

2010 DIVISION I PLAYOFF...

ROAD TO STARK COUNTY



A LOOK AT THE FIRST ROUND OF THE HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL PLAYOFFS



DIVISION I ■ FREMONT ROSS VS. TOLEDO ST. JOHN'S AT BGSU'S DOYT PERRY STADIUM

First Round Pairings

COLUMBUS — Regional quarterfinal pairings for the Ohio High School Athletic Association football playoffs. The regional semifinals, regional finals and state semifinals will all be played at neutral sites. The state finals will be played at Massillon Paul Brown Tiger Stadium and Canton Fawcett Stadium Dec. 3 and Dec. 4. Divisions I, III and V play at 7 p.m. Saturday. Divisions II, IV and VI play at 7:30 p.m. Friday.

DIVISION I

■ Region 1

No. 8 Brecksville-Broadview Heights (7-3) at No. 1 Solon (10-0)
No. 7 Warren G. Harding (8-2) at No. 2 Cleveland Glenview (10-0)

No. 6 Mentor (7-3) at No. 3 Lakewood St. Edward (10-0)
No. 5 Willoughby South (9-1) at No. 4 Austintown-Fitch (9-1)

■ Region 2

No. 8 Medina (8-2) at No. 1 Canton McKinley (8-2)
No. 7 Twinsburg (9-1) at No. 2 Sylvania Southview (10-0)

No. 6 Massillon Washington (7-3) at No. 3 Toledo Whitmer (9-1)
No. 5 Fremont Ross (9-1) at No. 4 Toledo St. John's (9-1)

■ Region 3

No. 8 Troy (8-2) at No. 1 Pickerington Central (9-0)
No. 7 Columbus Northland (8-2) at No. 2 Hilliard Davidson (10-0)

No. 6 Hilliard Darby (8-2) at No. 3 Springfield (8-2)
No. 5 Dublin Coffman (8-2) at No. 4 Westerville South (8-2)

■ Region 4

No. 8 Huber Heights Wayne (7-3) at No. 1 Middletown (10-0)
No. 7 Hamilton (7-3) at No. 2 Cincinnati Colerain (10-0)

No. 6 Cincinnati St. Xavier (5-4) at No. 3 Cincinnati LaSalle (9-1)
No. 5 Centerville (8-2) at No. 4 Cincinnati Archbishop Moeller (7-3)

■ Region 5

No. 8 Kent Roosevelt (8-2) at No. 1 Tallmadge (10-0)
No. 7 Chagrin Falls Kenston (8-2) at No. 2 Mentor Lake Catholic (9-1)

No. 6 Warren Howland (10-0) at No. 3 Copley (9-1)
No. 5 Aurora (8-2) at No. 4 Ashland (8-2)

■ Region 6

No. 8 Sandusky (6-4) at No. 1 Avon (10-0)
No. 7 Maumee (7-3) at No. 2 Avon Lake (8-2)

No. 6 Cleveland John F. Kennedy (7-3) at No. 3 Olmsted Falls (7-3)
No. 5 Maple Heights (10-0) at No. 4 Toledo Central Catholic (8-2)

■ Region 7

No. 8 Zanesville (9-1) at No. 1 Columbus Marion-Franklin (10-0)
No. 7 Dresden Tr-Valley (8-2) at No. 2 New Albany (10-0)

No. 6 Columbus St. Charles (5-4) at No. 3 Uniontown Lake (7-3)
No. 5 Sunbury Big Walnut (8-2) at No. 4 Canal Winchester (9-1)

■ Region 8

No. 8 Dayton Carroll (7-3) at No. 1 Cincinnati Winton Woods (9-1)
No. 7 New Carlisle Tecumseh (7-3) at No. 2 Kings Mills Kings (9-1)

No. 6 Cincinnati Mount Healthy (8-2) at No. 3 Cincinnati Turpin (9-1)
No. 5 Harrison (5-5) at No. 4 Trotwood-Madison (8-2)

■ Region 9

No. 8 Hunting Valley University (7-3) at No. 1 Parma Padua (7-3)
No. 7 Akron St. Vincent-St. Mary (6-4) at No. 2 Hubbard (8-2)

No. 6 Youngstown Cardinal Mooney (5-4) at No. 3 Mogadore Field (7-3)
No. 5 Poland Seminary (7-3) at No. 4 Akron Buchtel (7-3)

■ Region 10

No. 8 Columbus DeSales (5-5) at No. 1 Columbus Bishop Watterson (8-1)
No. 7 Shelby (8-2) at No. 2 Clyde (9-1)

No. 6 Columbus Eastmoor Academy (6-3) at No. 3 Tiffin Columbian (9-1)
No. 5 Elida (8-2) at No. 4 Tipp City Tippecanoe (9-1)

■ Region 11

No. 8 Minerva (8-2) at No. 1 Alliance Marlington (10-0)
No. 7 Dover (8-2) at No. 2 Steubenville (8-2)

No. 6 Salem (8-2) at No. 3 Thornville Sheridan (10-0)
No. 5 Newark Licking Valley (8-2) at No. 4 East Liverpool (8-2)

■ Region 12

No. 8 Washington Court House (8-2) at No. 1 Springfield Shawnee (9-1)
No. 7 Dayton Dunbar (7-3) at No. 2 Cin. Archbishop McNicholas (8-2)

No. 6 Cincinnati Wyoming (9-1) at No. 3 St. Bernard Roger Bacon (7-3)
No. 5 Jackson (9-1) at No. 4 Eaton (10-0)

■ Region 13

No. 8 Perry (6-4) at No. 1 Akron Manchester (10-0)
No. 7 Fremontville Paulding (8-2) at No. 2 Phoenixville (8-2)

■ Region 14

No. 8 Perry (6-4) at No. 1 Akron Manchester (10-0)
No. 7 Fremontville Paulding (8-2) at No. 2 Phoenixville (8-2)

Scrimmage partners meet again

BY KEVIN SHIELDS
Sports writer

FREMONT — More than a decade has gone by since they met each other during the football season.

Still there is no sense of unfamiliarity between Fremont Ross and its first round Division I, Region 2 playoff opponent, Toledo St. John's Jesuit.

Though they haven't played since a Ross win (41-0) in week two of the 2000 season, the two teams make an effort to scrimmage each preseason.

"We like to challenge ourselves in the preseason," Little Giants coach Derek Kidwell said. "And anytime you got St. John's on your schedule you know it's going to be a dog fight."

Kidwell expects nothing less when the two teams meet Saturday at Bowling Green State University's Doyt Perry Stadium. Kickoff between the fifth-seeded Little Giants (9-1) and fourth-seeded Titans (9-1) is scheduled for 7 p.m.

"Health-wise, both teams are as good as they've been all season," Kidwell said. "That's good — there won't be any excuses as to why this game can't be played at a high level."

St. John's coach Doug Pearson is also a fan of the Ross program.

"Over the years it's been one of the best traditional programs in Northwest Ohio," Pearson said. "Derek is keeping it that way."

Making the match-up even more interesting is the fact the two teams will be joining the brand new Three Rivers Athletic Conference next fall.

"Our young kids are going to have to get use to this," Kidwell said. "But this should be a very good defensive battle."

And on defense, the Titans don't shy away from smash-mouth teams like Ross. They held Toledo Central Catholic to just 204 total yards in a key 39-14 win a week ago. That included limiting its star tailback Caleb Goings to just 41 yards on 16 carries. Goings had 1,211 going into the City League showdown.

"That was a big stat for us," Pearson said. "We gave up a 70-yard run to them on a trap play on their first drive, but other than that we did an excellent job containing Central's run game."

Pearson holds Little Giants' tailback Tyler Trautwein in the same elite company of Goings.

"Trautwein is impressive," Pearson said. "As is Goings, and with both of those guys you got to bring it and you got to wrap-up. Because if you don't



File photo

Ross running back Tyler Trautwein finds space last week against Sandusky.

they're going to break tackles and you better have more than one guy there."

With his 271 rushing yards in the win over Sandusky (21-7) last Friday, Trautwein now unofficially has the eighth-best single-season run total in Little Giants' history with 1,329 yards. The senior's 13 rushing touchdowns are five shy of the top-five.

"They don't just do one thing," Pearson said. "They've really diversified as the season has gone on and they've found what works for them."

Ross is very confident in its schemes and thinks the key to the run game will be keeping the Titans' linebackers out of the run box.

"I think Tyler Wolf is going to have to play a good game at quarterback," Kidwell said. "There's opportunities in the pass game against them."

But Kidwell knows to look out for Michigan recruit Jack Miller and linebacker Kent Kern.

"The (Jack) Miller kid is a monster," Kidwell said. "He's extremely aggressive and physical — it's exciting to see a kid

that goes out and plays as hard as he does on both sides of the ball."

Miller a 6-foot-4-inch, 270-pound end, also is key in St. John's run game led by Kern, a converted quarterback. He and senior Nate White combined for 266 rushing yards against the Central Catholic. Meanwhile, sophomore signal caller Brogran Roback has thrown for more than 1,700 yards.

"They still run their same schemes," Kidwell said. "They're a counter type of team and they got big physical offensive linemen that like to get on you and their running backs use their vision."

One thing Kidwell likes though, is the mindset of his team. Ross was in close games most of the season en route the Greater Buckeye Conference title.

"I think having tight games throughout the season can only help us," Kidwell said. "Because you never know when you're going to have to have that game-winning drive or game-changing stop."

"And there's been times we've needed to do that for nine or 10 weeks now."

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Turnovers derail Little Giants

BY KEVIN SHIELDS
Sports writer

BOWLING GREEN — The turnover bug hadn't hit the Fremont Ross football team much during the 2010 campaign.

But on Saturday night at Bowling Green State University's Doyt Perry Stadium, it ailed the Little Giants.

Ross turned the ball over four times, all leading to points, in a 45-35 Division I, Region II playsetback to Toledo St. John's Jesuit.

"You can't spot a playoff-caliber team 24 points off turnovers," Little Giants coach Derek Kidwell said. "We're not good enough to beat a team and beat ourselves."

"Tonight we tried, but we gave them too many opportunities."

Ross sophomore Tyler Wolf was brilliant in passing for 266 yards (20 of 34) and two scores. But it will be the two scores he gave up via interceptions that will be hard for him to forget.

Titan cornerback Cheatem Norrils made both interceptions — taking one 28 yards and the other 36 yards for touchdowns.

Going into the game, Wolf had thrown just five picks all season.

St. John's had a slight edge in offensive yards, 152-127, at the half, but led 26-7.

"I thought offensively in the first half we were never really in sync," Titans coach Doug Pearson said. "Part of that was be-



Doug Hise | News Messenger

Tyler Wolf, of Fremont Ross, scores a touchdown Saturday.

cause (Ross) did some things on defense that gave us problems."

Despite the offensive troubles, Titans' tailback Nate White threw the first punch for St. John's. His 78-yard run on the second play from scrimmage set up a 2-yard scoring plunge from Kent Kern.

White led all rushers with 142 yards on 11 carries, adding a 49-yard scoring run in the third quarter that gave St. John's a 39-15 lead.

"My offensive line did a good job blocking and for another week the receivers did a really good job on the edge," White

said. "That also sprung me free because I didn't have to worry about those speed guys coming to get me."

Ross responded to the Titans' first score, taking the ball 89 yards in 14 plays to make it 7-7. Senior tailback Tylor Trautwein accounted for 40 yards on the ground. Wolf finished it with a 1-yard scoring run.

Then the Little Giants' defense went to work, forcing a three and out.

Two Norrils' interceptions for scores later, and a 25-yard field

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St. John's defender a big pain

BY SEAN SHAPIRO
News-Messenger
correspondent

BOWLING GREEN — If it wasn't for Cheatem Norrils Toledo St. John's probably wouldn't be advancing to the Division I, Region II semifinals.

A senior defensive back, Norrils had a hand in three defensive touchdowns as the Titans held on to beat Fremont Ross 45-35 on Saturday night.

Taking back two interceptions for scores and forcing a fumble that was recovered for a score, Norrils almost single-handedly put 20 of his team's 45 points on the scoreboard.

"They say big players make big plays 'in the playoffs,'" Norrils said. "You have

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to come out and play hard. every play can be your last play.”

Norrils first pick-6 was a gift. The ball ricocheted off a Ross receiver and bounced into the air and into Norrils’ arms. He was in the end zone 28 yards later.

“Coach says random things happen in the first playoff game usually, that’s one of those random things,” Norrils said.

Later that quarter Norrils celebrated again after picking off Tyler Wolf and tiptoeing his way down the sideline for a 36-yard touchdown.

“I’m not being arrogant when I say this, but Cheatam Norrils is a pretty good football player,” said St. John coach Doug Pearson. “If you throw it up and it’s tipped it might be going the other way. It happened twice tonight.”

In addition to the two defensive receptions, Norrils also had

the only St. John reception of the first half, a juggling catch near the sideline for an 11-yard gain.

After taking two interceptions back for touchdowns in the second quarter Norrils once again was part of a defensive score in the third quarter. He forced a fumble by Tylor Trautwein, and teammate Jake Pennese fell on the ball in the end zone for the score.

Trautwein reversed directions in the backfield, only to be met by Norrils who knocked the ball loose and into the end zone.

“Every time I see the ball I’m going after it,” Norrils said. “It was a run play as soon as you see it you have to be the hammer and not the nail.”

He also had an interception on a Ross two-point conversion attempt with 4:32 remaining in the third quarter and tackled Greg Brown on another two-point conversion attempt with three minutes remaining in the contest.

TURNOVERS FROM 6

goal from Titans kicker Brandon Smith — the game was much different.

And it didn’t get much better for the Little Giants.

Trautwein took a hand-off from Wolf on the first play of the second half, and fumbled it away inside the 10-yard line. Norrils made the strip and Jake Pennese was the recipient of any easy touchdown. He picked the ball up in the back of the end zone to give the Titans a 32-7 lead.

Wolf rallied the troops, though, tossing for 136 yards in the third quarter to pull Ross as close as 10 twice. Skylar Reffner and Tre Rollins each made TD grabs, with Wolf running in two more.

“I like the way our kids rallied in the second half,” Kidwell said. “But you can’t dig yourself that big of a hole and expect to get out of it — they gave it a great try though.”

St. John’s (10-1) always had an answer to the Little Giants’ strikes.

“When we didn’t have a stupid penalty, we scored every time we had the ball,” Pearson said.

The Titans were flagged for 70 yards in penalties, while Ross was penalized for 90.

Most of the damage came from

White and tailback Kent Kern, who added 106 yards on 19 attempts. The Titans racked up 271 of its 299 total yards on the ground.

As for Ross (9-2), Trautwein finished with just 46 yards on 23 carries. In total, the Little Giants racked up 114 yards on the ground for 380 yards of total offense. Most of which came from Wolf and the receiving corps.

Reffner finished with six catches for 87 yards with Greg Brown adding five grabs for 74 yards to lead six different targets.

“I told (Wolf) you’re going to have to grow up right now, and he played a heck of a second half,” Kidwell said. “He’s a reason why there’s going to be a bright future for Ross football.”

It’s a future for the Little Giants that’ll see them compete against the likes of St. John’s week in and week out.

“The Three Rivers Athletic Conference is going to be a tough league,” Kidwell said. “We’ll have to get stronger and bigger in the weight room and we’ll need to re-challenge our kids again because this is what it’ll be like every week.”

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