

BOYS SOCCER PREVIEW: IMPROVED DEFENSE LOOKING TO LEAD LITTLE GIANTS TO BETTER RESULTS

by [Rich McGowan](#) | Aug 15, 2017 | [Boys Soccer](#)



FREMONT – In a summer tournament at Bowling Green, the Fremont Ross boys soccer team found itself on the wrong end of a 3-0 drubbing at the hands of Defiance.

But later in the tournament, with a few adjustments and a couple of keys emphasized, Ross turned the tables on Defiance and cruised to a dominant 2-0 win of its own.

Those two summer friendlies against Defiance sum up what the Ross soccer program has been and what it could be this season. The Little Giants, who have not won a conference game in two years, see themselves as a team on the rise, ready to compete in and out of the league.

“The goals we have set are to win at least 10 of our games, out of our 16, which I think is feasible,” said coach Alex Coressel. “When I look at the schedule, I see 12 we should have the possibility of winning. I think we should be in the upper half of the TRAC, which has never happened.”

A season ago, Ross compiled a 4-9-3 record with a 0-5-2 mark in conference. But as they get set to open the season on Aug. 21 at home against Sandusky Perkins at 6 p.m., senior defender Spencer Bates believes the Little Giants are ready to take the next step as a program.

“There is a lot of talent in this field,” Bates said. “It’s just a question of harnessing that talent and trying to throw something together. I’m liking what I’m seeing so

far in terms of practices and the scrimmages we've done. We're a young team, but if we can all get together, it will be all right."

Coressel said Ross' optimism stems from a revamped defense, bolstered by a stable group of defenders and a new defensive philosophy that ditches the offside trap they employed last season, which often left goalkeeper Mikey Contreras alone on an island.

"He'd get 130, 140 one-on-one opportunities throughout the year," said Coressel of Contreras, who made 94 saves last year. "This year we scrapped the offside trap and play more straight-up, try to contain shots and hopefully he'll have a higher save percentage because of that."

Coressel noted the Little Giants' crop of defenders, led by Batey along with Chris Navarro, Mason DeWalt, Tim Moser and Robbie Baez, give Ross something they lacked last season.

"We have five right now that really want to play defense," Coressel said.

"Everybody wants to play midfield or forward; we didn't have anybody who wanted to play defense. And now we've got five that that (say) 'I want to play defense.'"

That's music to the ears of Contreras, the TRAC's second-team all-league keeper.

"We got the defensive part down, we can hold people back, but we have to start scoring more to push us over the edge," Contreras said. "Because we're there, we're right there, we just need that little bump, and we are set."

Putting the ball in the net will, ultimately, determine how far the Little Giants will go this season, Coressel said. To generate more offense, Ross is varying up its attack and looking to junior forward Dylan Brady, senior midfielder Sam Durbin and sophomore forward Alec Slemmer to put the ball in the net. Last year, Brady and Durbin each scored 11 goals, with Durbin adding five assists and Brady with four.

"We're focusing a lot right now on trying to work around the outside to get around defenses and then work the ball back in the middle, trying to give them easier looks to try to finish," Coressel said. "It's varying our offense instead of continuing to try the thing that doesn't work and ramming our head against the wall. Trying to create different opportunities for ourselves."

GETTING TO KNOW...DYLAN BRADY

by [Rich McGowan](#) | Aug 18, 2017 | [Boys Soccer](#)



Sometimes being the Joker can backfire. During the Ross boys soccer team's picture day, Dylan Brady tried to get his teammates to laugh while taking their individual mug shots. As a result, the junior forward was drafted to answer about 20 or so random questions with his entire team nearby listening to every word – often with a comment or two of their own—my thanks to Dylan for being a good sport.

Pet peeve?

When somebody gives me a hot dog without ketchup.

You win an all-expenses-paid trip anywhere in the world. Where do you go?

San Francisco, California. It's beautiful.

Biggest fear?

Sharks. They're terrifying.

What is a band or music artist you like that your teammates don't know you like?

Demi Lovato (nearby teammate: Are you serious!?)

If you could turn any activity into an Olympic sport, what would you have a good chance at winning a medal for?

Definitely cooking. You don't even know.

What are your best recipes?

Spaghetti and meatballs. Chicken Chow Mein.

What could you give a 30-minute presentation on with absolutely no preparation?

How much I love my teammates (nearby teammates boo and “awe”).

What is something you think everyone should do at least once in their lives?

Give away your clothes to Goodwill once in a while.

What skill would you like to master?

Karate. I find it interesting.

Plans for after graduation?

I’m probably thinking about going to (Bowling Green).

DYLAN BRADY'S 5-GOAL OPENER LEADS ROSS BOYS' SOCCER TO BLOW-OUT WIN

by [Rich McGowan](#) | Aug 21, 2017 | [Boys Soccer](#)



FREMONT – A season ago, the Ross boys soccer team struggled to produce offense.

If Monday night is any indication of things to come, lack of offense will not be an issue in 2017.

The Little Giants scored early and often Monday night and continued to pour it on throughout, winning 10-0 over Sandusky Perkins.

“Last year it was a 1-1 tie with these guys,” coach Alex Coressel said. “We outshot them a lot, but we weren’t getting good looks, shooting too far out, settling for whatever was given to us. This time we took what we wanted.”

No one took more than Dylan Brady. The Little Giants’ junior forward opened the season by potting a career-high five goals. He scored the first three goals of the game, netting his hat trick by the midpoint of the first half.

“I really was looking for my teammates the rest of the game,” Brady said, “but if the opportunity opens up for me to shoot, I’m going to score.”

The Little Giants closed out the half with goals from Sam Durbin and Alex Slemmer. Despite the commanding 5-0 halftime lead, Coressel thought his team let its foot off the gas pedal.

“For the first 20 minutes, we took it to them, but in the second 20 minutes, we got very lazy,” Coressel said. “We had a lot of bad first-touches, getting too cutesy. And that was the talk at halftime.”

The Little Giants heeded their coach's words and continued to push on in the second half.

Brady scored goal No. 4 with an assist from Durbin, followed by Slemmer's second goal of the night, off another Durbin assist.

Brady collected his fifth on a penalty kick. Kevin Navarro and Jared Atkins rounded out the scoring.

Chris Navarro and Drew Miesle also had assists.

"We're capable of a lot," Brady said of the offense. "We have a lot of young guys coming off the bench, and we looked fast, running around the defense. We should be able to score a lot of goals this year."

While the offense lit up the scoreboard, Coressel took pleasure in his defense.

Goalkeeper Mikey Contreras didn't have to make any saves as the defense kept the ball out of danger.

"The defense was outstanding, not something we saw a lot of last year," Coressel said. "It got us our first zero on the board for the opposing team in quite a while. I think a lot of the young guys stepped up, Alec Slemmer stepped up."

Ross (1-0) returns to action Wednesday at Port Clinton with a kickoff at 5 p.m.

BOYS SOCCER CRUISES TO ANOTHER BLOW-OUT WIN, BEATING PORT CLINTON 7-0

by [Rich McGowan](#) | Aug 23, 2017 | [Boys Soccer](#)



PORT CLINTON – The Ross boys soccer team expected to be vastly improved in 2017, but this? Not quite.

The Little Giants romped to their second-straight blowout win to start the season, traveling to Port Clinton and coming home with a 7-0 win on Wednesday. Combined with Monday night's win over Sandusky Perkins, Ross has outscored its opponents 17-0 this season.

Senior Sam Durbin played the role of point guard as much as midfielder, distributing the ball to his teammates and leading the Little Giants onto the scoreboard with two goals and four assists.

"They were kind of giving us the outsides of the field," coach Alex Coressel said.

"We were doing a good job of getting the ball to the middle and then getting it to the outside. Sam was able to make a couple of moves and get the ball upfield, and get the cross(pass) to a good spot where guys were open.

"We kind of spread out the field using that wing, really, to open up the middle to get those guys better chances of getting open with the ball and get some relatively easy looks."

The plan has worked to perfection twice now.

Dylan Brady scored twice, giving him seven goals already in the young season. Alec Slemmer, Chris Navarro, and Drew Miesle also scored for the Little Giants.

Despite the lopsided score, Coressel said, it could have been even more so had Ross not missed many more opportunities. Ross fired 47 shots at the net, requiring the Port Clinton keeper to make 21 saves.

"They are very confident but not overconfident," Coressel said. "We talked right after the game tonight, and I told them first thing, 'It was a 7-0 win, but it was pretty ugly.' And they absolutely agreed. They said there were a lot of things to clean up. There wasn't a lot I had to say; they knew it.

"It's nice that we can make a lot of mistakes that are correctable in practice and still come out with a relatively easy victory."

Goalkeeper Mikey Contreras got his second win of the season, making 12 saves, though all but one were routine.

Ross returns to play Tuesday, opening Three Rivers Athletic Conference play at Lima Senior.

BOYS SOCCER RECOVERS FROM LACKLUSTER FIRST HALF, WINS TRAC OPENER AT LIMA SENIOR

by [Rich McGowan](#) | Aug 29, 2017 | [Boys Soccer](#)



LIMA – The Ross boys soccer team was not a happy bunch at halftime Tuesday evening. And for good reason.

The Little Giants saw a three-goal lead vanish in the span of 10 minutes and found themselves tied at 4 in their Three Rivers Athletic Conference opener at Lima Senior.

However, after a stern intermission, Ross regrouped itself, as the defense clamped down and the offense found patience, and the Little Giants went on to a 7-4 victory.

“They knew we were up and had it in the bag and just needed to finish it off, and we made some inferior decisions,” coach Alex Coressel said. “We were unmotivated, playing pretty lazily in the first half, and unintelligent. We made bad choices defensively, with those two fouls, and offensively we tried to do things we’re not capable of doing instead of slowing down and playing our game.”

Following the halftime, the defense started communicating. Instead of two or three defenders attacking the ball, one man challenged it, while the others maintained their positions. On offense, the Little Giants remained patient,

waiting for the Spartans to try to move the ball out of their defensive end and then counterattacking.

Sam Durbin, who scored three goals in a span of eight minutes in the first half, added a fourth to his total to give his team the lead once again at the midway point of the second half. His four goals on Tuesday increased his season total to seven in three games.

"There was one (goal) that was from about half-field," Coressel said of Durbin's big night. "He just fired it, and they had a shorter keeper, and he was able to put it right over top of him. He just took the opportunities that were there. He wasn't forcing anything tonight."

Alec Slemmer also a good night, scoring two goals with two assists. Like Durbin, Slemmer has scored at least one goal in each of Ross' three games this season. Drew Miesle also scored and had an assist for the Little Giants. Isaac Minor also notched an assist.

The victory keeps Ross unbeaten this season (3-0) and begins the league schedule on a positive note.

The Little Giants have some downtime; their next game isn't until Sept. 5 at home against Toledo Central Catholic.

"It's nice to be 1-0 in the TRAC and get the rest of the week off," Coressel said.

"(We're going to) make sure we're healthy and get the work in and correct quite a few mistakes we saw tonight."

BOYS SOCCER MATCHES ALL-TIME TRAC WIN TOTAL WITH 4-1 WIN OVER CENTRAL CATHOLIC

by [Rich McGowan](#) | Sep 5, 2017 | [Boys Soccer](#)



FREMONT – Through six years and 42 games competing in the Three Rivers Athletic Conference, the Fremont Ross boys soccer team won just two games as the 2017 season began.

In their first two conference games of this season, the Little Giants have already doubled their win total.

Ross controlled the play for much of its league match with Toledo Central Catholic Tuesday night and finally put the ball in the net in the second half, going on to a 4-1 win over the Fighting Irish.

“Twenty-eight goals in four games is pretty amazing,” coach Alex Coressel said.

“Right now, with the success, I think they’re starting to feel hungry, that when they’re coming into games instead of ‘Oh man, we’re playing this team or that team,’ we’re going to go in and battle and give it a shot.”

The victory keeps Ross undefeated at 4-0 overall and 2-0 in the TRAC. While Ross is a far cry from the program that went 2-35-5 in the TRAC coming into this year, Coressel isn’t yet ready to say his team is prepared to contend.

“We’ve got a ways to go, for sure,” he said. “Once we hit those big three of St. Francis, St. John’s, and Findlay, that’s really going to show us exactly what we have. We knew we were at least in the middle of the pack. Central is a team we should beat on a good night for us, and we did that. Coming down the road will be the true test.”

Ross fired 30 shots Tuesday night, forcing the Irish keeper to make 18 saves. Despite controlling the pace of the play for much of the night, the Little Giants remained scoreless until the final minute of the first half when Carter Durbin sent a nice pass to his brother, Sam, who fired it into the net for a 1-0 halftime lead.

"We kind of went back to our old ways at points in the first half," Coressel said. "A lot of (shots) outside the 18 and in the center (of the goal) and we were knocking our heads against the wall, so to speak."

Ross returned to form in the second half, finding space on the outside and working his way to the front of the goal and firing. The Little Giants stopped crossing the ball over the middle, where Irish's size and strength gave them the advantage, and instead kept the ball on the ground.

"Once we started playing it on the ground, we got some nice, easy finishes," Coressel said. "We kept battling all night."

Dylan Brady scored a pair of goals, including one on a free kick, to put Ross ahead 3-1. Chris Navarro added a goal with 10 minutes to play off an assist from Sam Durbin.

"He was on fire," Coressel said of Brady. "As soon as the game started, their coach was calling him out and making sure they were marking him. I think he really shows up in every league game, especially when the competition picks up. He's a guy we can count on night in and night out."

Ross goalkeeper Mikey Contreras made seven saves on the night to pick up his fourth win of the season.

Ross returns to play Thursday, when it hosts Toledo Start at 5 p.m.

BOYS SOCCER BATTLES THROUGH WEATHER, ILLNESS TO REMAIN UNDEFEATED

by [Rich McGowan](#) | Sep 7, 2017 | [Boys Soccer](#)



FREMONT – Rain and cold can make for a sloppy game on the soccer field. Take away one of your best players, and things can get downright messy. Though Fremont Ross battled the conditions and being without midfielder Sam Durbin due to illness, the Little Giants did something they may not have done a year or two ago. They persevered.

Ross held off a defensively sound Toledo Start team and kept its unblemished record intact, winning 2-1 on Thursday night.

“In the past, when one little thing went wrong, a player was out we weren’t expecting, or we gave up a goal we probably shouldn’t have, in the past, we would fold,” coach Alex Coressel said. “We did not do that tonight. We stayed after it. It was 2-1 at half, and we battled the entire second half to keep them from scoring.

“We knew it would be a dogfight all night,” he added. “We hung in there and were able to pull it out.”

With Durbin out of the lineup, the Little Giants were forced to shuffle their starting lineup with several players finding themselves in different positions, which showed at times. “We just didn’t communicate on defense a lot of times, the ball would skip, and we didn’t get in front of it,” Coressel said. “Offensively, we tried to be too fancy and play balls through the air...instead of passing on the ground and making things easy on ourselves.”

Dylan Brady scored and had an assist on and Alec Slemmer's goal. Goalkeeper Mikey Contreras made eight saves and assisted on Brady's goal.

"I think the biggest thing is everybody stepped up and took on different roles and were more willing to do what was needed in order to get the W," Coressel said. "Dylan Brady is normally our attacking midfielder and we got it down to the last 15 minutes and, I didn't have to say anything, he dropped back to the defensive mid to help us out defensively so we wouldn't let them score again." Ross remains undefeated, 5-0 overall, and is 2-0 in the Three Rivers Athletic Conference. The Little Giants are back in action at Whitmer on Tuesday at 7 p.m.

SLOW START DOOMS BOYS' SOCCER TO THE FIRST LOSS OF THE SEASON

by Rich McGowan | Sep 12, 2017 | Boys Soccer



TOLEDO – Getting off to fast starts played a key role in the Ross boys soccer team's undefeated start to the season.

Tuesday night, however, the Little Giants found out what can happen when they get off to a slow start.

Whitmer scored the first two goals of the game to take an early lead. Though Ross' play improved, the Little Giants could not dig themselves out of the hole they had dug for themselves in a 2-1 loss.

"We didn't show up at the beginning of the game," coach Alex Coressel said. "We played an inferior first 20 minutes, allowed them two through-balls that they finished."

Whitmer scored just four minutes into the game and again just past the midpoint of the first half. For the game, the Panthers managed just six shots toward the Ross goal.

Ross cut the deficit to one goal with 15 minutes remaining in the first half on a goal by Alec Slemmer with an assist from Dylan Brady.

"We kind of dominated the rest of the game, we just didn't finish anything," Coressel said.

The loss drops Ross' record to 5-1 overall, 2-1 in the TRAC.

“Frustrated, to say the least,” Coressel said. “The effort was not there for at least the first 20. We had about eight guys playing hard and two or three that were letting us down on the effort standpoint.”

The Little Giants will look to bounce back Thursday at Tiffin Columbian at 5 p.m.

BOYS SOCCER WINS EASILY, 9-0, DESPITE ANOTHER LACKLUSTER FIRST HALF.

by [Rich McGowan](#) | Sep 14, 2017 | [Boys Soccer](#)



TIFFIN –Sometimes scores can be deceiving.

After a lethargic start on Tuesday, which cost it a game, one might think the Ross boys' soccer team learned its lesson Thursday night. After all, the Little Giants defeated Tiffin Columbian 9-0. Lesson learned, right?

Right?

"We played a terrible first half," coach Alex Coressel said. "We were still up 4-0 at half, but we came out slow, lackadaisical. We knew we could take care of business tonight, and that's kind of the way we started, like we knew we expected to win instead of playing to go and take the win."

Alec Slemmer scored three goals while Sam Durbin added two. Dylan Brady, Charlie Corthell, Brady Wolfe and Jordan Smith also added goals. Brady had a pair of assists, as did Drew Miesle, while Isaac Minor and Tim Mosser each had an assist.

"I think the big thing tonight was we knew what we were up against and they were, 'Hey, we're going to win, so let's go through the motions and get this over with,'" Coressel said. "It got corrected in the second half. We played as we had during the first five games. We moved the ball really well, and we distributed and finished really well. The kids fixed it. They knew."

The victory raises Ross' record to 6-1 overall, and the Little Giants host St. John's Tuesday at 5 p.m.

While Ross has come out of the gate slowly in the last two games, Coressel isn't worried that the trend will continue against the Titans.

"I think we'll be alright going forward, especially with St. John's being the next team up," he said. "If we're not ready against St. John's, the game will be over within five minutes. I think we'll be ready to go. They know it's a huge game and we need to go out and compete."

AFTER A 9-DAY LAYOFF, BOYS SOCCER RETURNS TO ACTION WITH A WIN OVER OAK HARBOR

by [Rich McGowan](#) | Sep 23, 2017 | [Boys Soccer](#)



FREMONT – After a nine-day layoff between games, the Fremont Ross boys soccer team needed some time to get back in the swing of things. Eventually, the Little Giants found a rhythm and, with a pair of second-half goals, pulled out a 3-2 non-conference win over Oak Harbor.

“They were out of sorts a bit, you could tell we hadn’t played in a while,” coach Alex Coressel said. “The miscues we had on defense were a lack of communication just from not being out there together for a bit.”

Ross hadn’t played since defeating Tiffin Columbian 9-0 on Sept. 14. Alec Slemmer opened the scoring for the Little Giants with an assist from Chris Navarro. While Ross fired 30 shots toward the Rocket goal Saturday, Coressel said Ross settled on most of those shots, rather than pushing ahead for a higher quality opportunity.

“We came out of the box, played relatively well, had about 18 shots in the first half, but they were generally settling for 20-, 25-yard shots or longer,” he said. “We just weren’t working it in the box; the one goal we scored in the first half was shot from inside the box.”

Dylan Brady scored unassisted in the second half, his 12th tally of the season, surpassing his total from all of last season. Cesar Flores scored Ross’ final goal of the afternoon off a corner kick by Navarro, who picked up his second assist of the day.

Mikey Contreras made five saves on eight Oak Harbor shots.

The Little Giants (7-1 overall) will travel to Clay Tuesday night for a critical TRAC meeting.

“That will be a big TRAC matchup, kind of tells us where we’re at,” Coressel said.

“Clay is playing very well and has definitely been a thorn in our side the last couple of seasons. It could be nice to get them to their place.”

CLAY JUMPS OUT TO AN EARLY LEAD, HOLDS ON FOR A 4-1 WIN OVER ROSS BOYS' SOCCER

by [Rich McGowan](#) | Sep 26, 2017 | [Boys Soccer](#)



OREGON – Ross' boys soccer team fell into a hole Tuesday from which it simply couldn't climb out.

The Eagles jumped out to an early lead and never looked back as the Little Giants lost 4-1.

"The first half was decent, Clay was actually the aggressor, and we just didn't keep up with their speed to start the game, not for a lack of effort," coach Alex Coressel said. "They were just a little bigger, quicker, and stronger than us." After Clay took a 2-0 lead, Drew Miesle got the Little Giants on the board off an assist from Sam Drubin. Clay, however, scored on a corner kick to retake a two-goal lead at halftime.

"The second half we battled and battled and battled, we just couldn't put one in the net," Coressel said.

Ross fired 10 shots at the goal, forcing the Clay keeper to make six saves. Clay fired 17 shots toward the Ross goal, where keeper Mikey Contreras made seven stops.

"Clay is vastly improved over what they had been," Coressel said. "They've got quite a few guys who used to play football, so they've been improving over the last few years. Is it one we could have gotten? Absolutely. But we weren't able to put anything in the back of the net."

The loss dips the Little Giants' record to 7-2 overall. Ross returns to action Saturday morning at Clyde. The girls will play at 10 a.m. and the boys to follow.

LITTLE GIANTS BOYS SOCCER OUTPLAYS CLYDE BUT FALLS SHORT, 4-3

by [Rich McGowan](#) | Sep 30, 2017 | [Boys Soccer](#)



CLYDE – By just about any metric, Ross' boys soccer team should have won Saturday afternoon.

The Little Giants controlled the play for much of the game, outshooting Clyde by a 2-to-1 margin and forcing the Flier keeper to make more than a dozen stops. But the Little Giants were undone by a few defensive lapses and moments of poor judgment in a bitterly disappointing 4-3 loss to the Fliers.

"We can't make mistakes and shoot ourselves in the foot and expect to win," coach Alex Coressel said. "Plain and simple."

Ross came out of the gate strong, firing three shots on net in the opening 10 minutes before Dylan Brady scored in the 15th minute for a 1-0 lead.

Clyde, however, answered eight minutes later when a shot lobbed over the head of keeper Mikey Contreras rolled into the goal.

Ross re-took the lead less than five minutes later on a terrific header goal by Carter Durbin off a pass from Charlie Corthell for a 2-1 lead.

Clyde tied the game once again with a minute remaining on a penalty kick.

"The shots (margin), I can handle, there's going to be days where you shoot and just not be able to finish one," Coressel said. "But for us to shoot ourselves in the foot and give them opportunities, that's on us. They didn't shoot a whole lot ...but they buried them because of our poor choices."

After being tied at halftime 2-2, Clyde took the lead in a disputed play at the Little Giants' end of the field. Contreras left his goal to dive on a loose ball near the top of the goal box. But a Clyde player got to the ball the same time as Contreras, kicking it free from the keeper's grasp, where Kyle Baker fired it into the vacated goal for a 3-2 lead.

"I thought it was offside," Coressel said. "I thought Mikey got to the ball first, the way the ref explained it afterward, he thought they got their simultaneously, and the ball went forward, he didn't feel as though Mikey had enough of it, and that's why he didn't call it (offsides)."

Ten minutes later, Clyde struck again when Brock Newsome fired a shot from about 30 yards out, which curved on its way toward the goal, deflected off the goalpost, and into the net.

Ross threw everything it had at the Fliers, but was short a man after sophomore Alec Slemmer was given a red card with 28 minutes to play in the game. The Little Giants trimmed the deficit to 4-3 on a goal from Sam Durbin off an assist from Tim Mosser with just under 20 minutes to play.

While Ross continued to put constant pressure on the Fliers deep in their end, the closest the Little Giants came to tying the game was a shot from Durbin that rang off the crossbar.

"That was the one we needed," Coressel. "Sometimes when it's not your day, it's not your day."

The loss drops Ross to 7-3 overall and is the last game before the Little Giants begin a busy stretch of games. Starting Tuesday at Findlay, Ross plays six games in 11 days, including TRAC games against league title contenders Findlay, St. John's, and St. Francis.

Due to his red card on Saturday, Slemmer, whose 11 goals rank second on the team, won't be available for Ross' next two games.

"Going into Findlay, we're going to have to find a way to get them back up," Coressel said. "We haven't been perfect on Tuesday nights at 7 o'clock, and going against one of the top three in our league, it's going to be a tough night. We need to rally on Monday, have a good practice, and be ready to go on Tuesday."

BOYS' SOCCER PLAYS TOUGH FOR 50 MINUTES BEFORE FINDLAY PULLS AWAY

by [Rich McGowan](#) | Oct 3, 2017 | [Boys Soccer](#)



FINDLAY – For 50 minutes, the Ross boys soccer team gave one of the TRAC's top teams all it could handle.

The Little Giants scored early in the second half to knot the game two goals apiece.

Then the bottom fell out.

Findlay took control of the match over the final 30 minutes and ended the Little Giants' bid for an upset, 7-2.

"It kind of went downhill from there," coach Alex Coressell said. "We played a good 50 minutes, but the last 30 got us."

Dylan Brady scored to get Ross on the board, with an assist from Issac Minor.

Chris Navarro scored early in the second half off an assist from goalkeeper Mikey Contreras.

"They found one thing that worked, and we didn't stop it," Coressell said. "They had a lead in shots, and we couldn't answer at that point and got a little bit tired." Ross' record falls to 7-4 overall with a 2-3 mark in the conference. Findlay is the first of three straight conference games the Little Giants are using to see where they stand in the league.

"Findlay, St. Francis, St. John's are who we think they are," Coressell said. "We played a good 50 minutes, but it's just that last 30 minutes that got us tonight. If

we can put that whole 80 together, as we did in that first 50, we can challenge anybody in the league.

"I think we were kind of down coming off the loss on Saturday and they responded tonight," he added. "This was one of the better games we've had against really tough competition."

OFFICIATING FRUSTRATES LITTLE GIANTS TEAM IN 5-4 LOSS TO MANSFIELD ST. PETER'S

by [Rich McGowan](#) | Oct 7, 2017 | [Boys Soccer](#)



MANSFIELD – Ross' boys soccer team battled two opponents Saturday. One was scheduled: Mansfield St. Peter's. The other was not: The officials.

A number of the referees' calls went against the Little Giants Saturday, and Ross fell into an early hole it could not climb out of in a 5-4 loss Saturday.

"The first half, we did not get any calls; the refs were calling everything in one direction," coach Alex Coressel said. "So we worried more about the refs and their players playing physical than we did about ourselves."

St. Peter's took a 3-1 lead at halftime. While Ross battled back in the second half, the Little Giants could not get the equalizer.

"The second half, we played much better and kept the ball on the ground and passed a lot better, got a lot of opportunities. We should have had more, but unfortunately, the poor officiating did not allow that to happen at times."

Dylan Brady and Sam Durbin filled the scoresheet for Ross, each scoring two goals and adding an assist each as well. Both teams fired 16 shots at the goal, Ross' goalkeepers Mikey Contreras and Christian Garcia split time in goal, and each made three stops. The Little Giants were stopped eight times by St. Peter's keeper.

"We had a couple of times where Carter Durbin was right in line and got called offside even though he was on, a couple of times they did not call them off when

they were," Coressel said. "Toward the end of the game, we had an opportunity to go and score, it deflected off a defender, and it should not have been offside, but they called it anyway."

The loss drops Ross' record to 7-5 overall. The Little Giants return to action Tuesday when they host St. Francis at 5 p.m.

BOYS' SOCCER PLEASED WITH PERFORMANCE IN A LOSS TO TRAC-LEADING ST. FRANCIS

by [Rich McGowan](#) | Oct 10, 2017 | [Boys Soccer](#)



FREMONT – The Fremont Ross boys soccer team knew defeating St. Francis de Sales was going to be a monumental task. The Knights are not only undefeated in the TRAC, but also earned the No. 1 seed in the upcoming Division I district tournament.

So the Little Giants kept their expectations modest and ended the night pleased with the outcome, even though the scoreboard read a 4-0 St. Francis victory.

“I told them before the game I didn’t care what the scoreboard said at the end of the night, I was more worried about the product that we put on the field,” Ross coach Alex Coressel said. “We’ve had a string of bad luck and some not-so-good games, and I think tonight we actually, not just played decent, but played together and played hard.”

While St. Francis controlled the play for much of the game, the Little Giants didn’t make it easy for the Knights. Ross contested the 50-50 balls, played patiently with the ball, and ran step-for-step with the Knights.

The first 20 minutes saw goalkeeper Mikey Contreras make several nice stops, including multiple breakaways. But the Knights finally broke through on a breakaway from speedy Scotty Upton, who slipped through the Ross defenders and put one past Contreras.

St. Francis scored again in the 26th minute of the half and took that 2-0 lead into halftime.

The Knights sent 30 shots at the Little Giant's goal, and Contreras made 12 saves on the night and kept the Knights from running up the score.

"Over the last couple of weeks, he's been very indecisive, and we talked about that," Coressel said of Contreras. "Tonight, he wasn't that. He was very decisive. He was aggressive and going after balls like the old Mikey. That's what we need going forward."

While St. Francis added two more goals in the second half, Ross also had more offensive opportunities in the final 40 minutes, firing five of its seven shots in the second half, forcing the St. Francis goalkeeper to make four saves.

"The kids came together, and they battled all night," Coressel said. "I told them we just wanted to see effort, especially with our defensive guys. It's going to be a long night; you're going to have to battle every single minute. The starters played 70 minutes of solid soccer, and the subs at the end held their own and did some good things. Nothing to complain about, that's for sure."

Ross is now 7-6 overall, 2-4 in the TRAC, and will have another stiff challenge Thursday when it hosts another league power, St. John's.

While Thursday will be another tough test, Coressel hopes this week's games will show the Little Giants they can compete when they travel to Ashland for the opening game of the district tournament.

"(Ashland) played these guys earlier this year and lost 5-0," Coressel said. "So a 4-0 result for us says that, for those guys, they have confidence now going into the tournament game, it's not going to be one of those where you go and play somebody and get your butt kicked and go home. We got a shot to move on."

BOYS SOCCER TEAM PUSHES ST. JOHN'S TO THE BRINK BEFORE FALLING LATE, 2-0

by [Rich McGowan](#) | Oct 12, 2017 | [Boys Soccer](#)



FREMONT – Sometimes results are defined by more than the final score. Just by looking at the scores of their last two games, one sees that the Ross boys' soccer teams lost both matches and failed to score a goal in either. What the scores don't show, however, is that on Tuesday, in a 4-0 loss to St. Francis, and Thursday night, a 2-0 loss to St. John's, the Little Giants played back-to-back performances that coach Alex Coressel said were their best of the season. With the win, St. John's tied St. Francis atop the TRAC for the league championship, so for the Little Giants to play both co-champions in back-to-back games and come away with momentum from playing their best is a victory of its own.

"Flat-out effort and being patient defensively, like we've been all year," Coressel said.

Defensively, they were getting in front of shots, sitting down and not letting them dribble around, forcing them to make a pass, and (goalkeeper) Mikey (Contreras) had another outstanding performance in net. When you combine all those things and put the effort behind it, we can be dangerous."

Ross played St. John's to a scoreless draw through nearly 70 minutes Thursday. The Titans didn't put one past Contreras (12 saves) until 12 minutes remained in the game. St. John's struck again two minutes later, putting away the Little Giants' bid for an upset.

"We relaxed for a second, the guys on defense were flat-out worn out," Coressel said. "They hit a couple of passes and were able to knock one in. The first ball went in, and we liked, 'oh, dang,' and couldn't get ourselves ready for the next attack."

Coressel was buoyed by his team's play in light of injuries to several starters. Forward Drew Miesle missed the game after an injury suffered on Tuesday. Thursday night, both Isaac Minor and Spencer Batey had to leave the game early. Despite the losses, the Little Giants soldiered on.

"We had three starters on the bench, one of them defensive, and we had guys step up huge and play some big minutes," Coressel said.

"Chris Navarro stepped up, we put him in the back, and he played a great, great center defensive spot tonight. He was very patient and blocked many shots.

"Cesar Flores was a man on a mission. I think he lost one 50-50 ball in the first half, if that. He was the main guy trying to stop their counter-attack. He was all over the place."

Ross is now 7-7 on the season and finishes 2-5 in the TRAC. The Little Giants host Sandusky Saturday morning at 11, then close out the regular season at home Monday against Marion Harding.

Coressel said his team is playing its best soccer of the year heading into next week's district tournament.

"We told the guys back in July, when we went to the tournament in Otsego, they needed to trust the process," he said. "We did some things in the preseason that not everybody was happy about, during the season there have been games we weren't happy with, but hopefully we're peaking at the right time going into the tournament next week."

BOYS' SOCCER SCORES A LATE GOAL TO SURGE AHEAD OF SANDUSKY, 2-1

by [Rich McGowan](#) | Oct 14, 2017 | [Boys Soccer](#)



FREMONT – Sometimes adversity brings out the best in a team.

Such was the case for the Ross boys' soccer team this week.

The Little Giants battled through back-to-back matches against the eventual TRAC co-champions, St. Francis and St. John's, playing their best soccer of the season, despite losing both games.

Saturday morning, Ross played host to rival Sandusky, where the Little Giants battled early fatigue and late frustrations as they searched high and low for the go-ahead goal.

Finally, with three minutes to play in a match it had essentially taken control of, Ross broke through and took a 2-1 victory.

"Battling through adversity, battling through three physical games – Sandusky was just as physical as St. Francis and St. John's – we fought and fought and fought," coach Alex Coressel said. "I think overcoming the mental aspect today was huge – not having that trap game, so to speak."

The toll of its league games this week was evident early, as Ross was flat and slow to the ball in the first 15 minutes of the match. As a result, Sandusky scored the game's first goal when a shot rang off the goalpost and the Blue Streaks fired the rebound into the goal for a 1-0 lead, which the game remained until halftime.

"The first half we were not making good decisions, plain and simple," Coressel said. "We were tired, mentally tired, physically tired, a little bit of everything. We

were playing balls over the top that we weren't getting to, 10 to 15 yards ahead, we were dribbling through traffic when we didn't need to."

Ross began to assert itself in the second half, but it took a Blue Streak miscue to get the Little Giants on the board in the game's 54th minute.

Sam Durbin fired a shot that rang off the goalpost. The ball then bounced off the Sandusky goalkeeper and over the goal line to tie the game.

From there, the Little Giants dominated most of the half, but as the shots piled up, 26 by the end of the match, the score remained tied.

Senior defender Spencer Batey said the Little Giants had to battle their own emotions just as much as they had to fight the Blue Streaks.

"We're all teenagers, our moods go up and down, so trying to rally together a team, from a coach's perspective, from a captain's perspective, or from a senior's perspective, it's tough," Batey said. "But you have to stay on them and let your teammates know to keep pushing forward, and you can't give up. We had a few players, you could see it on their faces, they were starting to go down, but you got to get on them and keep pushing them."

While Ross controlled the ball for the majority of the play, Sandusky still had its opportunities, and it fell to the Little Giant defenders and keeper Mikey Contreras to keep the Blue Streaks from re-taking the lead.

"It is nerve-wracking because you don't know, anything can happen," said Contreras, who finished with five saves. "We have a full 80 minutes, and you never know what can happen. It upsets me that we didn't score until the very end, but I'm still happy we got it."

"To win a crucial game at the end, like this, it feels great."

Finally, with 2:58 remaining in the game, Durbin battled through a Blue Streak defender and fired a shot past the Blue Streaks' goalkeeper to take the lead.

"Somebody made a sick, little tackle, just played me through, and the rest was easy," Durbin said. "It's tough, for sure, when you look up and, myself included, you've missed almost every shot you take. But you're just looking for one at the end."

While the Little Giants (8-7) celebrated their Senior Day, they have one more home match, Monday against Marion Harding, in a game rescheduled from earlier in the month. After that, Ross travels to Ashland on Wednesday for its district tournament opener.

While happy with the win, Batey said the Little Giants need to play as they did against St. John's if they want their season to continue beyond Wednesday.

"Today we started a little slow, and we rallied and were as good as we needed to be, but St. John's was right where we needed to be for the tournament game," Batey said. "We're getting there; it'll be interesting to see on Wednesday what we're able to come up with."

MIKEY CONTRERAS AND DYLAN BRADY WERE NAMED FIRST TEAM TRAC, FOUR OTHERS ALSO HONORED

by Rich McGowan | Oct 15, 2017 | Boys Soccer



FREMONT – The improvement of Ross' boys soccer team has not gone unnoticed by the other coaches in the Three Rivers Athletic Conference. The league's coaches met on Sunday to determine all-conference honors, and a half-dozen Little Giants were recognized for their seasons.

Senior Mikey Contreras was named Goalkeeper of the Year/ First Team all-TRAC for his play for the Little Giants, making official what Ross coach Alex Coressel has believed to be the case for a couple of years now.

"For Mikey, it was overdue, I think, and also in some of the other coaches' minds," Coressel said. "...He got six out of the seven votes he was able to get; it was nearly unanimous."

Joining Contreras on the First Team is junior forward Dylan Brady. Brady, who just missed First-Team honors a year ago, left no doubt as to his place in the conference as he led the Little Giants with 15 goals and added five assists.

"Dylan just missed out on First Team last year; he was basically a shoo-in this year," Coressel said. "He was a solid first-team guy, not one of those guys right on the bubble, so it was nice to see him get recognized."

Senior midfielder Sam Durbin scored 14 goals with eight assists this season and earned Second Team status.

"There are so many guys spread out across the league that get points when we vote, so it's difficult to get First Team," Coressel said. "Your own coach can't vote for you, and it depends on what you do on a game-by-game basis. He scored four against Lima Senior, but when we don't score against teams like St. John's, it's hard to get recognized in those games, sometimes."

Senior forward Drew Miesle, junior defender Charlie Corthell, and sophomore forward Alec Slemmer earned honorable mention status.

"Well deserved, for all of them," Coressel said. "Charlie stepped up big time on the defensive end.

"Alec did a great job this year, scoring nine goals and getting an assist, had a few he could have finished in the back of the net, but he's still extremely young, only a sophomore, and to get on there is a good thing.

"And Drew Miesle, over the last four years, everything he's put into the program and what he's done for us this year and the adversity he battled through off the field, it's good for him to get recognized for all he's done for us."

Ross has a record of 8-7 overall and closes out its regular season Monday at home against Marion Harding at 5 p.m. before beginning the district tournament Wednesday at Ashland.

BOYS SOCCER CRUISES TO WIN, CLINCH PROGRAM'S FIRST WINNING RECORD IN RECENT MEMORY

by [Rich McGowan](#) | Oct 16, 2017 | [Boys Soccer](#)



FREMONT – The boys soccer team's season-finale Monday night was less a contest and more of a victory lap.

And the Little Giants had plenty to celebrate.

Ross jumped all over Marion Harding early and often Monday night. Ross scored four goals in the first 20 minutes of the match and cruised to a 4-0 win over the Presidents.

The win not only sends Ross into its district tournament match Wednesday night riding a two-game win streak, but also improves the Little Giants to 9-7 overall and ensures they will end the year with their first winning season in recent memory.

"No clue," coach Alex Coressel said when asked when the last winning season was. "Sam (Durbin) and a couple of others were asking tonight, 'When was the last time we had a winning record?' and we could not remember it. It actually dawned on Sam after the game that we were going to have a winning record no matter what happens on Wednesday."

The Little Giants have more than doubled their win total from last season's record of 4-10-3, despite largely the same roster.

"It shows the improvement we made from last year because it's not like we had a big change in our roster, we only graduated two guys off our roster and basically

everybody was back," Coressel said. "It's been two years of hard work in the offseason to get ready and it's paid off throughout the year."

The only problem with Monday night's match against the Presidents was the time. Marion Harding arrived late after having transportation difficulties, moving kickoff back nearly an hour from its scheduled 5 p.m. start time. As a result, darkness ended the game with about 25 minutes remaining in the second half. But, with the game well in hand, and a couple Ross players under the weather and others battling nagging injury, the Little Giants didn't mind preserving some of their energy for their district tournament opener Wednesday.

"We pulled those (starters) off, let a lot of the young guys play for almost the full 20 minutes of the first half," Coressel said. "The second half, we put people in all sorts of different spots to give the seniors a send-off so we could pull them off the field one more time."

Junior Dylan Brady opened the scoring about seven minutes into the game and scored again about a minute later. Senior Sam Durbin scored a pair of goals within the next 10 minutes in the final home game of his career.

Senior Mikey Contreras didn't have a lot to do in goal, as the Presidents fired just three shots in his direction and he made one save. Brady played goal in the second half and also made one save.

With the regular season finished, Ross will travel to Ashland on Wednesday in the first game of the district tournament at 5 p.m. With a victory, the Little Giants will advance to face the winner of Anthony Wayne and Tiffin Columbian next week at Findlay High School.

A tournament victory will also check off one of Ross' primary preseason goals: To win 10 games.

"The kids are extremely confident right now," Coressel said. "They're pleased with the way they played, with a lot of games in a short amount of time, finished pretty darn healthy and with pretty good results. They're flying high, and they're ready to play a tournament game they think they can win. I know they can."