brunt of those errors, giving up six runs (two earned) on six hits with two strikeouts.

However, Hord would allow a single base hit to the first four batters of the game for the Streaks, as the Ross infield mis-played two groundballs.

The Streaks scored four unearned runs in the first and added two more runs in the second to lead 6-0 after two.

"Bottom line is we didn't make plays behind Cameron," said King. "He's out of the first inning with no runs with we make three plays."

"We haven't had mistakes in

the field like that the last 10 games and that's exactly what we did the first three games — give teams extra outs and extra opportunities."

Dexter Foos would relieve Hord in the third and pitch the final five innings for the Little Giants allowing five runs (four earned) on five hits. He would be saddled with the loss despite putting up zeros in the third and fourth innings that allowed Ross to cut the lead to one.

After facing just 14 batters thru three innings, Sandusky's Esposito, would finally be touched up by the Ross offense in the fourth. He would allow all five runs (four earned) and four hits against him in the inning.

SEE ROSS I B2

FREMONT ROSS 7, FINDLAY 6 FREMONT ROSS 19, MARION HARDING 9 (5 INNINGS)

FREMONT — The season came to a close for Fremont Ross, which ended with a pair of victories against Greater Buckeye Conference opponents.

The Little Giants topped Findlay on Friday at Alumni Fields before using the 10-run rule to knock off Marion Harding on Saturday in Fremont.

Statistics of these games can be found in The Scoreboard on this page. Ross ends its season 10-13 overall and 6-4 versus the GBC.