

St. Francis knocks Ross out of AAA tournament

By TIM HARMON

Staff writer

PERRYSBURG — Steve Bartalsky led Toledo St. Francis into the Class AAA regional baseball tournament last year and appears poised to do the same this season.

Bartalsky pitched a complete game as St. Francis defeated Fremont Ross 8-4 in the sectional tournament at Perrysburg High School Monday.

"He was getting his first strike over, was ahead of the hitters and his curveball was really biting," St. Francis assistant coach Tim Gerken said.

In short, the senior right-hander was in command.

Bartalsky, who struck out 11, did not walk a batter and did not give up a hit until Don Dolweck's solo home run to right

field with two out in the fourth inning.

"(Bartalsky) put them on their heels," Gerken said.

"We were out on our front foot," Ross Coach Dan Fought said. "We were too anxious."

St. Francis, which will play Toledo Rogers for a sectional championship Thursday, led 6-0 when Dolweck homered.

"I thought we would hit the ball better than we did," Fought said. "I was happy when I saw (Bartalsky) warming up. We faced him last week and I felt confident that we could hit him."

Bartalsky, who has never lost on Perrysburg's diamond, according to Gerken, got the start when Chris Granata was scratched with an injured finger.

Ross, 4-11, scored all three of its runs off

Bartalsky in a 12-3 loss at St. Francis last Thursday.

The Little Giants had a runner on second with one out in the fifth and managed just three runs after loading the bases with no outs in the sixth.

"We had (Bartalsky) on the ropes a few times, we just didn't take him," Fought said.

A triple by Marty Lavey and Jason Osterman's RBI single through a drawn-in infield produced the Knights' first run in the third inning off Ross starter and loser Rob Weiker.

The Knights scored five runs in the fourth on Osterman's sacrifice fly, Chris Pratt's RBI single and Steve Sadowski's two-run single. Sadowski's single chased Weiker.

Dave Smalley, who walked, scored the fifth run when he and Sadowski worked a double steal. Reliever Steve Fox got Sanders on a grounder to shortstop to end the inning.

Ross's three-run sixth included Ron Hamil's RBI single and Cory Lance's sacrifice fly.

Leading 6-4, St. Francis scored a run in the sixth when Smalley singled, stole second and scored on Sadowski's single.

The Knights added an unearned run in the seventh.

"We had to play a perfect ballgame to win," Fought said. "That's asking a heluva lot because we haven't played a perfect game all year."

"(St. Francis) isn't a great club, but they're good."