

Ross hitters must support pitchers

By TIM HARMON
Staff writer

Weather and field conditions permitting, Fremont Ross will open the high school baseball season today at Napoleon.

"We're ready to go," Ross coach Dan Fought said. "I want to find out what we're all about."

That could be predicated on a pair of baseball adages: Pitching is 75 percent of the game and 90 percent of the game is mental.

If pitching is indeed 75 percent of the game, a successful season might rest in the hands of junior pitchers Steve Fox, Ian Vardyan and Rob Weiker.

***"We hope our pitchers
hold things down until the
hitting comes around."***

— Dan Fought
Ross baseball coach

"We have a good feel for our pitching staff," Fought said.

The sixth-year Ross coach, though, puts more stock in the other adage.

"Ninety percent of the game is mental and 10 percent is physical," Fought said. "Our kids don't realize what concentration

means to baseball.

"We've come a long way since last Saturday (a scrimmage against Fremont St. Joseph Central Catholic) ... focusing on what we need to accomplish."

In general terms, Fought would like to see the Little Giants focus on a sectional title, winning two out of three games from Findlay in the Buckeye Central Conference's north division and a 20-win season.

Specifically Fought said, "our infield has to improve every day and if we hit between .300 and .320 as a team those goals are realistic."

"We hope our pitchers hold things down until the hitting comes around."

Fox, Vardyan and Weiker return for a second season as varsity pitchers. Their earned run averages hovered around 4.00 during a 5-13 season a year ago, but Ross also hit only .237.

"They are juniors now so they know what's going on," Fought said. "Our preference would have been not to use either one of those three last season."

"You hate to put a sophomore in situations like that, but they have been through their question mark stage."

The trio of junior pitchers, however, will need support to produce victories.

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Ross

Continued From B-1

Fought hopes for fast starts at the plate by left fielder Scott Mezinger, catcher Tate Young and shortstop Cory Lance.

"Our seniors are the key to how well we do with the stick," he said. "Tate and Cory have to start fast and although Mezinger always starts fast, he can't tail off the way he did last year."

Mezinger led the Little Giants with a .328 average a year ago.

Center fielder Chad Novitski, who played on the Ross junior varsity last year, and sophomore third baseman Justin Perry should help improve the team batting average.

"Novitski had a great summer (for Fremont's American Legion team) and he's had a great spring so far," Fought said.

Young, who was an infielder and outfielder a year ago, and Novitski helped Fought solve half of the middle defense puzzle. Lance and Fox are at the top of the depth chart at shortstop and second base.

Chris Benson, who is recovering from a hip pointer, or Shane McConnell, who sat out last season, will join Mezinger and Novitski in the outfield.

"Our outfield is probably the best since I've been here," Fought said. "They can go get it, they hit the cut offs and they won't make mental errors."

Terry Carter will try to earn his first baseball letter as the fifth outfielder. Carter as well as utility infielder Dan Lopez give Ross speed off the bench.

Brian Miller will open the season as the starting first baseman. Sophomore Nick Wolf, who was the starter last year, is limited to swinging a bat until he fully recovers from a broken right wrist. Wolf will play second base when Fox pitches.

Lance and McConnell are Ross's fourth and fifth pitchers, while Jay Hartley and Jim Kelly round out the staff.



News-Messenger/Terry Reimer

ROSS THIRD baseman Justin Perry awaits a throw from Ross catcher Tate Young as a Toledo DeVilbiss baserunner reaches the

base standing up Friday during the Little Giants' 6-3 victory over the Tigers at Anderson Field in the season opener for both teams.

Ross wins opener 6-3

By TIM HARMON
Staff writer

An early season high school baseball game between Fremont Ross and Toledo DeVilbiss Friday might have been decided earlier this spring, according to Ross coach Dan Fought and DeVilbiss coach Bryan Grabow.

The Little Giants scored four unearned runs in the fifth inning and went on to a 6-3 victory at Anderson Field.

"We're more advanced with our defense because of our commitment to go outside instead of stay in the gym," Fought said.

Said Grabow, "First time out. We've been taking ground balls on the blacktop and it showed."

The Tigers committed five errors in the home half of the fifth inning after tying the score at two-all in the top of the inning on a sacrifice fly by Joe Czyzewski and a run-scoring single by Chad Pennywith.

"Lack of concentration," Grabow said. "Errors, passed balls... this than that."

See **ROSS, B-3**

Ross

Continued From B-1

Steve Fox was the beneficiary of the DeVilbiss errors, working through the fifth for the victory. Rob Weiker pitched the final two innings to earn a save.

"We were pleased with both of them," Fought said. "We probably went a little too long with Fox, but that's a tough situation to gauge this early."

Cory Lance reached base on an infield error to open the Ross fifth and raced to third on an errant pickoff attempt. Justin Perry followed with a walk, and Lance scored on Brian Freeman's throwing error as Perry stole second.

Scott Mezinger and Tate Young reached base on back-to-back infield errors. Terry Carter ran for Young and Mezinger and Carter moved up on a passed ball as Perry scored.

Mezinger scored on a wild pitch, and Carter scored on Nick Wolf's infield single.

The inning made a loser of Jeremy Ray, who pitched the fourth and fifth innings in relief of Len Sniegowski.

"The kids knew they were in a tight game, but they have a lot

of confidence in Fox as well as the rest of the pitching staff," Fought said.

Fox struck out six and walked three before giving way to Weiker, who did not yield a hit while striking out three. Weiker gave up an unearned run in the seventh inning.

"I would have taken a couple of handcuff hits," Grabow said. "We had too many swings and misses. Offensively, I wish we would have made more contact, but the pitchers are ahead of the hitters at this stage."

Ross, which led Napoleon 9-0 after 2 $\frac{2}{3}$ innings Thursday before rain canceled the game, scored a run in the first when Chad Novitski walked, moved to third on a hit-and-run single by Mezinger and scored on Young's groundout.

The Little Giants added a run in the third. Perry opened with a double to right field, moved to third on a Sniegowski's balk and scored on Young's sacrifice fly.

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Throwing error gives Oak Harbor 5-4 victory

News-Messenger reports

Oak Harbor's Dane Epling scored on a catcher's throwing error in the bottom of the sixth inning Tuesday, giving the Rockets a 5-4 high school baseball victory over Northwood.

In other action, a game between Fremont Ross and Tiffin Columbian was suspended after six innings because of darkness with the score tied 11-all.

The Rockets, 1-1, fell behind 4-3 in the top of the sixth when the Rangers scored a run off Nate Whitman. Epling's run-scoring single tied the game at four-all. Epling stole second and scored on the throwing error.

Whitman yielded eight hits and three walks with six strikeouts for the complete-game victory.

Joe Griserler, suffered the loss after giving up both runs in the sixth in relief of starter Brian Amstutz.

Jamey Rollheiser had two hits for Oak Harbor, while Jerry Gladieux and Chris Larkins had two hits apiece for the Rangers.

Ross 11, Columbian 11

Ross scored all of its runs in the first two innings and led 11-4 before Columbian forged the tie in Tiffin.

The game will resume 4 p.m. today at Anderson Field in Fremont. The teams will play a reg-

ularly scheduled game 10 minutes after the conclusion of the suspended game.

Scott Mezinger got the Little Giants started with a two-run homer run in the first inning. Cory Lance and Chris Benson had two hits apiece and drove in three and two runs, respectively.

"I'm real disappointed," Ross coach Dan Fought said. "We're up 11-4 and don't put them away.

"The pitchers didn't go after them, throw strikes and let us make the plays."

Ross starter Ian Vardyan pitched just 2 $\frac{1}{3}$ innings before Rob Weiker relieved. Weiker pitched through the fourth before giving way to Steve Fox.

Vardyan, Weiker and Fox allowed nine hits and nine walks, while Columbian's Denny Tyree and Mark Ziegler yielded seven hits and walked 10.

"We were putting the ball in play; we just weren't picking up the runners," Fought said.

The Little Giants, 1-0 after a 6-4 victory over Toledo DeVilbiss Friday, left five men on base after the second inning.

The game is the second this season which Ross has been unable to complete. A game with Napoleon last Thursday was postponed because of rain with the Little Giants leading 9-0.

Ross routs Generals

News-Messenger reports

Tate Young's seven RBIs Wednesday powered Fremont Ross to a 25-9 high school baseball victory over Anthony Wayne at Whitehouse.

Young's two-run triple in the top of the sixth inning put the 15-run rule into effect.

In other games, Clyde edged Tiffin Calvert 4-3, Gibsonburg defeated Old Fort 6-4, Fostoria St. Wendelin beat Lakota 12-7 and Toledo St. Francis shut out Genoa 6-0.

Ross, 2-1, scored 11 runs in the first inning to make a loser of Chad Ritenhour. Young hammered a three-run home run in the inning as the Little Giants sent 14 men to the plate.

Ritenhour walked eight batters and hit one in the inning.

Ross scored five runs in the second inning, including RBI singles by Cory Lance and Young.

The Generals scored nine runs in the bottom half of the second off Rob Weiker. Six of the runs were unearned as Ross committed four of its five errors in the inning.

"It was a lot of fun except for that second inning," Ross coach Dan Fought said. "I think we relaxed."

See ROSS, B-3

Ross

Continued From B-1

Justin Perry's two-run single keyed Ross's seven-run fourth inning.

Jay Hartley took over for Weiker after the second inning to earn the victory.

"Hartley threw real well," Fought said. "He kept the ball down in the strike zone and most of the time away."

Hartley struck out two, allowed one hit and didn't walk a batter.

The Little Giants finished with 12 hits and four General pitchers yielded 18 walks.

Scott Mezinger, who walked five times, and Terry Carter scored four runs apiece for the Little Giants.

Early innings pivotal in Little Giants' 8-4 victory over Clyde

By TIM HARMON
Staff writer

A package deal in the first three innings Friday helped Fremont Ross to an 8-4 high school baseball victory over Clyde.

Ross, 3-1, got good pitching from Cory Lance, solid defense including two stellar plays by Scott Mezinger and collected 10 hits in the first three innings.

The Little Giants, who scored

two runs in the first inning, two in the second and four in the third, were held hitless over the final three innings by Clyde relievers John Montgomery and Ryan Patrick.

"Clyde's pitchers did a better job keeping the ball off the plate (in the later innings)," Ross coach Dan Fought said. "We can go cold with eight runs.

"If you score eight runs, you

should win; we had enough."

After Ryan Ray hit the first of his two home runs for Clyde in the top of the first inning, Ross got run-scoring singles from Tate Young and Steve Fox.

Brian Miller's single scored Chris Benson, who had doubled, in the second inning, and Terry Carter's double to the fence in right-center scored Lance, who reached on an error after Ben-

son's double.

Young led off the Ross third inning with a triple to the same gap Carter exploited in the second. Justin Perry's single to left field scored Young one out later and Benson followed with a two-run homer to left, chasing Clyde starter Wade Nofzt.

"I wanted (Nofzt) to go three or four innings no matter what happened," Clyde coach Doug

Ottney said. "He's a sophomore, but knows you get hurt if you get the ball up (in the strike zone)."

Lance, who struck out seven and walked three in his first start, greeted Montgomery with a single to right. Lance moved to third when the ball got past Aaron Hoffman and scored when Corey Distel's relay throw

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Ross

Continued From B-1

skipped past Patrick.

The 8-1 lead stood up until Clyde scored an unearned run in the sixth.

"I didn't expect Cory to go seven," Fought said. "That's the longest he's ever gone."

The Fliers added two runs in the seventh on Ray's second homer to left.

"I was expecting more (offense) early," Ottney said. "Our first five guys are our best hitters. Ryan got the big hits, but they didn't get it done."

Bedford hands Little Gian

News-Messenger reports

Visiting Bedford took advantage of four unearned runs in the fourth inning Saturday to hand Ross a 10-4 baseball loss at Anderson Field.

In other games Saturday, Oak Harbor handed visiting Woodmore two losses, 3-1 and 7-6, Toledo Libbey dealt host Genoa a 13-7 loss and Old Fort whipped Arcadia 11-7.

Bedford 10, Ross 4

Steve Fox, 1-2, suffered the loss for the Little Giants, who committed five errors to fall to 3-2.

Bedford, which got a home run and two singles from Tony Lambert and a home run from winning pitcher Scott Edwards, is also 3-2.

Chris Benson tripled and Terry Carter, Scott Mezinger and Dan Lopez each had two hits in Ross's nine-hit attack.

Oak Harbor 3, Woodmore 1

Dane Epling tossed a two-hitter to lead Oak Harbor to a 3-1 victory over visiting Woodmore

Baseball Roundup

in the first game of the Ottawa County Baseball Tournament.

Epling, 1-0, went the distance for the Rockets and finished with 13 strikeouts and four walks. Ron Taylor held Oak Harbor to two hits. Taylor struck out seven but it was his wildness that hurt the Wildcats. He finished with eight walks.

Oak Harbor 7, Woodmore 6

The Rockets' Mike Hubans drove in Steve Hetrick and Matt Starkey with the winning runs in the bottom of the fifth inning. The game was then called because of cold weather.

Jamey Rollheiser pitched one inning to pick up the win for Oak Harbor, 3-2. Rollheiser allowed two hits and struck out two. Rollheiser also doubled and singled and drove in a run.

John Schwochow went the distance for Woodmore, 0-2, allowing five hits and eight walks and striking out three.

Ross blunders contribute to Perrysburg victory

By TIM HARMON
Staff writer

A comedy of Fremont Ross errors Monday helped comprise Perrysburg's 15-7 high school baseball victory.

The muffs, boots, overthrows and underthrows at Anderson Field added up to eight errors.

"We just aren't making the plays behind the pitchers," Ross coach Dan Fought said. "Everyone plays three-out innings and we're playing six-out innings."

The loss came on the heels of Saturday's 10-4 loss to Bedford, Mich., in which Ross committed five errors.

The Little Giants, 3-3, committed four errors in the fourth inning and four in the

seventh Monday. It didn't help matters that Perrysburg pounded out 15 hits, including eight from the bottom of its order.

"That was the best we've hit since we came back north," said Perrysburg coach Dave Hall, whose team played seven contests in Florida in March. "We just outthit them and we made them make mistakes."

"Fremont usually plays better defense." Six of the Yellow Jackets' runs were unearned.

"Our mental attitude wasn't proper before the game," Fought said, "and our defense stunk."

"We didn't approach it right from the minute we got here."

Perrysburg led 4-1 when it scored five

runs in the fourth inning off Steve Fox, who replaced Ross starter Jay Hartley.

Fox worked scoreless innings in the fifth and sixth, but the Yellow Jackets plated six runs in the seventh.

"It was really tough on both Hartley and Fox," Fought said. "They did a nice job except for throwing 40 pitches more than they had to."

"We should have been out of both innings Hartley got in trouble and I know we gave away eight outs in the big inning against Fox."

The Yellow Jackets, 4-1, opened the game with a run in the top of the first inning. Steve Sevits walked, stole second, moved to third on a groundout and scored

on winning pitcher Brent Dhondt's single.

Ross got the run back in the bottom of the first when Terry Carter drew a lead-off walk, moved to third on a fielder's choice and an error and scored on Tate Young's groundout.

Perrysburg scored two runs in the second inning and added one in the third after Hartley retired the first two men he faced.

The Little Giants scored three runs in the fifth inning, including two on Brian Miller's home run to left field, off Perrysburg reliever Kevin Mallory.

Sacrifice flies by Young and Fox and Chad Novitski's RBI single in the seventh finished the scoring.

Ross falls under .500 after loss to 'Skins

Three unearned runs costly in 4-0 loss

News-Messenger reports

PORT CLINTON — Fremont Ross coach Dan Fought will probably think twice the next time he schedules a game with Port Clinton.

Fought called Redskins coach Dan Timmons Thursday night in hopes of scheduling a Friday afternoon game, and Timmons granted his wish.

"I heard he was looking for a game," Fought said. "I figured we could pick somebody up."

What the Little Giants got was a 4-0 loss, which dropped them to 3-4 on the season.

Port Clinton, meanwhile, improved to 4-0, the Redskins' best start "since I can remember," Timmons said.

"I can't remember ever being 4-0," he said. "It feels good, but the important games don't start until Monday."

Timmons was referring to PC's Sandusky Bay Conference opener Monday at Huron.

Timmons said the two biggest reasons for Port Clinton's early success have been pitching and defense. Against Ross, senior right-hander Scott Calton and sophomore Charlie Mullens combined to one-hit the Little Giants, while the PC defense committed just one error.

Port Clinton has committed just two fielding errors through four games.

Three of the Redskins' four

runs were unearned. The only earned run came in the second inning when Mike Claus singled in Brian Johnson. PC's other runs came on a passed ball and two double-steals.

Ross junior Steve Fox, 1-3, suffered the loss. The right-hander went the distance and gave up three walks and struck out three. Fox, however, was hurt by three Little Giant errors.

"We're making a lot of mistakes behind the pitchers," Fought said. "The pitchers are doing their job; Steve threw well. With us giving up that one earned run, we should have gone into the seventh inning with a 1-0 deficit."

"(Port Clinton's) pitchers did a nice job, but we've got to play better defense."

The 'Skins scored single runs in the second, third, fourth and sixth innings.

Mullens started and went the first 2½ innings for Port Clinton and gave up an infield single to Scott Mezinger and three walks. Calton, 3-0, relieved and went the final 4½ innings. He walked four and struck out six.

Ross hosts Toledo Central Catholic (10 a.m.) and Bellevue (1 p.m.) today at Anderson Field.

Port Clinton travels to Genoa today (10 a.m.) to take on the Comets in the semifinals of the Ottawa County Tournament.



FREMONT ROSS first baseman Nick Wolf fields a ground ball near the bag during the second inning of the Little Giants' 3-1 victory over Port Clinton Tuesday at Anderson Field.

News-Messenger/Terry Reimer

Ross ends PC's win streak at five

By **TIM HARMON**
Staff writer

Fremont Ross made the most of its opportunities Tuesday.

Port Clinton, meanwhile, failed to convert scoring chances in Ross's 3-1 high school baseball victory at Anderson Field.

Ross, 4-4, scored three unearned runs to avenge a 4-0 loss to Port Clinton last Friday in which the Redskins, 5-1, scored three unearned runs.

"We did a lot better job putting the ball in holes," Ross coach Dan Fought said. "We put a few things together; we probably could have put a few more things together."

The Little Giants left two men stranded in the third inning, one

in the fifth and one in the sixth.

Port Clinton stranded three runners in the first two innings.

"I'm not dissatisfied, other than the fact we didn't have key hitting," Port Clinton coach Dan Timmons said.

"A big key was their first two innings," Fought said. "We shut them off. Lately, we've been letting those runs score."

Dan Lopez scored the first Ross run off starter and loser Brian Johnson in the third inning, and the Little Giants scored twice in the fourth.

With one out in the third, Lopez singled and moved to second on a fielder's choice. Chad

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Ross

Continued From B-1

Novitski's infield single moved Lopez to third, and Lopez scored when PC second baseman Brian Williamson dropped Scott Me-zinger's line drive.

Steve Fox led off the Ross fourth with a single but was forced at second after Justin Perry's grounder to third. Chris Benson reached on PC third baseman Charlie Mullens' error, and Perry and Benson moved up on a wild pitch.

Perry scored on Nick Wolf's groundout, and Lopez followed with a walk. Lopez and Benson then worked a double steal, with Benson scoring after Lopez retreated successfully to first base.

Winning pitcher Rob Weiker, Cory Lance and the Ross defense sealed the win. Weiker allowed three hits, struck out four and didn't walk a batter.

"That was Robby's best pitching so far," Fought said. "The ball was down. In the seven innings he's pitched so far, he was

up in the strike zone and got hurt by it."

Lance worked the final two innings for the save, and the Little Giants played errorless ball after the first inning.

"Cory had a fine performance in relief," Fought said. "We did a good job getting the defense in position."

Williamson relieved Johnson

after the fourth inning for PC.

The Redskins tallied an unearned run in the sixth inning off Lance when Matt Zetzer doubled and scored on two passed balls.

Mike Claus led off the Port Clinton fifth with a single and moved to second on a wild pitch.

Two outs later, Williamson popped up in front of home plate but Perry, Ross's third baseman,

dropped the ball. Claus was already around third base but headed back to second — across the infield — and was called out for running out of the baseline.

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Ross outlasts Oregon Clay

News-Messenger reports

Fremont Ross outlasted Oregon Clay Wednesday for an 11-10 high school baseball victory.

Ross, 5-4, scored eight unearned runs in the fifth inning.

The Little Giants, who had two hits in the fifth, took advantage of three Clay errors and six walks in the inning.

In other games, Clyde defeated Sandusky St. Mary's 8-4, Oak Harbor shut out Edison 3-0, Margaretta topped Port Clinton 7-4, Genoa beat Gibsonburg 7-1, Otsego pounded Woodmore 16-1, Northwood defeated Lakota 13-9 and Old Fort shut out Bettsville 11-0.

Jay Hartley was the winning pitcher for Ross despite pitching just one inning and giving up five runs. Hartley relieved starter Steve Fox. Ian Vardyan pitched to two batters, and Rob Weiker worked the final three innings for the save.

Ross overcame a 9-2 deficit with its eight-run fifth.

"We took it one base at a time," Ross coach Dan Fought said. "We just kept trying to make things happen."

Scott Mezinger had two hits, including his second home run, and drove in three runs for Ross. Chad Novitski also homered.

Bret Bruns, Clay's fourth reliever, took the loss.

The Eagles outhit the Little Giants 14-6.

Baseball

Edison's Tim Rowe held Oak Harbor to just three hits, but the Chargers fell to 3-2 and 0-2.

Margaretta 7, Port Clinton 4

Port Clinton committed five errors in the first two innings to help the Polar Bears build a 5-1 lead.

Winning pitcher Mike Lyons had three hits for Margaretta, 3-1 and 1-1 in the SBC.

Scott Calton took the loss for Port Clinton, 5-2 and 1-1.

Genoa 7, Gibsonburg 1

Brad Witt pitched a complete game as Genoa won its third straight game after five losses.

Witt, who allowed six hits, got the victory over Jerry Bateson.

Genoa, which got a pair of RBIs from John Phillips, had three double plays in the game.

Gibsonburg, 3-2 and 1-1 in the Suburban Lakes League, got two hits each from Bateson and Tom Busdeker.

Otsego 16, Woodmore 1

Woodmore committed 10 errors, falling to 0-5 and 0-2 in the SLL.

Roman Guerrero singled and doubled for the Wildcats.

Northwood 13, Lakota 9

Two hits each from Brian Boze, Mike Tyson and Jeff Hammonds wasn't enough for Lakota, 3-3 and 1-1 in the SLL.

Tyson and Hammonds scored

Little Giants lose by one; St. Joe falls 15-3

News-Messenger reports

Fremont Ross, which won a one-run game Wednesday, lost a 10-9 high school baseball decision at Maumee Thursday.

Ross scored four runs in the seventh inning before Maumee's Chad DiSalle struck out the last two batters he faced.

In other games, Elmwood beat Fremont St. Joseph Central Catholic 15-3, Tiffin Calvert nipped Old Fort 5-4, Danbury beat Oak Harbor 12-1, Tiffin Columbian whipped Port Clinton 13-1 and Toledo Central Catholic outscored Genoa 18-13.

Ross, 5-5, gave up six unearned runs in the third inning against the Panthers.

"That big third inning hurt us," Ross coach Dan Fought said. "Those errors always haunt us."

Ross, which edged Oregon Clay 11-10 Wednesday, committed two of its four errors in the third inning.

Baseball

The Little Giants scored three runs in the first inning, and Maumee tallied a run in each of the first two innings.

Ross got a run back in the fourth and another in the fifth, but the Panthers plated two in the sixth before Chris Benson's second home run of the game keyed Ross's four-run seventh.

Benson finished with four RBIs, and Chad Novitski and Terry Carter each had two of the Little Giants' 10 hits.

Maumee collected 13 hits off four Ross pitchers, including a home run by DiSalle.

DiSalle saved the game for Jeff Venable, while Ross starter Cory Lance took the loss.

Elmwood 15, St. Joe 3

Elmwood jumped to a 5-1 lead against losing pitcher Hans He-trick as St. Joe fell to 1-4.

P.J. Szakovits had the only two hits for the Crimson Streaks, who committed six errors.

"We have to be more consistent defensively," St. Joe coach Mike Gabel said, "and we have to hit the ball better."

"We made six errors and at least six more mental errors."

Elmwood, 4-2, collected nine hits in the game off three St. Joe pitchers.

Calvert 5, Old Fort 4

After Old Fort took a 4-3 lead in the top of the seventh, Greg Gosche's two-out, two-run single gave Calvert the Midland Athletic League win.

Old Fort, 3-3 and 2-2 in the MAL, had just two hits including Shawn Colvin's single in the seventh which scored Ryan Fry.

Reliever Jim Lee was the winning pitcher, while Doug Hoerig took the loss.

The Senecas improved to 4-3 and 2-0 in league play.

Danbury 12, Oak Harbor 1

Brian Sauvey pitched a two-hitter with 10 strikeouts for Danbury, 2-3.

Oak Harbor, 4-4, committed seven errors.

Losing pitcher Nathan Whitman allowed seven runs and nine of the Lakers' 11 hits.

Columbian 13, Port Clinton 1

The Tornados broke the game open with six unearned runs in the fifth inning, handing Port Clinton its third straight loss after five wins.

Toledo Central 18, Genoa 13

Brad Witt homered twice, and Junior Sanchez also homered and the Comets collected 17 hits in a losing effort.

Central Catholic, 6-2, broke Genoa's three-game winning streak.

Witt finished with four RBIs and Dave Hoffman scored three runs for the Comets, 3-6.

Vardyan, Ross down PC 8-3

Crimson Streaks, Old Fort chalk up MAL victories

News-Messenger reports

Ian Vardyan held Port Clinton hitless through 4½ innings Tuesday and Fremont Ross went on to an 8-3 high school baseball victory.

Vardyan worked through the fifth for Ross, 6-5, and Jay Hartley finished up.

In other games, Fremont St. Joseph Central Catholic defeated Hopewell-Loudon 7-3, Old Fort beat Bettsville 13-4, Oak Harbor defeated Danbury 6-1 in an Ottawa County Tournament semifinal, Margaretta edged Sandusky St. Mary's 4-2 and Genoa topped Ottawa Hills 9-4.

Vardyan allowed one run on one hit, with four strikeouts and no walks.

"He was very sharp," Ross coach Dan Fought said. "He was sharp down in the strike zone and he got them to go fishing at the high fastball."

The Little Giants scored two runs in the first inning, added two in the second and four more in the third.

The Redskins, 5-6 and the losers of six straight games, committed all six of their errors in the first three innings.

Jeff Zetzer was the starter and loser for Port Clinton, which scored an unearned run in the fourth inning and two unearned runs in the seventh.

Tate Young had two hits, including a home run, and drove in three runs for Ross.

Matt Zetzer had three of Port Clinton's eight hits.

Baseball

walked four to earn the decision over Jim Hoover.

The Crimson Streaks broke open a close game with a three-run sixth inning.

Old Fort 13, Bettsville 4

Jason Wickert led Old Fort's 13-hit attack with three hits, including a home run, and drove in three runs and scored twice.

The Stockaders, 5-3 and 4-2 in the MAL, scored two runs in the first inning, three in the third, five in the fifth and three in the sixth.

Bettsville, which collected 10 hits, slipped to 1-7 and 1-5 in league play.

Oak Harbor 6, Danbury 1

Dane Epling flirted with a no-hitter, holding the Lakers hitless through six innings before giving up a single to freshman Brent Gerrard in the seventh.

Epling struck out 13 and walked three.

Oak Harbor, 6-4, will play Genoa for the Ottawa County Tournament championship.

Brian Sauvey took the loss for Danbury, 2-5.

Margaretta 4, St. Mary's 2

Brad Downing scattered seven hits and Margaretta scored its four runs in the first three innings.

Greg Gasser, who had nine assists from his third base position, collected two of the Polar Bears' six hits including a double.

Margaretta improved to 4-2

Panthers outscore Little Giants 19-13

By TIM HARMON
Staff writer

Toledo Whitmer outlasted Fremont Ross 19-13 Wednesday in a three-hour high school baseball marathon at Anderson Field.

Whitmer, 14-2, pounded three Ross relievers for 17 runs after starter Steve Fox allowed two unearned runs on one hit in three innings.

"I wanted Fox to go five innings and let (Rob) Weiker finish," Ross coach Dan Fought said, "but Weiker's balls just looked like Melons coming in."

Weiker took the loss, yielding three home runs including a two-

run homer and a three-run shot by Mark Witrzykowski.

"We haven't had anyone hit long like that," Whitmer coach Rob Rose said. "We've hit two this year so to hit three in one game is surprising."

Andy Follas' two-run homer in the fifth inning preceded Witrzykowski's second blast, which gave the Panthers their first lead 9-7.

"I couldn't have thrown prettier strikes to those guys," Weiker said.

Whitmer capped the fifth with a pair of unearned runs off Cory Lance.

The Little Giants, 6-6, committed seven errors which led to nine unearned runs.

"Right there is the game," Fought said. "You can't do that against a ballclub like Whitmer. They're going to put the ball in play; they're not going to strike out."

"The errors are killing us. Defensively, we're horrible."

Ross took a 2-0 lead in the first inning when Terry Carter led off with a double and Chad Novitski followed with a triple. Novitski scored on shortstop Ron Lukasik's error.

Whitmer got on the board in the second when Fox, who walked four in his three innings of work, hit Eric Fritz who then stole second, moved to third on a wild pitch and scored on Todd Barbash's groundout.

Novitski's two-run single and Scott Mezinger's triple in the second inning gave Ross a 5-1 lead, but the Panthers made it 5-2 in the third when Chad Whiting walked, moved to third on a wild pitch and a fielder's choice and scored on a single by Follas.

Witrzykowski's two-run homer in the fourth made it 5-4, but Ross bounced back with two runs

in the bottom of the inning when Mezinger delivered a two-out, two-run single.

Whitmer's seven-run fifth made it 11-7, and the Panthers scored five runs in the sixth inning including four which were unearned.

Tate Young's gran slam capped the Little Giants' six-run sixth, which also included a run-scoring single by Novitski and a bases loaded walk to Dan Lopez.

Novitski's hit chased starter and winner Ryan Wolfe. Matt Durham walked Mezinger and

See ROSS, B-2

Ross

Continued From B-1

Lopez and gave up Young's homer upon entering the game.

The Panthers added three runs in the seventh after Lance loaded the bases on a walk, a single and a hit batsman. Jay Hartley relieved Lance and gave up a two-run single to Barbash and an RBI single to Mark Szymakinak.

Witrzykowski pitched a scoreless seventh.

Ross explodes for 26-6 victory over Macmen

News-Messenger reports

The Fremont Ross baseball team doubled its run production from Wednesday's loss to Toledo Whitmer, beating Toledo Macomber 26-6 Thursday.

The 26 runs were a season-high as were the Little Giants' 18 hits.

"I never thought we would hit the ball like this," Ross coach Dan Fought said.

Chris Benson, Scott Mezinger and Terry Carter led the Ross attack with home runs including a pair by Benson. Mezinger's homer was a grand slam in Ross's seven-run fourth inning and one of Benson's came with the bases loaded in a nine-run third.

In other games, Gibsonburg outscored Van Buren 15-14, Lakota defeated Oak Harbor 9-6 and Old Fort topped Hopewell-Loudon 8-5.

At Ross, the Little Giants scored four runs in the first inning and six in the second when Benson and Carter homered.

Benson and Mezinger finished with six and four RBIs, respectively, and Chad Novitski finished with three hits. Carter, Mezinger and Brian Miller scored four runs apiece.

Jim Kelly was the winning pitcher with relief help from Jay Hartley.

Ross improved to 7-6, and Macomber slipped to 4-6.

Baseball

single and Chris Carper's suicide squeeze which scored Bryan Stahl and Beaber all the way from second.

Tom Busdeker pitched a scoreless seventh for the save.

Busdeker and Beaber each had three of Gibsonburg's eight hits. Busdeker and Carper drove in four runs apiece and Beaber finished with three RBIs.

Reliever Chris Stillings took the loss for Van Buren, 9-4.

Lakota 9, Oak Harbor 6

Lakota scored five runs in the fifth inning after Oak Harbor took a 6-4 lead with a four-run fourth.

Brian Boze, who pitched the third, fourth and fifth innings in relief of Alan Hunt, was the winning pitcher. Randy Brown pitched a scoreless seventh for the save.

Nathan Whitman, who relieved starter Jamey Rollheiser in the fourth, took the loss. Dane Epling pitched the sixth.

Boze, who drove in three runs, and Mike Hernandez each had two of Lakota's eight hits.

The Raiders improved to 4-5 and the Rockets fell to 6-6.

Old Fort 8, Hopewell-Loudon 5

Old Fort scored four runs in the sixth in the Midland Athletic League game.

St. Joe wins second straight; Whitmer blasts Ross

News-Messenger reports

Fremont St. Joseph Central Catholic won its second straight high school baseball game Wednesday, defeating Seneca East 6-3 in a Midland Athletic League game at Attica.

P.J. Szakovits and Rick Holland had three hits apiece, and Tim Meek pitched a complete game with six strikeouts and one walk for St. Joe, 7-8 and 5-4 in the MAL.

In other games, Toledo Whitmer beat Fremont Ross 16-9, Lakota whipped Woodmore 12-1, Elmwood topped Gibsonburg 6-3, Otsego defeated Genoa 7-4, Edison beat Clyde 10-6, Port Clinton defeated Huron 7-4, Sandusky St. Mary's pounded Oak

Baseball

Harbor 10-4 and Perkins beat Margaretta 10-4.

Szakovits and Holland scored two runs apiece for the Crimson Streaks, who outhit Seneca East 12-8. Ken Gonya, who drove in two runs, and A.J. Young added two hits.

The Tigers slipped to 2-11 and 1-6 in the MAL.

Whitmer 16, Ross 9

Whitmer scored five runs in the second inning, six in the third and four in the fourth, and Ross made it respectable with a seven-run seventh.

Chad Novitski had two of the Little Giants' eight hits, while

the Panthers collected 15 off started and loser Rob Weiker and reliever Cory Lance.

Ryan Wolf was the winning pitcher as Whitmer, the third ranked Class AAA team in Ohio according to The Associated Press, improved to 18-2.

The Little Giants fell to 8-8.

Lakota 12, Woodmore 1

Ryan Tyson pitched a six-hitter, and Lakota scored seven runs in three innings off losing pitcher Ron Taylor.

Tyson had two hits, including a double, and drove in three runs for the Raiders, 8-5 and 4-3 in the Suburban Lakes League. Brian Boze added two RBIs.

The Wildcats fell to 1-11 and 0-7 in Suburban Lakes League

play.

Elmwood 6, Gibsonburg 3

Mike Combs and Rob Wickard combined on a five-hitter as the Royals improved to 10-5 and 5-3 in the SLL and the Golden Bears fell to 7-6 and 3-4.

Tom Busdeker homered, tripled, drove in two runs and scored twice for Gibsonburg, which also got two hits from Bryan Stahl.

Jerry Bateson took the complete-game loss.

Otsego 7, Genoa 4

The Knights jumped out to a 5-0 lead after four innings and held on for the SLL victory.

Genoa fell to 9-8 and 5-2 in

See BASEBALL, B-4

Baseball

Continued from B-1

topped Danbury 4-2.

North Baltimore outhit Old Fort 11-8, but the Stockaders committed only one error behind the complete-game pitching of Steve Adelsperger.

"North Baltimore has a nice hitting team all through the lineup," Old Fort coach Jack Kaemming said. "We made the plays; it was a good defensive game."

Jason Wickert, who drove in three runs and scored four, and Brian Miller, who also drove in three runs, had two hits apiece for Old Fort.

"We had the hitting when we needed it with men on base," Kaemming said.

St. Wendelin 4, St. Joe 1

The Mohawks scored a run in the first, two in the second and one in the sixth and outhit St. Joe 11-3.

The Crimson Streaks scored their run in the second when A.J. Young scored on Steve Kelbley's sacrifice fly.

Kevin Furlong was the losing pitcher and Aaron Myers got the win as St. Joe fell to 7-9 and 5-5 in the MAL and St. Wendelin improved to 8-5.

Ross 7, Fostoria

Jon Hetrick was the winning pitcher, with relief help from Cory Lance and Steve Fox, in his first varsity start.

Hetrick pitched $5\frac{1}{3}$ innings,

Lance pitched to two batters and Fox earned a save by working the final $1\frac{1}{3}$ innings. Fox struck out the side in the seventh — all on called strikes.

Ross, 9-8, led 4-0 when Fostoria scored two runs in the top of the fifth. The Little Giants countered with three runs in the bottom of the fifth and held on after the Redmen scored three in the sixth.

Chris Benson, who drove in three runs, and Justin Perry, who scored twice, each had two of Ross's eight hits. The Redmen, 5-10, collected 10 hits.

Eastwood 4, Lakota 3

Wade Nitz' two-run double with one out in the seventh inning earned second-seeded Eastwood the right to play Edison Saturday for the sectional championship.

Randy Brown, who took the loss for Lakota after allowing five hits and striking out eight, homered for Lakota. Eric Lipfert had two of the Raiders' six hits.



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Ross, Findlay set for showdown

News-Messenger reports

FINDLAY — Fremont Ross will host Findlay at Anderson Field Thursday for the right to play Lancaster Saturday for the Buckeye Central Conference championship.

The Little Giants and Trojans split a doubleheader Tuesday. Findlay won the opener 3-2 and Ross took the nightcap 8-6.

Rob Weiker turned in his finest outing of the season, according to Ross coach Dan Fought in the first game.

"Rob had a great performance," Fought said. "Everything was down in the strike

zone, and he threw the curveball real well over the top.

"It was the best his curveball has been all season."

All three runs Weiker allowed were unearned, including one in the bottom of the seventh. The Little Giants committed three errors in the game but just one in the nightcap.

Ross, 10-11, tied the score in the top of the seventh when Dan Lopez scored on Chris Benson's triple to right-center.

Blaise Winch was the complete-game winner for Findlay.

"We had a lot of hanging heads," Fought said. "(Steve)

Fox had thrown on Saturday (a 5-4 loss to Toledo Whitmer), and we had just used the best (pitcher) we had."

Fox, who drove in Ross's only other run in the opener, wanted the ball in the second game despite just two days rest. He scattered nine hits in 6½ innings and didn't walk a batter through five innings before walking five in the final 1½ innings he worked.

Jay Hartley gave up a run-scoring single in the seventh before saving notching a save.

The Little Giants collected 11 hits off losing pitcher Kevin Robertson in the nightcap, including

two each by Terry Carter, Scott Mezinger and Nick Wolf.

Justin Perry and Carter each homered with a man on in the fourth as Ross took a 6-2 lead.

Lopez, who had two hits in the opener, added two RBIs.

Findlay slipped to 11-5.

"The kids felt great after winning the second game," Fought said. "They have a chance of reaching one of their goals."

"I hope they want to play Lancaster with a passion."

The Golden Gales won a round-robin tournament with Newark and Zanesville for the BCC's south division title.

Jeff Wightman took the loss for Perkins, 3-10 and 3-6 in the SBC.

Clay 13, Ross 8

Ross, which committed nine errors, led 5-3 after five innings.

Clay scored six runs in the sixth and added four in the seventh.

Scott Mezinger, who drove in five runs, Terry Carter and Tom Contreras homered for the Little Giants, 10-12. Contreras was appearing in only his second game with the Ross varsity.

Chad Novitski and Carter scored two runs apiece.

Jon Hetrick took the loss. Hetrick

pitched 5½ innings, and Jay Hartley finished up.

Clay improved to 15-6.

Lakota 11, Genoa 4

The Raiders exploded for seven runs in the top of the eighth inning for the Suburban Lakes League win.

Randy Brown was the winning pitcher and Chris Mathews took the loss. Brown struck out six and did not walk a batter.

Ryan Tyson doubled twice and drove in four runs for Lakota, which also got two RBIs apiece from Eric Lippert and Al Hunt and two hits from Kurt Sams.

The Raiders improved to 10-6 and 6-3 in the SLL. The Comets are 9-11 and 5-4.

Findlay 14, Ross 3

Ross fell to 10-13 and 1-2 in the Buckeye Central Conference, while the Trojans improved to 13-6 and 2-1, respectively.

Findlay pounded out 15 hits and used five errors by the Little Giants to make a loser of Rob Weiker. Scott Garlock allowed seven hits to pick up the victory.

Nick Wolf and Tate Young each had two hits for Ross.

Northview crushes Ross; Lakota nips Gibsonburg

News-Messenger reports

Brian Miller's solo home run in the fourth inning was Ross's only offense Monday afternoon in a 15-1 non-league loss at Sylvania Northview.

In other games, Lakota nipped Gibsonburg 3-2 and Elmwood ripped Genoa 22-9.

Ross, 10-14, trailed by a 9-0 deficit by the time Miller hit his second homer of the season. Jon Hetrick, 1-1, took the loss.

Bill Lary held the Little Giants to five hits as Northview improved to 7-14. The Wildcats connected for 19 hits, including five doubles and a triple.

Lakota 3, Gibsonburg 2

At Gibsonburg, Randy Brown, 7-3, got the win despite giving up 10 hits. Tom Busdaker pitched a six-hitter for the Golden Bears, 4-6 in the Suburban Lakes League.

The Raiders, who got RBIs

Baseball

from Mike Hernandez and Brown, finished with four errors. Ryan Tyson doubled for the winners, while Jon Beaber and John Peck each had two-base hits for the losers.

Elmwood 22, Genoa 9

Visiting Elmwood exploded for six runs in the first, five in the second and seven in the third against the Comets, 9-13 and 5-6 in the SLL.

Brad Witt, 3-3, took the loss for the Comets. Witt hit a grand slam home run in the third inning to put Genoa on the board, and the Comets scored at least one run in each of the last four innings. Witt also doubled, Andrew Gladden added a triple and Eric Asman singled in the seventh for the Comets' only other hits.