

AREA HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL PREVIEWS

Here comes the sun



News-Messenger/Ben French

FREMONT ROSS senior baseball players, clockwise from far left, Gabe Sanchez, Josh Harnish, Adam Garcia, Dash Yost, Jake Halm, Nick Oprie, Jered Kingsborough and Clint Coonrod will lead the Little Giants at the Westminster National Classic next week in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Little Giants fly south for prestigious tournament

By TIMOTHY R. WOLFRUM
Sports editor

Now that snow has kept the Fremont Ross baseball team inside for most of the preseason, the Little Giants figure the weather might as well just stay cold and wet until they catch an Easter flight to the Sunshine State.

"I want it to keep snowing, so it's snow-covered when we leave and 80 (degrees) when we get to Florida," Ross senior captain Dash Yost said Thursday.

Said classmate and fellow captain Jered Kingsborough, "I cannot wait to get out of here. You can count on one hand the number of times we've been able to get outside this season."

The temperature climbed into the low 80s Thursday in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., the site of the fourth annual Westminster National Classic. Ross will compete as one of 16 high school teams

Clyde scrimmaging Ohio's top programs

News-Messenger reports

IRONTON —There isn't much area baseball teams can do about the soggy weather — except get up and leave.

The Clyde baseball team has done just that by kicking off the upcoming season with a southern twang.

The Fliers left Wednesday afternoon for the Ohio-Kentucky border for a three-day, four-scrimmage trip against

some of Ohio's storied baseball programs.

It is the first preseason trip for Clyde's baseball team in nearly 20 years.

"Last year at our coaches meeting, we looked at the list of state champions in Ohio the last 10 years. We saw a group of them in this area and planned a trip," Fliers assistant coach Mick Gooding said.

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in the prestigious tournament, which opens Monday. It will be the Little Giants' first trip to a Florida

tournament in the seven-year tenure of head coach Chuck Lindsey.

"I've been trying to get

something like this accomplished since I took over the program," Lindsey said. "It's pretty exciting for the kids with the competition we'll be playing against.

"We're on a mission to go down and compete to get ready for the GLL (Great Lakes League)."

The Ross players raised money for their airfare by selling advertising for game programs, the school's first alumni baseball game and a golf outing. Private donations covered the remainder of the cost of lodging and meals.

The Little Giants will leave for Florida at 7:30 a.m. Sunday and return at about 7 p.m. April 7.

The tournament is run by Westminster Academy head coach Rich Hoffman, who coached Texas Rangers star Alex Rodriguez at another Florida high school. The Lions are the most decorated team in the tourney, having

won three USA Today national championships.

The event, which attracts schools from six states and the District of Columbia, also features Pleasure Ridge Park, a Louisville school that claimed three consecutive Kentucky state titles in the 1990s. The only other Ohio school participating is Toledo St. John's.

The tournament also offers exposure for top players. Fifty of the competitors in the 2000 and 2001 classics received college scholarships or were drafted by a major league team.

"As a team, we think we're one of the best teams around here. We want to compete against other good teams," said Yost, an All-GLL second baseman. "It's also a great opportunity for those who want to go on and be seen by college and pro scouts."

See ROSS, B2

Ross headed for Fort Lauderdale

Continued From B1

Ross will open at 10 a.m. Tuesday against St. John's College High School out of Washington, D.C. The Cadets return 11 lettermen and five pitchers from last season's 23-5 team. The baseball program is 215-53 since 1993.

St. John's College was scheduled to have played eight games by the time of the tournament. By contrast, Ross has played neither a scrimmage nor a real game.

"There is a disadvantage, but this is something the kids will talk about for the rest of their lives," Lindsey said. "They're going down to win it."

Yost agreed, "Why not take it all? But if we could open some eyes about Fremont Ross baseball, that would be good, too."

The Little Giants are anticipating a strong season. They return nine letterwinners, including seven seniors, from last season's 13-12 team. The team's top three pitchers in seniors Clint Coonrod, Adam Garcia and Josh Harnish are back after combining for nine victories.

Ross hopes to ride its pitching and defense, especially until the hitters get used to facing live pitchers. Every tournament game counts on the Little Giants' record.

"There's not a great pitcher, but I think I have nine guys who can go out and get the ball over the plate," Lindsey said. "And I think the strength of our team is our defense."

"If we play the best we can, the wins and losses will take care of themselves. I don't see anything but positives coming out of this."

Said Kingsborough, the team's catcher, "This whole team has been playing together since we were 12. After all the work we've put in, we want to have a great season."

Ross wins Florida opener

Harnish spins shutout; three-time national champ up next

News-Messenger reports

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — Senior pitcher Josh Harnish and a flawless defense got the Fremont Ross baseball team off to a scintillating start Tuesday at the Westminster Academy National Classic.

Harnish fired a two-hit shutout as the Little Giants recorded a 2-0 victory over St. John's College High School of Washington, D.C.

The Ross defense committed no errors and turned three double plays during its first game of the season.

"He pitched an outstanding game," Fremont Ross head coach Chuck Lindsey said of Harnish,



HARNISH

who struck out three batters. "It was a great effort by everybody."

The Little Giants advanced to play the tourney hosts, Westminster Academy, in the marque game of the day at 7:30 p.m. today. Westminster, a three-time USA Today national champion, defeated East Bullitt, Ky., 10-0, Tuesday to improve to 21-0 on the season.

"I think our players respect them, but they don't fear them," Lindsey said of Westminster.

The Ross bats weren't quite as powerful as its gloves Tuesday. The Little Giants recorded just five hits.

Senior second baseman Dash Yost went 2-for-4 and scored both runs. Yost tallied the first run in the first inning on a single by Jared Dickman. He came around in the fourth inning on a hit by John Franks.

Franks, a sophomore who is normally the team's third baseman, was pressed into catching duties Tuesday after Jered Kingsborough injured his back during a home-run hitting contest.

"I was confident he could do

it," Lindsey said. "Harnish is a tough pitcher to catch. I thought he did an outstanding job."

Kingsborough hopes to return for today's game.

Lindsey said his team has been focused on the task at hand despite the wonderful weather in Fort Lauderdale. Ross practiced Monday afternoon after arriving late Sunday.

"I was wondering if the kids just came down here for fun, but we went out yesterday and had the best practice we've had since I've been at Fremont Ross," he said.

See BETTSVILLE, B3

Garza's bat lifts Little Giants

Ross plays for fifth place in Westminster tourney today

News-Messenger reports

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — Freshman first baseman Joey Garza drove home the winning run in the bottom of the seventh inning Thursday as Fremont Ross won its second game in the Westminster National Baseball Classic.

Garza's blast into left-center field scored Jared Dickman from second base with the deciding tally in a 5-4 victory over Great Bridge (Va.).

"Joey Garza will never, ever forget that," Ross head coach Chuck Lindsey said. "It was really great to see him step up like that."



GARZA

The Little Giants are 2-1 in the prestigious tournament.

They will play for fifth place in the 16-team event by facing M.S. Douglas of Florida at 1 p.m. today.

Ross, which fell 5-3 to three-time national champ and tourney host Westminster Academy on Wednesday night, is holding its own against the country's top high school programs.

"They look at us funny down here," Lindsey said. "We're the smallest team down here with 13 players. Everybody else has 25 players and 10 coaches. It's a first-class operation."

"They're not doing everything I would like, but they're playing really well."

John Franks picked up the victory Thursday by pitching a scoreless inning of relief. Clint Coonrod started and went 4½ innings; Gabe Sanchez pitched 1½ innings.

Ross recorded only four hits. Garza knocked in three runs,

Franks two. Dickman and Kyle Hintze scored two runs apiece.

On Wednesday, Little Giants pitchers walked 11 batters and wasted a chance to knock off undefeated Westminster Academy (22-0). The game was tied at 3 after three innings, but Ross pitchers walked in the final two runs of the game.

Sanchez absorbed the loss in relief of starter Adam Garcia. Hintze led the offense with two hits. Dash Yost knocked in a pair of runs.

"I was proud of the way we hung in there," Lindsey said. "We hit the ball around a little bit, but we didn't come up with the big play."

Spring Sports Roundup

Ross settles for sixth; Clyde upends Streaks

News-Messenger reports

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — The Fremont Ross baseball team settled for sixth place at the Westminster National Baseball Classic by dropping a 3-0 decision to M.S. Douglas on Friday in the tournament finale.

Little Giants pitcher Josh Harnish deserved a better fate. Three Ross errors led to all three of M.S. Douglas' unearned runs.

Harnish, who fired a shutout Tuesday in the first game of the tourney, allowed seven hits while striking out two and walking one.

The Little Giants were pleased with their 2-2 record and sixth-place finish in the 16-team tournament. M.S. Douglas is 23-2 and won the big-school Florida state title last season.

"Everybody down here has been impressed with our kids," Ross head coach Chuck Lindsey said. "We're as good as anybody down here. We're looking for good things when we get back."

Ross collected six hits by six different players. Doug Hinkle doubled for the Little Giants.

Lindsey said his team planned to practice twice today before packing up to head back to Ohio on Sunday. Ross travels to perennial Great Lakes League power Oregon Clay on Wednesday.

Clyde 5, St. Joe 2

CLYDE — Snowy weather cut the game to five innings, but not before the Clyde baseball team pulled out a non-league victory over St. Joseph Central Catholic on Friday.

Flier Jake Keegan pitched all five innings for the triumph. He allowed two hits and struck out seven Crimson Streaks. SJCC's Mike Lento took the loss.

Clyde's John Meggett was 2-for-3, while Dale Churchill and Bill Waugaman each had a double.

The cold weather slowed Clyde's bats.

"We had plenty of guys on base, but we didn't move them," Fliers head coach Terry Miracle said. "We need to get better at situational hitting. I was disappointed with our hitting, but overall we played well."

Clyde (2-0) travels to Bellevue today. The Crimson Streaks (0-2) travel to Woodmore today for a doubleheader.

Old Fort 5, Arcadia 1

ARCADIA — Old Fort broke a 1-1 tie with four runs in the fourth inning to secure a non-league win over Arcadia.

Scott Rathfelder was 2-for-4 with an RBI to lead the Stockaders. He also scored a pair of runs and swiped two bases.

Old Fort pitcher Matt Hoke recorded the win, going seven innings surrendering five hits and had four strikeouts.

The Stockaders (2-1) open Midland Athletic League play on Monday at Fostoria St. Wendelin.

Port Clinton 6, Bettsville 1

PORT CLINTON — Tom Estep's bloop to right field scored Chris Mazur with the winning run as the Redskins claimed a game shortened to five innings by heavy snow.

Port Clinton (1-1) trailed 5-2 entering the bottom of the fourth. But the Redskins scored three runs in the fourth to tie it and one in the fifth to get the victory.

"It was snowing hard the whole game," Bettsville head coach Rod Daniel said. "It was a difficult one to take because the kids played so well."

Ian Munson homered, and Steve Woods doubled for Port Clinton. Chris Drusbacky claimed the pitching victory.

Evan Baker and Justin Harri-

son each doubled and had two hits for the Bobcats (1-1). Harrison absorbed the loss.

Bettsville hosts its tournament at 10 a.m. today.

SOFTBALL

Lakota 10, Carey 5

RISINGSUN — Four different Raiders collected two hits apiece as Lakota collected its first victory of the season.

Amber Ginnever, Kristen Lenz, Megan Stoudinger and Terica Lowery had two hits apiece for Lakota (1-1). Ginnever, Lowery and Kim Wells each drove in two runs. Ginnever, Stoudinger and Jessica Rupright scored two runs apiece.

Wells picked up the pitching victory. She went seven innings, allowing three earned runs and 11 hits, striking out three and walking one.

Lakota hosts Lima Bath at noon today for a twin bill.

Port Clinton 16, Bettsville 1

PORT CLINTON — Port Clinton head softball coach Vicki Gresh-Ullman said her team wanted to set a tone for the season.

The Redskins, behind senior Anya Alvarez, did so convincingly against Bettsville in non-league action.

"This was the first time we've been on the dirt all year," Gresh-Ullman said. "We had the combination of good pitching and good hitting. It was a good win, especially for our home opener."

Alvarez fanned 11 Bobcats and walked four.

The Redskins were equally successful at the plate. Sara Savu and Mo Bickley had three hits apiece.

Molly Johnson scored the only run for Bettsville (2-1) in the final inning.

News-Messenger reports

OREGON — The Fremont Ross baseball team scored three runs in the top of the seventh inning to come from behind and beat Clay, 5-4, Wednesday in the Great Lakes League opener for both teams.

The Little Giants (3-2) trailed 4-2 entering their final at-bat against the previously unbeaten Eagles.

But Doug Hinkle walked to lead off the seventh, and Dash Yost followed with the last of Ross's three hits on the day. After a Kyle Hintze sacrifice bunt, Clay intentionally walked John Franks to load the bases.

Jered Kingsborough then drew a walk to force in the first run of the inning, and Jared Dickman followed with a sacrifice fly to tie the game. With runners on first and third, Kingsborough broke for second. The throw from the Clay catcher went into center field, allowing Franks to waltz home with the go-ahead run.

Ross reliever Adam Garcia closed the door in the bottom of the seventh for the victory.

The Little Giants won despite being outhit 9-3. Clay (2-1) committed four errors to Ross's none.

"The kids played hard, and you have to play to the end," Ross head coach Chuck Lindsey said. "They beat us last year by scores of 3-0 and 1-0. But I was thinking we still had a chance to win the game heading into the last inning."

Yost led Ross hitters by going 2-for-4 with two runs scored. Franks had a double, and Dickman and Nick Oprie drove in two runs apiece.

Josh Harnish started on the mound and went $5\frac{2}{3}$ innings. He gave up four earned runs and eight hits while striking out three and walking two.

Ross hosts Whitmer on Friday.

Whitmer's five-run sixth inning buries Little Giants

By TIMOTHY R. WOLFRUM
Sports editor

Clint Coonrod's inconsistent past flared up at the worst possible moment for the Fremont Ross baseball team in Friday's home opener at Joe Lotycz Field.

Inside: Ross softball game suspended. **Page B3**

The Little Giants, coming off an important win at Oregon Clay on Wednesday, had clawed back to tie Toledo Whitmer at 2 after five innings.

Coonrod, a senior pitcher who struggled with control problems earlier in his career, faced a two-on, two-out jam in the Whitmer half of the sixth.

He had worked ahead of hitters all day and walked no one to that point. But Coonrod proceeded to hit Panther lead-off man Justin Hennagir with a pitch to load the bases and walk

Alex Duhaime to force in the go-ahead run.

That brought up Whitmer's heavy hitters, Brian Rachuba and Scott Zaciewski. Each batter rifled a two-run double off the outfield fence to cap a five-run inning that chased Coonrod from the game and led to a 7-2 Whitmer victory.

"He's worked real hard on it (his control), Ross head coach Chuck Lindsey said on Coonrod. "I thought he could get through it. But they hit it. We hit the ball, too, just not in key situations like they did."

"But I told the kids a loss is a loss. It's just one loss in the league. We just have to go back and work on our hitting."

Rachuba and Zaciewski each went 3-for-4 to lead the Panthers, who improved to 7-1 and 2-0 in the Great Lakes League. Whitmer suffered its only loss of the season, 1-0, on Thursday against Toledo Bowsher.



JARED DICKMAN of Ross lets a high pitch pass during Friday's game at Joe Lotycz Field.

"The heart of our order is very strong," Whitmer head coach Gary O'Connor said. "They hit the ball very well. The thing we told the kids today was to wait for the pitch they could handle. I think they did a good job of that."

The Little Giants (3-3, 1-1 GLL) scratched out seven hits off Whitmer starter Derek Kozlowski, considered one of the top hurlers in

the league. Kozlowski went the distance, allowing two earned runs while striking out four and walking four.

"He didn't hurt himself with too many walks," O'Connor said of Kozlowski, who lost four league games by one run apiece last season. "He's a competitor. It wasn't a great outing, but when he steps on the mound you know he's going to give you a good game."

Lead-off man Dash Yost went 2-for-2 and scored a run for Ross.

After the Panthers scored a run in the top of the first, Yost led off the Ross half of the first with a single and moved to second on a Kyle Hintze single. John Franks bunted both runners up a base, and Jered Kingsborough's grounder scored Yost.

Whitmer took a 2-1 lead in the third when Rachuba singled, stole second, moved to third on a Zaciewski single

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News-Messenger/Ben French

FREMONT ROSS players watch a teammate bat during Friday's game against Toledo Whitmer.

Little Giants drop home opener

Continued From B1

and scored on a sacrifice fly to deep shortstop by Kozlowski.

In the Ross fifth, Gabe Sanchez led off with a walk. Yost then laid a bunt down the first-base line and reached base when no Panther covered first. Hintze moved the runners up with a sacrifice, and Franks brought Sanchez home with a roller to short.

Coonrod finished his day by throwing 100 pitches, 65 of them for strikes. He started off 22 of the 31 hitters he faced with strikes. Coonrod struck out two,

walked one and surrendered 10 hits. All seven Whitmer runs were earned.

But the start of the Little Giants' undoing may have come in the form of a weak roller in the top of the sixth.

After Coonrod struck out Sean Mariucci to open the frame, Lance Crosby reached out for a two-strike pitch and dribbled it toward second base. The ball was out of Coonrod's reach, and Yost, who was playing deep, was unable to get to the ball in time.

Crosby was safe with a hit, and the floodgates opened. Ryan Kluczynski followed with a sin-

gle, and, one out later, Coonrod's lapse in control gave Whitmer a chance to blow the game open.

The defeat left the Little Giants deflated after beating perennial power Clay on the road Wednesday.

"I think we're back even," Lindsey said. "You've got to keep your home field. But we battled well."

Ross is home for a double-header against Anthony Wayne at noon today.

Said O'Connor: "It's going to be a close race this year. There are a lot of good teams in this league."

News-Messenger reports

KANSAS — Lakota's pitching and hitting proved too much for Woodmore in the Suburban Lakes League opener for both teams.

Raider pitcher Tim Ray held the Wildcats to four hits, and he led his team offensively by going 3-for-3 with a home run and four RBIs in the 13-2 win.

"They drilled us," Wildcats head coach Scott Smith said. "They really hit the ball well. Once we fell behind, our kids got frustrated. I think it's because of the lack of winning the past couple of years. It's something we're trying to work on. We just need to keep on playing."

Lakota's Matt Graber and David Russell added three and two hits, respectively. Graber scored two runs and drove in two, while Russell scored three runs and drove in two. Greg Thrasher went 2-for-2 with three runs and three RBI.

A.J. Schlea led the Wildcats with a pair of hits and two RBI. Marcus McGee took the loss for Woodmore.

Lakota (6-1) travels to Genoa on Wednesday, and Woodmore (2-4) hosts Elmwood today.

Ross 9, Perkins 7

Nick Oprie went 3-for-3 and hit his first varsity home run Monday as the Fremont Ross baseball team outlasted Sandusky Perkins, 9-7, at Joe Lotycz Field.

The Little Giants (4-3) trailed 4-0 before scoring



RAY

single runs in the second and third and putting up five runs in the fourth. John Franks and Jared Dickman recorded two-out, two-run hits in the inning.

Doug Henkel picked up the victory in relief of Franks, who started and went three innings. Henkel pitched two innings, giving up a run and two hits while striking out one and walking none. Josh Harnish came on and pitched the final two innings to get the save.

Oprie drove in a pair of runs and scored one. Dash Yost had a hit, knocked in two runs and scored two. Dickman and Franks each had 2 RBI.

Perkins (2-6) was led by Kevin Keller, who went 3-for-4 with a double.

Ross is at Findlay on Wednesday.

St. Joe 11, St. Wendelin 6

FOSTORIA — St. Joseph Central Catholic was eager to start its second season.

After a 1-6 mark in non-league play, SJCC rebounded to hold off a St. Wendelin rally and open the Midland Athletic League slate with a triumph.

The Crimson Streaks (2-6) opened the game with a 4-0 lead. The Mohawks rallied to tie the game at 6, but SJCC scored in each of the final four innings to preserve the victory.

Cory Miller (2-1) took the win, while Kevin Wammes earned the save. Miller pitched four innings, allowing six runs and recording a pair of strikeouts. Wammes tossed three innings with no hits and five strikeouts.

See FLIERS, B2

Continued From B1

Jessica Rupright led Lakota by going 2-for-3. Gonzales and Nicole Donaldson each had two hits for the Royals.

Elmwood's Liz Chamberlain improved her record to 6-0 by allowing no earned runs and four hits over seven innings. She struck out four and walked two.

Kim Wells took the loss for the Raiders, surrendering one earned run and nine hits. She struck out none and walked two.

Lakota is at Hopewell-Loudon for a doubleheader on Saturday.

BASEBALL

Findlay 5, Ross 1

FINDLAY — Findlay took advantage of a slow start by Ross pitcher Josh Harnish to score all of its runs in the first inning and win a Great Lakes League game on Wednesday.

The first five Trojan batters came around to score off Harnish. Findlay (7-1, 2-0 GLL) got five hits in the first inning, but Harnish allowed them two more the rest of the way.

The Little Giants (4-4, 1-2 GLL) got three of their four hits in the seventh inning, when they scored their only run. Nick Oprie doubled, moved to third on a Doug Henkel single and scored on a two-out hit by Adam Garcia. Dash Yost got the other hit for Ross.

Findlay hurler Spencer Hahn took a perfect game into the sixth inning. He allowed one earned run and three hits on his way to the victory. Hahn struck out 12 batters.

Matt Dillon led the Trojans' offense with two hits.
Ross hosts Sandusky today.

Woodmore 10, New Riegel 2

NEW RIEGEL — Andrew Greenley had three hits, and Brandon Hepler threw fifth shutout innings as the Wildcats got back on the winning track in a non-league game.

Woodmore (4-5) snapped a four-game losing streak.

Greenley went 3-for-5 with a double, a run scored and an RBI. Chris Pavlica had two hits and two runs batted in for the Wildcats.

Hepler started and went five shutout innings for the win. He allowed four hits while striking out three and walking two. Marcus McGee finished up, allowing two runs and four hits while striking out three.

Woodmore got all the offense it needed in the first inning, when a two-run triple by A.J. Schlea highlighted a four-run outburst. The Wildcats scored a single run in the second inning and four more runs in the third.

Ryan Martin paced New Riegel by going 3-for-4.

Woodmore is at Eastwood today.

TENNIS

St Joe 5, Fostoria 0

FOSTORIA — Jeff Young battled through a pair of tiebreakers in a marathon victory to pace St. Joseph Central Catholic to a non-league triumph.

Young, at No. 1 singles, played Kyle Kings to a 6-6 tie in the first set and took the 8-6 tiebreaker. Kings claimed the second set 2-6, and then the two tied again at 6 in

Streaks' timely hits doom Ross

By **TIMOTHY R. WOLFRUM**

Sports editor

Fremont Ross pitchers fanned a whopping 15 Sandusky hitters during Friday's Great Lakes League baseball game.

Unfortunately for the Little Giants, the rare Blue Streak who matched bat with ball found a way to get things done during a 7-3 Sandusky victory at Joe Lotycz Field.



HINTZE

Inside: Ross softball wins; OH sweeps Clyde in baseball, softball. **Page B3**

"When we made contact, we capitalized," said a succinct Sandusky head coach Schuyler Smith.

The Blue Streaks scored all the runs they needed off Ross starter Clint Coonrod during a four-run fourth inning and held on behind the pitching of Jon Heath, who made his first start of the season.

Heath held the Little Giants scoreless for the first five innings — the Streaks

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Streaks put Ross in GLL hole

Continued From B1

built a 7-0 lead — and allowed only one run during his six-inning stint. Ross left a runner in scoring position in every inning but the first.

"Their kids hit the ball in certain situations, and we didn't do that," Ross head coach Chuck Lindsey said. "They're working hard; they're trying. We hit the ball sometimes, but it doesn't fall in. Our confidence is a little low, which may be part of the problem."

The victory allowed Sandusky to remain unbeaten at 5-0, 2-0 in the GLL.

Ross's GLL title aspirations took a major jolt with a third league loss. The Little Giants are 4-5, 1-3 in the league.

"If you had told me we'd be 1-3 at this time, I wouldn't have believed it," Lindsey said. "Our backs are against the wall. Hopefully, we can come back and get a share."

Coonrod, who struck out 13

batters in his five-inning outing, got off to a rocky start when Sandusky's lead-off man, Ross Oeder, rocketed a triple to left-center field on the game's second pitch. Oeder later scored on a Nick Baker double.

But Coonrod rebounded to retire the next eight batters, the first seven by strikeout.

Sandusky made the most of its opportunities in the fourth, though. Baker led off with a single, Coonrod walked Heath and Andrew Todd laid down a bunt single to load the bases. Chris Voegle followed one out later with a two-run single over shortstop, and Matt Harris slammed a two-out, two-run single over second base to make it 5-0.

The Blue Streaks added two unearned runs off Ross reliever Adam Garcia in the sixth. Oeder tripled again, this time to deep right-center field, to score a run and later came in on a single by Jacob Kennedy.

"He's been solid all year for us,"

Smith said of Oeder, who finished 2-for-4 with two runs scored. "That's what we expect from him. It's what we expect from everybody."

Ross challenged the Blue Streaks late in the game. Nick Oprie singled off Heath to lead off the sixth and scored on a Garcia sacrifice fly to center.

In the seventh, Sandusky brought in Oeder to relieve a tired Heath, and the Little Giants scored two quick runs. Doug Henkel walked, and Kyle Hintze followed with a two-run, inside-the-park home run. Hintze lined a shot to right field, past portly Sandusky outfielder Preston Barnum and to the wall. By the time Barnum ran down the ball, Hintze had come all the way around to score.

John Franks walked, and Oprie singled to keep the rally going with one out, but Oeder settled down to retire Jared Dickman and Joey Garza to end it.

Ross will be at Tiffin Columbian today for an 11 a.m. doubleheader.

BASEBALL

Ross 10-8, Columbian 7-4

TIFFIN — The Little Giants rode two big innings to a doubleheader sweep of the Tornadoes on Saturday.

Ross responded to Columbian's six-run fifth inning with a six spot of its own in the top of the sixth inning to win the first game. The Little Giants used a five-run fifth inning to put the second game away.

John Franks paced Ross (6-5) in the first game by going 3-for-3 with a home run, a double and three RBI. He also scored twice. Adam Garcia went 2-for-4 and drove in three runs.

Josh Harnish got the opening victory on the mound. He went the distance and allowed two earned runs and 10 hits. Harnish struck out two and walked four.

Gabe Sanchez earned the win in the second game by pitching four innings. He struck out three and walked five and gave up two earned runs.

Jake Halm had three hits; Jered Kingsborough added two hits, two RBI, two runs and two stolen bases; and Doug Henkel had two hits and an RBI.

Columbian fell to 6-5.

Ross hosts Bowling Green today.

BASEBALL

Ross 11, Bowling Green 1

Sophomore Jared Dickman went 4-for-4 with a triple and three RBI as the Little Giants run-ruled the Bobcats in six innings.

Kyle Hintze added two hits and four RBI for Ross (7-5).

John Franks started on the mound and got the victory by pitching three innings and allowing no runs and two hits. Clint Coonrod and Adam Garcia provided relief.

The Little Giants are at Fostoria today.



DICKMAN

Continued From B1

Steve Lonneman and Jeremy Leary posted a 6-1, 6-2 triumph over Jared Shetzer and Mike Hernandez.

The Redskins, who improved to 7-1 overall and 3-1 in the Sandusky Bay Conference, host Edison today.

Perkins 5, Oak Harbor 0

OAK HARBOR — The Pirates improved to 3-1 in the SBC by winning five matches in straight sets.

Marcus Pullano, Justin Goff and Adam Davie earned singles victories. Pullano downed Matt Conley 6-3, 6-1. Goff upended R.J. Stoner 6-1, 6-3; and Davie took care of Scott Avery 6-0, 6-3.

The Perkins doubles team of Shawn Babich and Tim Perrin defeated Oak Harbor's Justin Fetterman and Cameron Loft 6-1, 6-0. Joe Mazza and David Schwartz swept Ryan Tingley and Troy Alvarado 6-0, 6-0.

Oak Harbor dropped to 0-9, 0-5 in the SBC.

Clyde 20, Port Clinton 7

CLYDE — Port Clinton opened the conference contest with a 2-0 advantage, and then Clyde took over.

The Flyers (3-3, 4-1 SBC) crushed 22 hits. Karly Lalonde and Tina Dodson smacked five and four hits, respectively. Dodson had three triples and a double. Sarah Pearson was 3-for-3 and drove in five runs and scored four. Winning pitcher Angie Powell and Heather Kwiatkowski each contributed a pair of hits.

On the mound, Powell (7-2) surrendered 13 hits and five earned runs in seven innings.

Clyde travels to Huron on Friday.

Gibsonburg 6, Lake 0

GIBSONBURG — Lexe Warren singled, doubled and knocked in two runs to make life easy for Golden Bear ace Jamie Wonderly, who tossed a three-hit shutout.

Wonderly struck out 14 and walked one as Gibsonburg improved to 12-0, 5-0 in the Suburban Lakes League.

The Golden Bears exploded for four runs in the bottom of the fifth inning to extend a one-run advantage to five. Sarah Taulker and Sarah Walby each had two hits for Gibsonburg.

The Golden Bears are at Woodmore on Friday.

Genoa 3, Woodmore 2

GENOA — The Comets made their own breaks to get past the Wildcats in SLL action.

Genoa scored two runs on passed balls in the third inning to give pitcher Daven Henniger just enough offense. She went the distance, allowing two earned runs and four hits. She struck out seven and walked two.

Woodmore's Tarai Jacobs was a tough-luck loser. She gave up three runs and six hits while striking out nine and walking three.

Nicole Nissen had two hits to lead the Comets (3-3, 2-2 SLL). Woodmore (2-6, 1-3 SLL) got a pair of hits from Erin Stoffan.

The Wildcats host Gibsonburg on Friday.

Oak Harbor 3, Perkins 0

OAK HARBOR — Leslie Avery fanned 14 Pirates and fired a two-hit shutout as the Rockets stayed perfect in Sandusky Bay Conference play.

Monique Perez went 2-for-4 with a pair of RBI for Oak Harbor. Her two-run double in the sixth inning capped the scoring. Dana Sprouse also collected a pair of hits.

Oak Harbor (9-2, 4-0 SBC) is at St. Mary today.

Old Fort 5, North Baltimore 1

OLD FORT — Lauren Lee and Sara Noss each smacked a pair of hits to power the Stockaders past North Baltimore in MAL action.

Ashleigh Fry recorded the victory as North Baltimore (2-8, 0-5 MAL) was limited to six hits.

The Stockaders (3-5, 5-1 MAL) host Gibsonburg in a doubleheader on Saturday.

BASEBALL

Ross 18, Fostoria 14

FOSTORIA — The Little Giants coughed up a 10-run lead then won the Great Lakes League game by scoring four in the top of the eighth inning.

Ross (8-5, 2-3 GLL) led 14-4 when starter Josh Harnish was pulled in the bottom of fifth inning for Gabe Sanchez. The Redmen promptly reached Sanchez for 10 runs to tie the game in the seventh. Adam Garcia came on to shut the door and earn the victory.

The Little Giants banged out 14 hits. John Franks led the way by going 4-for-4 with four

RBI and three runs scored. He and Garcia blasted home runs. Nick Oprie went 3-for-5 with an RBI, and Joey Garza had a hit and scored four times.

Ross hosts Clay on Friday.

St. Joe 7, Seneca East 4

Soild defense and timely hitting proved key as the Crimson Streaks defeated Seneca East for a league triumph at Conner Park.

SJCC capitalized on four Tiger errors and smacked six hits off losing pitcher Andy Bischoff. Mike Lento (2-for-3) blasted a home run and drove in a pair of runs. Jimmy Haas added a pair of hits.

Kevin Wammes pitched 5 1/3 innings for the victory. He allowed four earned runs and six hits and had seven strikeouts. Cory Miller earned the save.

Curt Niedermier had a home run to lead Seneca East (6-5, 2-3 MAL).

The Crimson Streaks 4-8 (2-1 MAL) host New Riegel in a makeup game today.

Lake 11, Gibsonburg 0

MILLBURY — Jared Krugh fired a four-hit shutout as the Flyers won in five innings.

Scott Conley had three hits to lead Lake.

Aaron Kaseman led the Golden Bears with a hit and a stolen base.

Gibsonburg hosts Woodmore on Friday.

Genoa 10, Woodmore 7

ELMORE — The Wildcats rallied to tie the game at seven apiece, but couldn't seal the deal in a league loss to Genoa.

Woodmore scored four runs in the fourth inning, but was held scoreless the rest of the way.

Dana Wend paced Woodmore with a 3-for-4, three-RBI performance. He cranked a solo home run in the second inning.

Jon Winters absorbed the loss, while Genoa's Ryan Borowske credited the victory. Winters pitched four innings, surrendering six hits and four runs and had two strikeouts.

Woodmore (3-9, 4-1 SLL) travels to Gibsonburg today.

Eastwood 12, Lakota 1

KANSAS — Eastwood displayed its prowess at the plate, and Lakota showed its struggles in the field as the Raiders bowed in league action.

Tim Ray (4-2) absorbed the loss after six innings of duty and led Lakota with a 2-for-3 performance.

The Raiders (8-5, 2-3 SLL) travel to Lake on Friday.

Perkins 5, Oak Harbor 2

OAK HARBOR — Conference foe Perkins scored all its runs in the fourth inning for a triumph over the Rockets.

Audrey Hemminger went the distance and absorbed the loss. Rob McGuire and Dave Bensch each had a pair of hits for the Rockets (3-6, 1-4 SBC).

Oak Harbor hosts Margaretta on Friday.

Bettsville 10, Calvert 6

BETTSVILLE — Justin Harrison turned in a 3-for-3 performance at the plate to lead Bettsville past Calvert for a league triumph.

Bobcat teammate James Tyndall added a pair of hits and two RBI, while Evan Baker contributed a double.

Robert Tarris (2-1) earned the victory. He pitched four innings and allowed four earned runs and had four strikeouts. Tyndall recorded the save.

Bettsville (8-5, 3-1 MAL) hosts Buckeye Central in a doubleheader on Saturday.

Old Fort 10, North Baltimore 9

OLD FORT — The Stockaders withstood a two-run, seventh-inning rally by the Tigers to get an MAL triumph.

Dan Heilman doubled, homered and drove in three runs to lead Old Fort (6-5, 2-3 MAL). Nick Kerlin added three hits and two runs. Greg Burks also homered and drove in two.

Matt Hoke went the distance to earn the victory.

The Stockaders visit Gibsonburg on Saturday.

Margaretta 7, St. Mary 0

CASTALIA — St. Mary's Mike Link doubled in the first inning, but that was the only hit the Panthers got off Margaretta pitcher Rob Lewis.

Lewis went the distance and had seven strikeouts and two walks for the triumph.

Dan McGory (double) had two hits, two RBI and scored a pair of runs for Margaretta (6-3, 4-1 SBC). Teammate Brandon Wadding added a double.

The Polar Bears travel to Oak Harbor on Friday.

Thomas halts Ross charge

Clay scores early, keeps Little Giants at bay in seventh inning

By TIMOTHY R. WOLFRUM
Sports editor

Oregon Clay played a game of "Can you top this" with the Fremont Ross baseball team Friday at Joe Lotycz Field.

The Little Giants responded immediately to the first Eagle onslaught, answering Clay's three first-inning runs with four of their own in the bottom half of the inning.

But Ross waited too long to come back from Clay's second-inning salvo, allowing

the Eagles to bring on ace pitcher Justin Thomas just in time to save a 9-6 victory.

"When our team fell behind, they showed a lot of character taking the lead," Ross head coach Chuck Lindsey said. "But they (the Eagles) came back aggressively."

Clay (9-4, 3-2 GLL) reached Ross starter Adam Garcia for eight runs and eight hits in the first two innings and led 8-4 in a game that appeared destined for double-figure runs for each team.

But after allowing the first four Little Giants he faced to score in the first, Clay starter Matt Guerrero righted himself. He allowed Ross only three more hits and no runs in innings two through six.

"I thought it was going to be one of those days," Clay head coach Karl Knierim said. "We've had those over here before when it turns out 16-13, and it looked like we were headed for another one. But Matt settled down, and their pitcher settled down."

Garcia ended up going the distance for Ross. He gave up eight earned runs and 11 hits while striking out three and walking three.

The Little Giants (8-6, 2-4 GLL) trailed 9-4 heading to the bottom of the seventh inning, but they put up a fight against Guerrero.

Nick Oprie and Jared Dickman blasted run-scoring doubles off the fence to bring Ross within three runs with two outs. Guerrero walked

See GIANTS, B3

More inside

See the following high school sports stories on page B3:

■ SOFT-BALL:

Jamie Wondery of Gibsonburg fires her sixth career no hitter to beat Woodmore.

■ BASEBALL: Jimmy Haas pounds two home runs as St. Joe whips Lorain Catholic.



Giants fall too far behind, drop game to Clay

Continued From B1

Garcia to bring the tying run to the plate in Ross freshman Joey Garza.

That's when Knierim called for Thomas, his left-handed ace. Thomas had already carried the load for the Clay offense by going 4-for-4 with a pair of doubles and four RBI while playing first base.

The Eagles were wary of Ross comebacks. The Little Giants scored three runs in the

seventh inning to earn a 5-4 victory in the GLL opener at Clay.

"I was going to take any chances," Knierim said. "We were in this position against Ross at our place."

Thomas fell behind Garza 3-1 but got the freshman and a hard liner to second base to end the game.

"You can't ask for anything else," Lindsey said. "He got a pitch he thought he could handle and hit it hard. A couple of inches either way, and something could have happened."

The Little Giants banged out 10 hits, but all of them came from the first five batters in the order. Kyle Hintze went 3-for-4, while Dash Yost, John Franks and Oprie had two hits apiece. Oprie knocked in a pair of runs and scored twice.

Gary Tscherne had two hits, including a home run to lead off the game, for the Eagles. Guerrero also recorded a pair of hits.

Ross travels to Bryan today for a double-header.

News-Messenger reports

BRYAN — Aaron Creek's two-run home run in the bottom of the seventh ruined a rousing Fremont Ross rally and gave Bryan a doubleheader sweep Saturday.

The Little Giants scored six runs in the top of the seventh to take an 11-10 lead. The rally featured consecutive homers by Clint Coonrod and Jered Kingsborough.

But Creek blasted his home run to give the Golden Bears a 12-11 victory. Bryan (12-1) won the first game 12-2.

Coonrod had two hits and four runs batted in to lead the Ross offense in the second game. Jared Dickman had a hit and knocked in three runs. Doug Henkel took the loss in relief.

Bryan star Doug Carpenter went 4-for-4 with two homers in the second game.

In the opener, the Golden Bears blew open a tight game by scoring eight runs in the bottom of the sixth inning.

The Little Giants (8-8) managed just two hits in the first game. Coonrod absorbed the loss.

Ross is at Whitmer on Wednesday.

By **TIMOTHY R. WOLFRUM**
Sports editor

The Fremont Ross baseball team may get two chances for revenge, and the Little Giants softball team is facing down a familiar rival in sectional tournament pairings announced Tuesday night.

Inside: Full tournament pairings. **Page B2**

The Ross baseball team (8-8) faces Ashland in the sectional opener at 5 p.m. Monday at Mansfield Madison. The Arrows knocked the Little Giants out of the sectional final, 9-3, last season.

A victory would earn Ross a sectional final date with second-seeded Sandusky, which handed the Little Giants a 7-3 defeat on April 19. Host Madison received the top seed in the Division I sectional.

"There's nobody, talent-wise, that we haven't seen this year," Ross head coach Chuck Lindsey said. "It just depends on how we go down there and play."

The Ross softball team will host a Division I sectional beginning Saturday. The Little Giants drew the second seed and will meet one of two winless teams, either Mansfield Senior (0-12) or Sandusky (0-13), on Monday.

A victory would likely advance the Little Giants to meet top-seeded Oregon Clay, a Great Lakes League rival. The two teams have split a pair of meetings this season.

Continued From B1

"He kept the ball down," Barbour said of Wammes. "The wind was blowing out, so it was a good day to keep it low. He also got ahead of the hitters, which was key."

Cory Miller hit a solo home run, and Eric Velez went 2-for-2 to lead the St. Joe offense.

The Crimson Streaks (7-9, 4-2 MAL) face Danbury in a Division IV sectional game on Saturday at Old Fort. Bettsville (10-8, 3-3 MAL) hosts Old Fort on Monday.

Whitmer 5, Ross 4

TOLEDO — The Fremont Ross baseball team coughed up a 4-1 lead in the final two innings and dropped a Great Lakes League game Wednesday at Whitmer.

The Panthers (12-4, 5-2 GLL) rallied to tie the score on a three-run home run by Scott Zacienski in the bottom of the sixth. They won it in the bottom of the seventh on a two-out single by Justin Geiner.

"It's been one bad inning every game," Ross head coach Chuck Lindsey said. "We do a good job for the majority of the game, and then something bad happens. It boils down to the little things."

The Little Giants (8-9, 2-5 GLL) took the lead on a two-run double by Jered Kingsborough in the fourth and Kingsborough's RBI single in the sixth. Joey Garza knocked in Ross's other run in the sixth.

Kingsborough and Jared Dickman each had two hits for Ross. Josh Harnish went the distance and took the loss on the mound.

Zacienski picked up the victory for Whitmer in a route-going performance. He, Geiner and Chad Wainscott collected two hits apiece.

Ross hosts Findlay on Friday.

St. Mary 8, Clyde 5

CLYDE — The Panthers tied the game with one run in the seventh and won it with three runs in the ninth inning during a Sandusky Bay Conference contest.

The loss dropped the Fliers to 8-6, 2-6 in the SBC.

Jordan Wax led Clyde by going 3-for-4 with a pair of RBI. Kevin Beard absorbed the loss in relief.

Clyde is at Sandusky today.

Woodmore 8, Lakota 4

ELMORE — Mark Schneider's three-run home run highlighted a

Ross 12, Fostoria 2

This time, the Little Giants kept the Redmen from coming back and earned a five-inning, run-rule victory at Joe Lotycz Field.

On April 24 in Fostoria, Ross blew a 14-4 lead and had to rally for an 18-14 triumph in extra innings.

But Little Giants pitcher Josh Harnish kept the Redmen at bay Friday. He allowed only four hits and no earned runs while striking out seven and walking two.

Jered Kingsborough doubled and homered to lead Ross's nine-hit attack.

The Little Giants (9-11, 3-6 Great Lakes League) have one league game remaining at Sandusky.



KINGSBOROUGH

Little Giants whip Blue Streaks, 9-1

News-Messenger reports

SANDUSKY — The Fremont Ross baseball team closed the regular season on a positive note by downing rival Sandusky, 9-1, Wednesday behind the four-hit pitching of senior Clint Coonrod.

Coonrod allowed one run while striking out seven and walking three.

Kyle Hintze, Jon Franks, Nick Oprie and Adam Garcia led the offense with two hits apiece. Oprie drove in three runs, Franks two.

Ross finished the season 10-11, 4-6 in the Great Lakes League. Seniors Coonrod, Adam Garcia, Jake Halm, Josh Harnish, Jared Kingsborough, Nick Oprie, Gabe Sanchez and Dash Yost saw their careers come to an end.

"We had really high expectations," Ross head coach Chuck Lindsey said. "Sometimes in life, you don't get what you want. They still tried hard. Hopefully, this will be something the players and coaches can learn from and take into the rest of their lives."

Lindsey is stepping down as head coach to assume the head football coaching duties. He thanked his assistants — Roger Hetrick, Rob Schimmoeller, Greg Vassar and Dale Mitchell — and said he is sad to end his baseball coaching career. His record in eight years is 96-65.

Baseball Roundup

with the go-ahead run. Andrew Greenley scored the final run on Lake's second error of the inning.

"We played another excellent game," Woodmore head coach Scott Smith said. "The kids believe we can beat anyone right now. To knock off one of the top teams in our league is great for our program."

McGee retired one batter and earned the victory. Greenley pitched the final two innings for the save.

Woodmore (10-10, 4-6 SLL) led 4-0 until the bottom of the fifth inning, when Lake's Scott Conley touched up A.J. Schlea for a grand slam to tie the game.

Greenley led the Wildcats by going 3-for-4 and scoring three runs.

Lakota 9, Otsego 5

TONTOGANY — David Russell homered for the second straight day as the Raiders earned a come-from-behind victory in the SLL.

Lakota trailed 5-3 entering the top of the fourth inning but responded with six runs to take control.

Russell had two hits, scored twice and knocked in two runs. Matt Gruber added two hits, and Jeff Herr homered for the Raiders (10-14, 3-10 SLL).

Zack Gruber earned the pitching victory by going five innings. He allowed four earned runs and