

Little Giants need to make a pitch

By TIM HARMON
Staff writer

Fremont Ross coach Dan Fought wants to find out which of his eight pitchers wants the baseball — really wants it.

"I can throw eight guys, but I'm looking for four tough peanuts out there," Fought said Friday night after the Little Giants finished an intrasquad game. "If three of them come through out of those eight, I think

High School Baseball

we're awful tough to beat."

The Little Giants compiled a 13-12 record last year, including 8-4 in the Great Lakes League, with a team full of juniors.

Although graduation losses included top hitter Ryan Wagner (.429), top pitcher Shane Moran (4-4, 1.53 ERA, 4 saves), top run-producer Kyle Kusmer (21 RBI)

and the guts of the defense — second baseman Gary Rakes and center fielder Brian Reinbolt, Fought said the Little Giants should be better.

"We're better defensively," he said. "We have better speed than last year; we have better offense from last year from the way I look at potential."

The biggest question: "Have we replaced the ace," Fought said. "Moran was a bulldog."

Left-hander Eric Brough won six of his eight decisions, including a no-hitter against Napoleon, and had a 1.97 ERA last year. Bryan Coonrod (2-2, 2.95) averaged more than a strikeout per inning.

Nick Jurski holds down the No. 3 spot, Matt Fox (0-3, 4.85) is battling Alex Pate and Eric Mullholand for the fourth spot.

"I think overall we're going to be a better club than last year if

the pitching is as good as what it should be," Fought said. "Brough had a good season last year; he should be better...should be."

"Jurski had a nice season at the JV level; he should be a lot better for us. Coonrod had an outstanding summer for the legion team and pitched 19 strong innings for us last spring; he should have a wonderful season."

See ROSS, B3

Ross hopes for solid pitching

Continued From B1

Fought will build the lineup around catcher Bucky Byers (.286, 15 RBI). He's expecting more from third baseman Tim Rakes (.244) and Ryan Shively (.180).

"Tim Rakes and Ryan Shively have played since they were sophomores. Now it's their time to shine," Fought said. "Bucky Byers is ready to be primed. Those are three leaders I'm looking for with the stick right off the bat."

Rob Stotz can build on his .297 average as the regular second baseman.

Utility infielder Sam Root and right fielder Derek Thiessen both batted over .400 for the junior varsity a year ago, and shortstop Terry Cisco batted over .350 for the reserves.

"Those are three bats that I've got in the lineup this year, as far as expectations, that I didn't have last year," Fought said.

Cisco also helps stabilize the defense. He's a natural shortstop; Kusmer was converted there last year.

Graham Hogan (.207) is the left fielder, with Travis Johnson in center and Jeremy Haslinger as a backup in the outfield.

The 1996 edition of the Little Giants doesn't have as much depth as past Ross teams. With Thiessen and Jurski also able to pitch, however, the pitching staff is deep.

"Which is where I want to be deep anyway," Fought said.

Ross opens the season Monday at Tiffin Columbian.

Little Giants anxious for first win

Perrysburg defeats Fremont Ross at chilly Alumni Field

By TIM HARMON
Staff writer

Perrysburg batters made things happen in chilly conditions Monday. Fremont Ross hitters were too anxious to do so.

That was the difference in the Yellow Jackets' 10-4 non-league victory in the Little Giants' home opener at Alumni Field.

"We were too impatient at the plate," Ross coach Dan Fought

said. "We're not waiting for good pitch selection or pitch count."

Ross (0-2) seemed especially

Monday
Perrysburg 10
Ross 4

Today
Ross at Findlay
4:30 p.m.

"We had a big advantage today," Perrysburg coach Dave Hall said.

"We've been out in the cold weather more."

Fought asked the Little Giants to take a different approach to their deficit — seek a run at a time instead of five at once.

"It's is demoralizing, especially in cold weather," he said. "The pitcher has the advantage."

Jeff Hall pitched a complete game, scattering nine hits with two strikeouts and two walks.

Hall, who had the Little Giants hitting off their front foot, had seven assists and a putout.

"He changes speeds very well," Coach Hall said. "He throws the curve, a changeup and the knuckleball."

Hall got all the runs he needed in the second. A two-run double by Scott Mullins capped the inning, but it was helped by Ross errors on three successive plays and two hit batsmen by starter

and loser Nick Jurski.

Jurski struck out five, walked two and hit four batters before Derek Thiessen took over with one out in the sixth.

"I hate throwing the ball away, and I hate when we're not smart on the hill," Fought said. "We're not a smart baseball team yet."

Or a patient one.

■ How they scored, B2

Little Giants top Polar Bears for first victory

News-Messenger reports

Good pitching, good hitting and good defense added up to the Fremont Ross Little Giants' first victory of the season Tuesday.

Ross backed the complete-game pitching of Bryan Coonrod with 11 hits and committed just two errors in an 11-3 victory over Margaretta at Lions Field.

Tim Rakes, Terry Cisco, Graham Hogan and Ryan Shively all had two hits for the Little Giants (1-2).

Roundup

"It was nice to see some people break out," Ross coach Dan Fought said. "Hogan's hits were nice hits because he was deep in the count."

Coonrod struck out one and walked three.

"Coonrod was impressive," Fought said. "He was around the plate the whole game."

Rakes led the defense from his third base spot with five assists.

"He gets a lot of action at that position," Fought said. "It's nice to see him come through...the glove is really important."

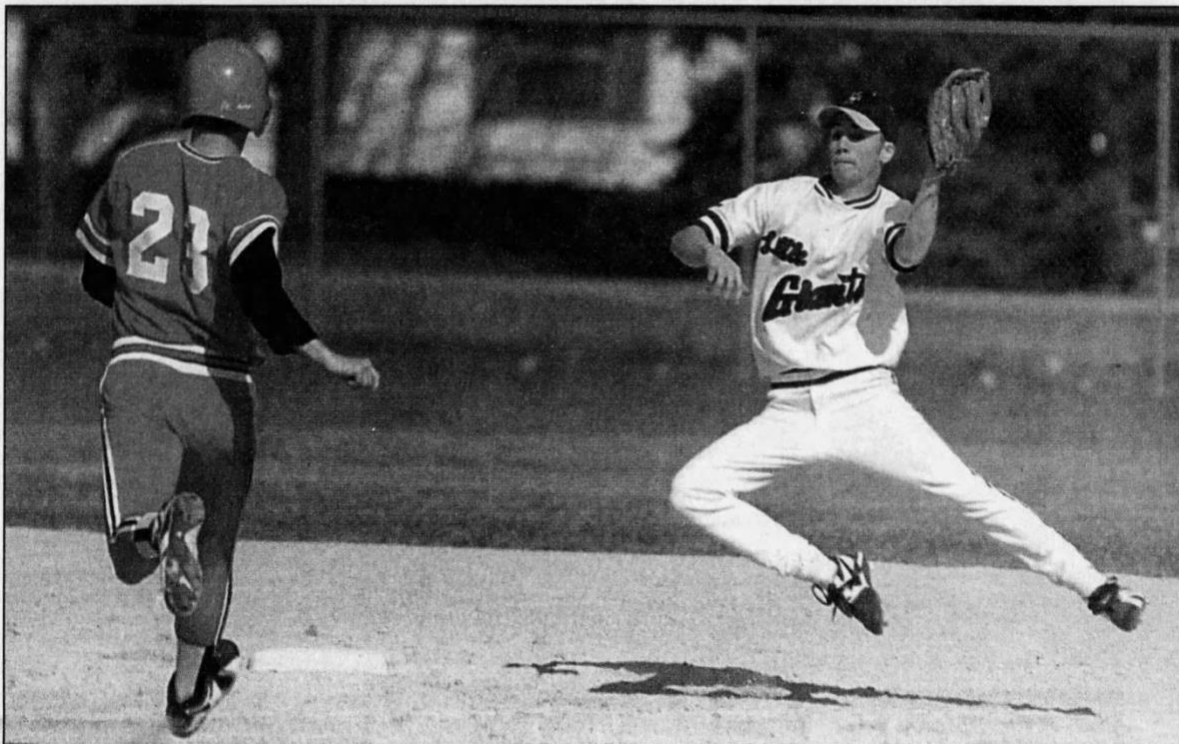
Ross took a 2-1 lead after one inning and scored three in the third to make a loser of Chris Crum.

Shane Ruthsatz had two of Margaretta's six hits.

The Polar Bears are winless in three games.

In other games:

'Focused' Fremont routs Redskins



TERRY CISCO of Ross catches a wide throw as Port Clinton's Derek Carlson steals second base Thursday in the second inning of Ross's 13-2 win. News-Messenger/ Andrew Morrison

Six-run second, seven-run fourth provide runs for Ross

By **TIM HARMON**
Staff writer

The biggest concern for a coach after a team puts together a big inning early in a game is that the players become content.

"I worry about them relaxing," Fremont Ross coach Dan Fought said after the Little Giants added a seven-run fourth inning to a six-run second in a 13-2 non-league victory over Port Clinton Thursday at Alumni Field.

"The second thing is I worry about them staying focused. When you have a lead, that's the time to settle down and think more what you want to do with the baseball."

Ross (2-2) collected nine hits, including two by Bucky Byers and Ryan Shively, and was aid-

ed by nine walks and five Port Clinton errors.

"Situational defense is our biggest problem," Port Clinton coach Dan Timmons said. "We have to keep practicing."

The Little Giants kept the pressure on, striking out just five times.

"A lot of our guys are picking up confidence at the plate," Fought said.

Ross also made just two errors — both in the fourth inning by Derek Thiessen, who was playing on a badly bruised toe.

"The infield is getting more settled," Fought said. "They know what they're doing and are attacking the ball."

Three Ross pitchers combined for the win. Alex Pate started and pitched four

Thursday

Ross	13
Port Clinton.....	2

Friday

Clay at Ross, 4:30 p.m.

innings for the victory. Matt Fox worked two innings in relief and Eric Mullholland finished.

"I was happy with the way Pate competed," Fought said. "Fox threw as hard as he has this spring, and the word I got from Port Clinton was that the curveball was hard to pick up. When things were decided, I wanted to get Mullholland some work."

Pate allowed three hits, including a double by Steve Laird, walked two and hit a batter with three strikeouts. Fox struck out the side in the

sixth, and Mullholland struck out the side in the seventh.

Port Clinton (1-3) got good relief work from Tony Greear, who slowed down Ross after taking over for starter Dave Reichman.

"I didn't expect to get much out of Tony, but we had to use him because of the people we were missing (because of senior trips)," Timmons said.

The Redskins scored single runs in the third and fourth to make it 6-2 before Ross broke it open by sending 13 men to the plate in the bottom of the fourth.

"We kept trying the stuff that we hope will work offensively," Timmons said. "I'm still trying to put pressure on them offensively."

So was Ross.

Ross batters take cue from weather for win

By BOB MARKER
Staff writer

Oregon Clay found out it could not push Mother Nature around. When the Eagles tried, the ole girl teamed up with Fremont Ross and produced an 11-9 Great Lakes League baseball win for the Little Giants.

The win was the third straight for Ross, raising its record to 3-2 and 1-1 in the GLL race. Clay slipped to 6-2 and fell to 1-2 in league play.

The game started in near 80-degree temperatures but with Clay leading 5-1 in the fifth inning, a weather front blew across the expanse of Alumni Field. The tem-

perature dropped about 25 degrees in seconds. A strong wind blowing out to left field became a stronger wind to right.

The rain-laced wintery blast was so severe, it sent players and fans scrambling for extra clothing.

With storm clouds threatening and the strong wind raking the field, the game was halted for about 10 minutes in the fifth inning with Clay leading 5-1.

"I think they tried to put the rush job on it to get the game in," Ross coach Dan Fought said. "All of a sudden they went away from the way they were playing to try to get the game in."

Clay starter Ryan Hugulley

Friday

Ross 11
Oregon Clay 9

Today

Toledo Woodward at Ross (doubleheader)

had held Ross to one hit in four innings before losing his control. He was relieved by Aaron Franky with one out in the Ross fifth.

"He (Hugulley) was throwing strikes," Fought said, "but all of a sudden they are telling him to pick the pace up and he could not throw strikes."

The game would have had to go at least five innings to be a complete game.

Clay coach Richard Kandik did

not blame Mother Nature for the change in his team.

"I think once we took that break," Kandik said, "I think we lost our concentration and Fremont came out hitting the ball. Plus our pitchers could not get the ball over the plate and that was the game."

Ross came up with three runs in its fifth after the break and ran off seven more in the sixth for an 11-5 lead. Clay pitchers issued six walks in the two innings.

The bottom of the batting order keyed the Ross resurgence.

Sixth-batter Travis Johnson tripled and doubled in the sixth as 11 Little Giants batted. Sev-

enth batter Terry Cisco singled in a sixth-inning run and Ryan Shively, batting eighth, singled in a run in the fifth and doubled in another in the sixth. Ninth hitter Graham Hogan walked in both innings with all three of the last three hitters in the Ross lineup scoring two runs apiece. Johnson drove in two runs.

Bucky Byers drove in three runs for the Little Giants.

Clay did not go easily, scoring four runs with two outs in the seventh, but the Eagles' early tussle with Mother Nature had taken its toll.

■ Local roundups, B2

Reliever saves Ross, 14-12

News-Messenger reports

Fremont Ross spelled relief J-U-R-S-K-I Tuesday.

Nick Jurski slowed Bedford over the final four innings, and the Little Giants outlasted Bedford 14-12 in a Great Lakes League game.

Jurski came on after Bryan Coonrod allowed the first four Bedford batters to reach base in the fourth inning.

"He was nice and relaxed," Ross coach Dan Fought said. "We told him to come with his best stuff. They never hit his best stuff; his best stuff was the fast-ball."

Jurski allowed four hits, two unearned runs, struck out four, walked one and hit a batter.

Bedford's three-run fourth cut a Ross lead to 11-10. The Little Giants (4-2 and 2-1) scored two runs in the sixth and added one in the seventh.

Ross collected 13 hits but committed nine errors.

"The kids swang the bats real well," Fought said. "The errors were on balls that were hard hit."

"Later in the ballgame, we had key hits."

Graham Hogan and Derek Thiessen had run-scoring singles in the sixth, with Thiessen's coming with two out. Ross scored its final run, executing a double

steal from a first and third situation.

Thiessen finished with three hits, while Bucky Byers and Rob Stotz both had two.

Sam Root, Byers, Stotz, Travis Johnson and Terry Cisco all scored two runs.

Losing pitcher Jason Hebert, who didn't make it out of the second as Ross scored 10 runs in the first two innings, homered and doubled to lead the Bedford offense.

The Mules are 4-3 and 1-2.

In one other game:

Edison 1, Oak Harbor 0

Jim Roe pitched a two-hitter and drove in the winning run with a single in the sixth inning as Edison won for the sixth time without a loss.

Roe struck out nine and walked two. His single scored Dan Bibb, who singled, moved to second on a sacrifice bunt and advanced to third on a fielder's choice.

Oak Harbor (4-4 and 0-1 in the Sandusky Bay Conference) had the bases loaded with one out in the second and had a runner on third with two outs in the sixth.

Both Oak Harbor hits, singles by Phil Joseph and Randy Schiets, came in the second.

Brian Schultz took the complete-game loss, striking out two and walking one.

Ross, St. Joe, Clyde among winners

News-Messenger reports

Fremont Ross took over third place in the Great Lakes League Wednesday with a 17-2 victory over Fostoria at Alumni Field.

Ross (5-2 and 3-1) outhit the Redmen 11-2 and committed one error to Fostoria's eight.

The Little Giants, who scored five runs in the second inning and five more in the third, trail Toledo Whitmer (3-0) and Sylvania Northview (2-1) in the GLL standings.

Eric Mullholland got the win with five innings of relief pitching after Eric Brough left the game after an inning with soreness in his arm.

Mullholland allowed a run on one hit, with 12 strikeouts. He walked five and hit a batter.

Tim Rakes, Bucky Byers and Rob Stotz all had two hits for Ross. Stotz drove in three runs, with Rakes and Byers driving home two.

Fostoria, 4-2, is winless in two GLL games.

In other games:

St. Joe 16, Seneca East 4

Matt Hirt broke open a close game with a three-run homer in the fourth inning, and St. Joe added nine runs in the fifth inning in the Midland Athletic League game at Conner Park.

St. Joe (5-1 and 2-0) outhit Seneca East 11-4.

Hirt, who finished with four RBI, Mark Gillenwater and Nate Dray all had two hits.

Kyle Kayden pitched five innings for the victory, allowing one earned run on three hits with four walks and two strikeouts. Dan Kalo finished, pitching two scoreless innings.

Losing pitcher Chris Hafner homered for Seneca East (0-5 and 0-2).

Clyde 11, Port Clinton 7

Adam Greenslade homered, had three of Clyde's 13 hits and drove in four runs to help back the complete-game pitching of Wade Conner in the Sandusky Bay Conference.

Colin Bennett, Adam Turner, Jim Tyree and Dan Hemminger all added two hits for the Fliers (2-4 and 1-0).

Port Clinton (1-4 and 0-1) collected 12 hits after falling behind 4-0.

Lakota 5, Gibsonburg 1

Freshman pitcher Dan Burdette won the decision over Gibsonburg's Mike Jividen in the Suburban Lakes League game.

Lakota (2-5 and 1-0) scored three runs in the fourth inning on a two-out, bases-loaded single by Jared Lowery.

Burdette struck out seven and walked four before Bryce Brockschmidt took over with one out in the sixth. Jividen struck out four and walked five, and Josh Donnell pitched the final two innings.

Gibsonburg (6-2 and 0-1) committed four

errors.

Eastwood 16, Woodmore 4

Eastwood took advantage of eight Woodmore errors to win for the third time in four games. Alan Witker homered to lead the Eagles' offense in the SLL opener.

The Eagles knocked out Woodmore starter Mike Cairns after three innings then scored seven runs in the fourth.

Quentin Stang had three hits and drove in two runs for Woodmore (3-2 and 0-1).

North Baltimore 10, Old Fort 0

Ryan Clark pitched a one-hitter with 19 strikeouts in the MAL game.

Clark took a no-hitter into the fourth inning before losing pitcher Eric Hoover singled. The Stockaders put just two other balls in play, with one of them turned into a double play following Clark's lone walk.

Brad Smith and Teddy Francisco homered for the Tigers.

North Baltimore is 4-1 and 2-0 in the MAL. Old Fort is 1-5 and 0-1.

Perkins 5, Oak Harbor 4

Dan Barnum's three-run double highlighted a four-run seventh inning for Sandusky Perkins, who sent Oak Harbor to its fifth loss in nine games and second without a win in the SBC.

Barnum's hit came off Nathan Denman. Randy Shiets and Ron Lajti both had two hits for the Rockets.

Columbian 11, Ross 7

Ross 000 250 0 — 7 4 4

Columbian 043 004 x — 11 10 1

WP: Kory Winkler. LP: Matt Fox. HR:

Bucky Byers (R), Jamie Detillion (C), Dave Porter (C); 2B: Tim Rakes (R), Byers (R), Detillion (C), Burgderfer (C).

Records: Ross 5-3, Columbian 5-1.

Jurski, Johnson key win against Bowling Green

News-Messenger reports

Fremont Ross pitcher Nick Jurski did not allow an earned run in a complete game victory Saturday against Bowling Green.

Jurski struck out eight batters and allowed just three hits in the 10-4 win, which improved the Little Giants' record to 6-3, 3-1 in the Great Lakes League.

Travis Johnson homered and drove in four runs for Ross and teammate Sam Root went 3-for-4 with two RBI in the home win. Bowling Green is now 7-3, 3-1 in league play.

St. Joe 13-10, Norwalk St. Paul 2-8

St. Joe got two-hit games from Matt Hirt, Nick Halm and Bobby Druckenmiller in a 13-2 win in the opener of a doubleheader.

The Crimson Streaks trailed 1-0 in the bottom of the third inning when they exploded for eight runs, including a three-run home run by Matt Hirt.

In the second game, Nate Dray homered and Doug Abdoo doubled twice for the Crimson Streaks.

Abdoo and Bobby Druckenmiller each had three hits in the game and St. Joe (7-1, 2-0) rallied for four runs in the bottom of the seventh.

Mohawk 4, Old Fort 3

Mohawk's Jason Karcher doubled home the winning run in the bottom of the eighth inning for the winning run.

The Warriors tied the game at 3-3 in the fifth inning when Tony Spurlock stole home. Old Fort (2-6, 0-2) got doubles from Jeff Miller and Nick Strausser.

Eastwood 17, Gibsonburg 2

Eastwood scored 13 runs in the third inning to beat the Golden Bears in a game stopped after five innings.

Gibsonburg's Doug Miller drove in Michael Jividen in the first inning and Nick Kaemming knocked in Brian Riedmaier for the Golden Bears other run. Gibsonburg is 6-4, 0-3 in league play; Eastwood is 4-4 and 3-0.

Fostoria 17, Lakota 3

The Redmen scored eight runs in the third inning and collected 15 hits against the Raiders.

Sixth-inning homer beats Little Giants

News-Messenger reports

Mansfield Madison won a preview of a sectional tournament game next month by defeating Fremont Ross 7-5 Wednesday.

Tark Neuhardt's two-run homer in the bottom of the sixth off Ross reliever Eric Mullholland provided the winning runs as Madison improved to 5-7 and Ross fell to 6-4.

The Little Giants tied the score 5-5 with three runs in the top of the sixth.

Baseball Roundup

Bucky Byers walked, and Rob Stotz bounced to the mound before Travis Johnson drove in a run with a double. Terry Cisco reached on an error and Ryan Shively walked one out later to load the bases.

Derek Thiessen's two-run single tied the game, but Sam Root popped out to end the threat.

Steve Thurber, who also homered for the Rams, was the winning pitcher in relief.

Madison knocked out Ross starter with four runs in the third inning.

Tim Rakes had two hits for Ross.

Whitmer pitcher finds zone, shuts down Ross

By TIM HARMON
Staff writer

Another episode of good pitching beats good hitting took place Friday at Alumni Field.

Toledo Whitmer right-hander Matt Speegle battled wind, cold, some shaky defense and early control problems to check Fremont Ross on two hits in a 14-2 Great Lakes League victory.

The Little Giants entered the game batting .325.

Todd Calcamuogio and Mark Hamilton homered as Whitmer (8-2, 4-1) took a 7-2 lead, and the Panthers scored seven runs in the seventh.

Speegle retired 11 of the last 12 batters he faced.

"He's smart," Ross coach Dan Fought said. "He learned the strike zone. The umpire was calling the low strike, and he kept it

Friday	
Whitmer	14
Ross	2

Today
Ross at Findlay
4:30 p.m.

there."

Ross (6-5, 3-2) left the bases loaded in the second inning after answering Whitmer's two second-inning runs with two in the bottom of the inning.

"If we break on top in that inning, we put the pressure on them," Fought said. "Maybe they change their game a little bit."

After Terry Cisco's bunt base hit produced a run and Ryan Shively drove in a run with a groundout, Derek Thiessen walked to load the bases. Sam Root grounded out to third on a close play at first.

Speegle, spotting his fastball and getting his curveball over for strikes from the third inning on, did not allow a hit after Cisco's bunt.

"He's a competitor," Whitmer coach Rob Rose said. "He's got a good fastball, but he's a better pitcher when he's getting the breaking pitch over."

Root's infield hit in the first was the only other hit allowed by Speegle, who walked four and struck out three.

Whitmer, which committed three of its four errors in the second, collected 13 hits.

"We haven't been hitting as you would expect coming into the season," Rose said. "Until today, we've only had a few guys who have been consistent."

Ross plays at Findlay at 4:30 p.m. Monday.

Top performers

Baseball

Pitcher: Old Fort's Tony Florence pitched a complete game and did not allow an earned run, striking out 13 Vanlue batters in a 6-1 win.

Batter: Woodmore's Quentin Stang had three hits, including a home run, and drove in three of the Wildcats' runs in a 7-6 win over Northwood.

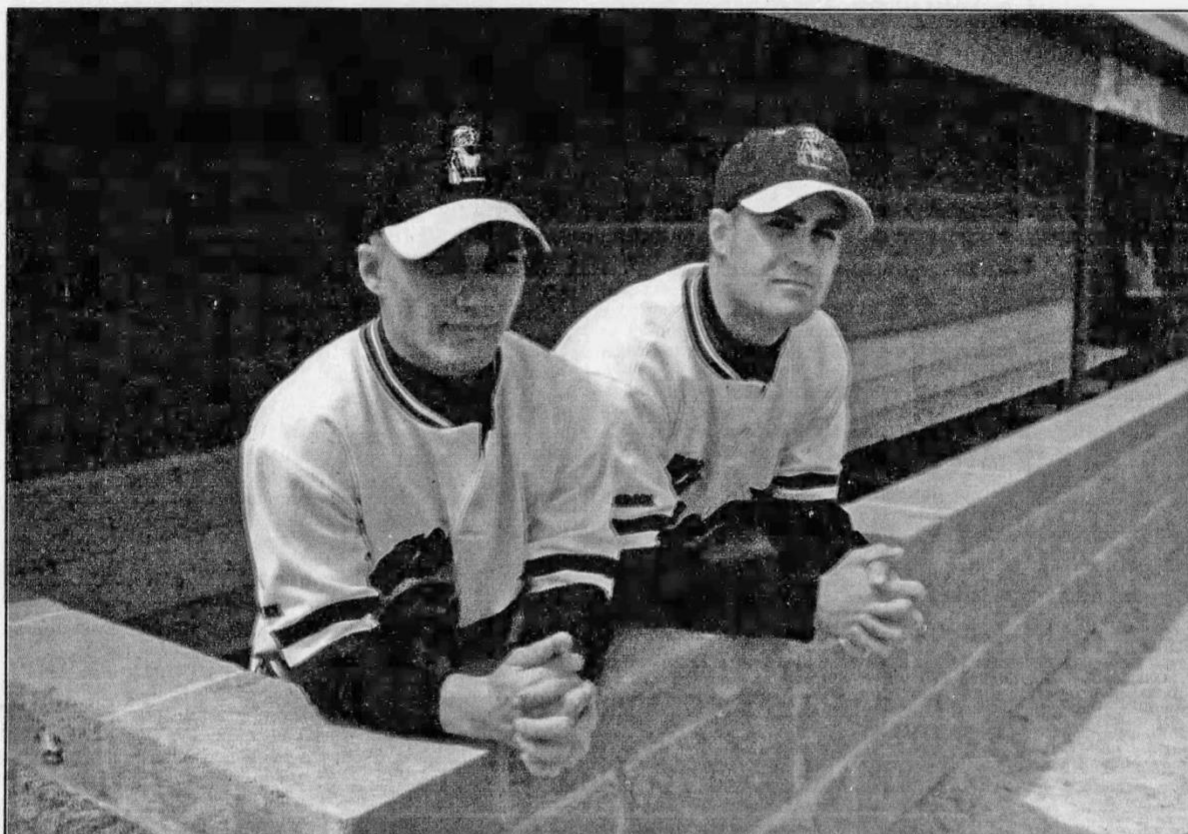
Softball

Pitcher: Oak Harbor's Erin Radsick allowed four hits, struck out seven and did not walk a batter as the Rockets beat Huron 19-8.

Batter: Fremont Ross's Nicki Pelfrey doubled, tripled and scored three runs in the Little Giants' 8-2 win over Whitmer.

High School roundups, B3

Leadership times 2



TIM RAKES (LEFT) AND BUCKY BYERS are seniors and leaders for the Fremont Ross baseball team.

News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

Tim Rakes profile

Team: Ross
Grade: Sr.
Position: Second year as starting third baseman
Bats: Right
Throws: Right
Batting average: .387

Little Giant seniors have differing styles

By **TIM HARMON**
Staff writer

There's one player who's always chattering in the Fremont Ross dugout. There's another who doesn't say much at all.

The contrast is stark, but there's no mistaking that Bucky Byers and Tim Rakes serve the dual role of leader for the Little Giants.

Byers, the talkative one, and Rakes, the quiet one, have helped Ross rebound from an 0-2 start to win six of nine games entering this week.

With a lot on the minds of all 16-, 17- and 18-year-old boys during the spring, leadership is important for successful high school baseball.

"It's important for us because we're not a powerhouse team,"

said Byers, a senior catcher. "In order for us to win, we have to be real emotional for seven innings."

Byers says he talks to keep himself loose as much as he does to keep his teammates focused.

"(Leadership) has always been natural for me," he said. "The last two years I wasn't too vocal because it's always been a senior role."

Rakes, a senior third baseman, learned that way as well.

"Since I was a sophomore, I learned from the seniors," he said. "I don't say much, but I learned that they didn't quite get the job done."

Talk doesn't mean much if you don't produce on the field. Both Byers and Rakes are producing.

Entering this week, Byers was batting .406 (13-for-32) with a home run and four doubles. He's driven in 16 runs and scored 15. Rakes was hitting .353 (12-for-34) with three doubles. He's scored 14 times and has 14 RBIs.

"(Rakes) is my favorite type of player because I like a kid that hustles and shows enthusiasm on a daily basis," Ross coach Dan Fought said. "You don't have to push Tim Rakes. He's self-motivated."

"Bucky Byers is another kid that fits in that category."

Byers has eclipsed his 1995 RBI total by one already, and Rakes has one more hit than he had all of last season.

"Last year, we didn't have a

Bucky Byers profile

Team: Ross
Grade: Sr.
Position: Third year as the starting catcher
Bats: Right
Throws: Right
Batting average: .448

See **LITTLE GIANTS**, B2

Little Giants' leaders have different styles

Continued from B1

lot of guys who got on base a lot," Byers said. "This year, our first three guys are on constantly. When I get up, there's always somebody in scoring position."

Rakes follows Derek Thiessen and Sam Root in the batting order in front of Byers.

"I'm real comfortable with Derek and Sammy because they're both good

hitters," Rakes said. "There's no pressure on me whatsoever."

The steady play of Rakes at third base has helped solidify the Ross infield. Byers is in his third year behind the plate.

"Their leadership has been a big plus in turning things around from games one and two (losses to Sylvania Northview and Perrysburg)," Fought said. "They have totally taken charge of this ballclub."

Each in their own way.

Ross batters slump in loss



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

RYAN SHIVELY of Ross loses control of the ball Tuesday as Northview's Brian Lloyd dives safely back to first base in the Wildcats 5-2 win.

Little Giants rarely threaten in loss to Northview

By **TIM HARMON**
Staff writer

Hitting slumps are strange. Frustrations go up as batting averages go down.

The Fremont Ross Little Giants are at that point after Aaron Thrush and Sylvania Northview beat them 5-2 Tuesday at Alumni Field.

"We're not going to hit the breaking ball on a consistent basis because we're not a breaking ball hitting team," Ross coach Dan Fought said. "And I think some of the guys are pressing. They started out so well and fell into a little slump. Now they're pressing to get out of it, which isn't the way to get it done."

Ross (6-6 and 3-3 in the Great

Tuesday

Northview 5
Ross 2

Today

Ross at Findlay, the continuation of a game delayed in the third inning Monday. The score is 3-3.
4:30 p.m.

Lakes League) left the bases loaded to end the game as reliever Stacey Tresize got Tim Rakes to pop out and Bucky Byers to foul out.

Thrush threw enough fastballs to keep the Little Giants guessing on his curveball. He struck out eight and walked only one before Tresize took over.

"I felt it was time to get a different look in there," Northview coach Jack Koch said. "Aaron

had some things go against him, and he was getting tired."

What went against Thrush is what slumping Ross clinged to as it tried to avoid its second straight league loss — an infield single by Terry Cisco, a bloop base hit by Graham Hogan, an error and a walk to load the bases. The Little Giants managed a run.

Earlier, it took a wild pitch to score pinch runner Jeremy Haslinger in the fifth with the other Ross run.

"I told the kids before the game that three losses can still win the league but four would be second place," Fought said. "It's awful hard to do at this point, but I think there's still a shot."

Northview (5-8 and 4-2) now

has two GLL wins over the Little Giants.

"I'm surprised where we're at right now," Koch said. "The kids seem to respond well to league games. We haven't played a bad league game yet."

The Wildcats, who collected 10 hits and took advantage of five Ross errors, scored three runs in the third and added solo runs in the fourth and fifth.

"We put the ball in play better today than we have all season," Koch said.

The Little Giants go to Findlay today for the continuation of a game started Monday but stopped by rain.

■ **How they scored, B2**

■ **St. Joe ranked 8th, B2**

Ross hosts Findlay today

News-Messenger reports

Napoleon's 7-0 Great Lakes League victory over Fremont Ross Thursday was it's first in the league and extended the Little Giants' losing streak to four games.

"It was one of the few times I didn't talk to the team after the game," Ross baseball coach Dan Fought said.

Ross (6-7 and 3-4) is back in league play today against Findlay at Alumni Field. The continuation of a game tied 3-3 after three innings begins at 4:30 p.m. followed by a regularly scheduled game.

"A big part of this team's game is to say 'I did something positive,' Fought said. "I'd like to win one of the two against a 10-1 team for the psychological advantage."

Ryan Fitzenreiter blanked Ross on three hits, with six strikeouts and no walks.

Sam Root had a single in the first inning and another in the third, and Derek Thiessen singled in the fifth.

Ross had its best chance to score in the fifth. Jeremy Haslinger reached base on an error, and Graham Hogan bunted him to second.

But Haslinger was out at the plate on Thiessen's hit to left field.

Napoleon (2-13 and 1-7) scored three runs in the first two innings to make a loser of Ross starter Eric Brough. Five of the runs Brough allowed were unearned, however.

Alex Pate finished the game, yielding an unearned run on four hits with two strikeouts and a walk in 4 2/3 innings.

"There was one positive note: that Alex Pate pitched so well," Fought said.

"And he deserves it because he works so hard."

In other games:

Lakota 4, Otsego 3

One day after Otsego won 15-0 in five innings on Brad Milligan's no-hitter, Lakota scored a run in the bottom of the seventh for the Suburban Lakes League victory.

Bryce Brockschmidt pitched a complete game for the victory, and Mark Adams had two hits and scored two runs for the Raiders.

The Raiders (3-12 and 2-5) took a 2-0 lead in the second inning. Otsego (7-9 and 3-5) scored three runs in the fourth to go on top and Lakota tied it with a run in the fifth.

Ross pitching improves, win column does not

By TIM HARMON
Staff writer

Findlay left Fremont with two wins as the Ross losing streak lengthened to six games Friday.

The Great Lakes League-leading Trojans capped 11 innings of baseball by scoring two runs in the top of the seventh for a 7-5 victory in the nightcap of a doubleheader.

Findlay (12-1, 6-0) scored four runs in the bottom of the sixth for a 7-3 victory in the completion of a game suspended from Monday.

"It doesn't sting as much as it might because of how bad we played in the last two games," Ross coach Dan Fought said. "I saw some positives."

Among those were the pitching efforts of Eric Mullholand and Bryan Coonrod.

Mullholand finished what he started Monday but took the loss in the opener, allowing three earned runs. He pitched the first four innings of the second game, striking out seven before leaving

Friday	
Findlay.....	7-7
Ross	3-5
Tuesday	
Ross vs. Masfield Madison at Sandusky 5 p.m.	

with a 5-4 lead.

Coonrod finished the nightcap. He took the loss when left fielder Graham Hogan and shortstop Terry Cisco let a fly ball drop between them, sending home the tiebreaking run.

"Mullholand's pitching performance was nothing short of outstanding," Fought said. "He kept them off balance with good location."

Mullholand's lone mistakes were two fastballs he left up in the strike zone. Hamilton Leonard hit one for a run-scoring double and Jason Lane sent the other one for a two-run homer.

Lane's homer made it 4-3, but Ross (6-9, 3-6) took the lead in the fourth on Travis Johnson's fielder's choice groundout and Cisco's

sacrifice fly. The Little Giants were aided by two Findlay errors in the inning.

Findlay starter and winner, Damon Ammons, who struck out nine and walked four, then retired nine of the final 10 men he faced.

"He struggled, and he hadn't struggled yet this year," Findlay coach Jack Foltz said. "He was real close a couple of times to leaving."

After walking home three runs in the first, Ammons struck out Matt Fox. After Tim Rakes and Bucky Byers opened the fourth with hits, Ammons was also in trouble until he retired Cisco on the fly to right.

Byers and Rakes had three and two hits, respectively, and both scored twice.

The Trojans tied the score when Lane greeted Coonrod with a leadoff single, raced to third on a sacrifice bunt and scored on a groundout.

Coonrod struck out Chad Curlis for what would have been the

second out in the seventh, but Curlis was safe on a wild pitch. After Curlis stole second and Nick Lunn popped out, Brad Pochard singled to put runners at first and third.

Ammons then blooped his double to left.

"We broke down defensively on easy plays," Fought said. "It's a big concern because we let the pitcher down. Every little mistake the pitcher makes is magnified."

"We have to play good defense behind Coonrod because he's not a strikeout pitcher."

Findlay used a leadoff walk and two Ross errors to score the winning runs in the first game. Ross left the bases loaded in the fifth and seventh as Curlis pitched four innings for the win.

Derek Thiessen finished the game with three hits, including two Friday, and Ryan Shively added two.

How they scored, B2
High School roundups, B3

Little Giants top Willard; St. Joe loses 2nd straight

News-Messenger reports

Nick Jurski pitched out of bases-loaded jams in the fourth and seventh innings as Fremont Ross defeated Willard 9-4 Wednesday in a non-league game.

Ross (8-9) outhit the Crimson Flashes 9-3 and committed just one error at Alumni Field.

Bucky Byers had three hits, Derek Thiessen

Baseball Roundup

had two and scored three times and Tim Rakes and Rob Stotz both drove in two runs for the Little Giants. Travis Johnson also scored twice for Ross.

Willard, which committed four errors, cut a 5-1 deficit to a run by scoring three times in the fourth. Ross then scored four runs over the next three innings.

Ross 5, Bedford 3

Fremont Ross pitcher Eric Brough-struck out four and allowed just one earned run in five innings against Bedford.

"This is Eric Brough's best performance in four games since his injury to his elbow," Ross coach Dan Fought said.

The Little Giants (9-9, 4-6) got offensive production from Sam Root (two hits in three at bats) and Derek Thiessen (two RBI).

In the two-run fourth, Terry Cisco got an RBI walk and Thiessen hit a sacrifice fly.

News-Messenger reports

Mike Jividen pitched a five-hitter and Gibsonburg defeated Old Fort 2-0 in a Division IV sectional tournament championship game Tuesday at Old Fort.

The Golden Bears (10-10) face North Baltimore at 5 p.m. next Tuesday in the district tournament at Old Fort.

Jividen struck out 10 and walked five.

Gibsonburg broke a scoreless tie with a run in the fifth and one in the sixth. Doug Miller reached on a two-base error then scored on an error for the first run. Shaun Peiffer's two-out single in the sixth scored Scott Hilt, who walked and stole second.

Eric Hoover struck out five and walked one for Old Fort, but the Stockaders fell from the tournament at 6-13.

In one other tournament game:

Otsego 5, Woodmore 1

Winning pitcher Brad Milligan struck out 12 and overcame nine walks in a complete game four-hitter, while the Knights took advantage of four Woodmore errors in the Division III sectional tournament title game at Genoa.

Otsego is 11-11, and the Wildcats are 9-9.

Woodmore scored in the first inning, tying the score at a run apiece, when Eric Fegley singled, stole second and scored on two wild pitches.

Ryan Travis took the complete-game loss.

In regular season games:

Fremont Ross ran its win streak to four games with a 6-5 Great Lakes League victory at Fostoria Tuesday.

Ross (10-9 and 5-6) overcame deficits of 3-2 and broke a 4-4 tie with two runs in the seventh inning.

The Little Giants scored two runs in the fifth inning on consecutive run-scoring hits by Tim Rakes and Bucky Byers. Rakes singled to tie the game 3-3, and Byers followed with an RBI double to give Ross the lead.

After Fostoria (8-7 and 2-6) tied the game with a run in the sixth, Derek Thiessen started a Ross rally with a one-out base hit.

Thiessen stole second and took third on a passed ball. After Sam Root

walked and stole second, Thiessen scored as Rakes grounded out to shortstop, with a throwing error allowing Root to score on the play.

Bryan Coonrod got the win despite giving up Fostoria's run in the sixth — his lone inning of work.

Nick Jurski got the save after allowing an unearned run in the

Baseball Roundup

seventh and facing a second and third situation with nobody out. Jurski got the first out on a popup and struck out the final two Redmen.

"He turned the juice on," Ross coach Dan Fought said. "I don't think I've ever seen him throw as hard. They put him in a pressure situation, and I wasn't going to anybody else."

Ross plays Tiffin Columbian in a Division I sectional tournament championship game today at 4 p.m. at J.C. Park in Sandusky.

In other games Tuesday:

St. Joe 17, Bettsville 2

Following the five-inning victory, the Crimson Streaks will try to move back into a share of first place in the Midland Athletic League today when it plays league leader St. Wendelin at Fostoria.

St. Joe (15-3 and 6-2) scored eight runs in the first inning after Bettsville scored its two runs in the first on Mike Knisely's two-run double.

The Streaks' 15 hits included home runs by Bill Dirlam, Doug Abdoo, Ryan Wiechman and winning pitcher Dan Kalo. Dirlam and Wiechman both finished with three hits, and Wiedchman had three RBIs.

Kalo struck out five and walked one after relieving Dave Tischler in the first inning. Tischler left because he was ill.

Genoa 5, Lakota 0

Shawn Sondergeld pitched a five-hitter, striking out seven and walking one, and Genoa kept its share of first place in the Suburban Lakes League.

The Comets, tied for the top spot with Eastwood, scored a run in the third and four in the fifth.

Genoa (14-4 and 8-1) had just four hits off three Lakota pitchers, but losing pitcher Dan Burdette walked seven and the Comets did not commit an error.

Bill Beaston had a double among two hits for the Raiders (5-16 and 4-8).

Brough pitches Ross to 11th win

News-Messenger reports

Eric Brough pitched a complete game and Fremont Ross evened its Great Lakes League record with a 3-1 victory over Napoleon Friday at Alumni Field.

Brough, who struck out five and walked four, carried a one-hitter into the seventh. He allowed two hits and Napoleon's lone run in the inning.

"He thought he was done after five innings," Ross coach Dan Fought said.

Ross (11-10 and 6-6) scored a run in the first and two in the fourth.

Derek Thiessen singled leading

Baseball

off the Little Giants' first, stole second and went to third on an error. He scored on a sacrifice fly by Bucky Byers.

In the fourth, Rob Stotz was hit by a pitch with one out and Travis Johnson walked. One out later, Ryan Shively singled in two runs.

In one other game reported:

Edison 8, Clyde 2

Brad Simon homered and Zach Eckel pitched a two-hitter as Edison won the Sandusky Bay Conference game.

Adam Turner and Jeremi Woodruff singled for the Fliers, who scored both their runs in the fifth.

Clyde is now 3-15 and 2-7.

Ross takes two

News-Messenger reports

Tim Rakes and Bucky Byers combined for nine hits in a double-header sweep for Fremont Ross Saturday.

The Little Giants beat Ashland 8-4 and 11-2 to improve their record to 13-10.

Baseball roundup

They need a win at Toledo Whitmer Tuesday or at Oregon Clay Friday to top last season's 13-12 record.

In the first game, pitcher Matt Fox struck out six Ashland batters in a complete game win. Rakes had three hits, Byers two and Terry Cisco doubled.

In the second game, abbreviated to five innings, Rakes and Byers each had two hits and winning pitcher Nick Jurski homered. Eric Mullholand struck out three of the six batters he faced in a hitless relief appearance.

Perkins' record dropped to 9-8.

In other games:

Fremont St. Joe 4, Sandusky Perkins 2

Bobby Druckenmiller scored on an error to put the Crimson Streaks ahead of Perkins to stay in a St. Mary's Invitational game.

St. Joe plays their district opener at 5 p.m. Tuesday against Bucyrus Wynford. Saturday, the Crimson Streaks will play Margareta in the invitational semifinals Saturday.

Jeff Mosser doubled for the Crimson Streaks (16-3) and Kyle Kayden struck out five Perkins' batters for the victory.

Perkins is 16-7 this season.

Woodmore 3-4, Gibsonburg 2-7

Ryan Travis struck out nine Gibsonburg batters to help the Wildcats win the first of two games.

In the second game, Gibsonburg's Jay Morelock, Nick Kaemming and Scott Hilt had multiple-hit games in a 7-4 win.

Gibsonburg is now 13-12 (3-10). Woodmore is 10-10 (4-7).

Old Fort 7, Carey 0

Stockader pitcher Eric Hoover struck out eight Carey batters and Old Fort's Jeff Miller hit two home runs as Old Fort won their final game of the season.

Hoover, Nick Strausser and Paul Schmidt all had multiple-hit games for Old Fort. Jason Beckford had three hits for Carey.

Old Fort ended the season at 9-13 (5-5).

New Riegel 11, Bettsville 2

Bettsville's Ken Kaiser and Phil Steffanni each had two hits but the team committed four errors in the eight-run loss.

Bettsville is 0-17 (0-7) this season, while New Riegel improved to 12-7 (5-2).

Whitmer 18, Ross 1

The Panthers had 18 hits to Fremonts five as they moved to 16-5 and 10-3 in the Great Lakes League with the win.

Leading hitters for Ross were Tim Rakes, Rob Stotz, Jeremy Haslinger, Graham Hogan and Brian Coonrod.

Byers, Thiessen picked All-GLL

Fremont Ross catcher Bucky Byers and Little Giants outfielder Derek Thiessen have been named to the second team All-Great Lakes League baseball team.

Earning honorable mention honors for Ross were third baseman Tim Rakes and second baseman Sam Root.