

Season ends with heartbreaker for Little Giants

Ross managed just two shots on goal, but goalie Gipe had 15 saves

By VINCE GUERRIERI
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FINDLAY — One goal was all it took for the Fremont Ross boys soccer team's season to end Monday.

Celina managed to score one goal on a header by Brian Dorsten off the fingertips of Ross keeper Bobby Gipe with 28:19 left to play, and the Little Giants'

offense couldn't match it, falling 1-0 in a sectional heartbreaker.

It was the only missed save out of 16 chances for Gipe, a junior. The Bulldogs (10-1-2) took 24 shots on goal.

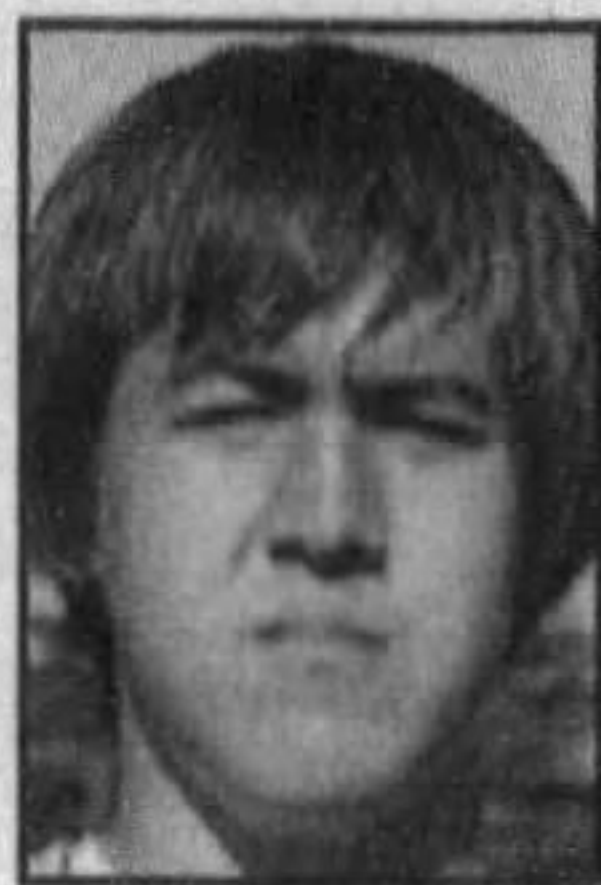
"We planned that," joked Ross midfielder Miguel Layton. "We have a really good goalie."

After the game, both Celina coach Bruce Strine and Ross coach Jeff Pendry had praise for Gipe.

"Their keeper did make some great saves," Strine said, adding that one goal in 24 shots was a terrible ratio.

"He's the type of player who comes up with the big

saves, and he did," Pendry said. "Unfortunately, they just floated one in."



GIPE

A little more than three minutes before Dorsten's goal, Celina keeper Matt Leugers missed a free kick.

Aaron Schmitt was bringing the ball downfield for a goal. His kick was off target, but he got the assist for the goal with Dorsten's header.

After the game, Gipe was

a little frustrated, having put a couple fingers on the ball.

"I got it, I just couldn't get enough of it to push it out," he said. "That's how it goes."

Senior captain Layton said it wasn't an error on Gipe's part.

"No breakdown," he said. "They just scored a nice goal."

Pendry said he wasn't surprised by Celina, having seen them on tape.

"They gave us what we were expected," he said. "A fast-paced team. I thought we played them well."

Most of the game was played on Ross's half of the field, which didn't surprise

or disappoint Pendry. He said that the team has been going on a defensive-oriented game plan, focusing on shutting down teams.

But while the Little Giants did hold the Bulldogs to one goal, they couldn't execute their offense, managing just two shots on goal.

"We did generate opportunities," Pendry said. "We just couldn't put it in the net."

Ross's last best hope came with 16:15 remaining, when Layton was called on for a penalty kick. However, his attempt sailed wide.

"They just kept after us," Strine said.

During the second half,

the team switched from a 5-4-1 scheme to 4-4-2, trying to get a little offense going, said senior captain T.J. George.

After the game, George, who said he was a little upset, was left to ponder what might have been.

"I thought we could have won," he said. "We played a great game."

But one thing held constant: they played at Palmer Stadium in Findlay. And it rained.

"It's rained the past three or four times we were there," George said.

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