

Contreras tough as Little Giants earn tie

By Matthew Horn

Sports writer

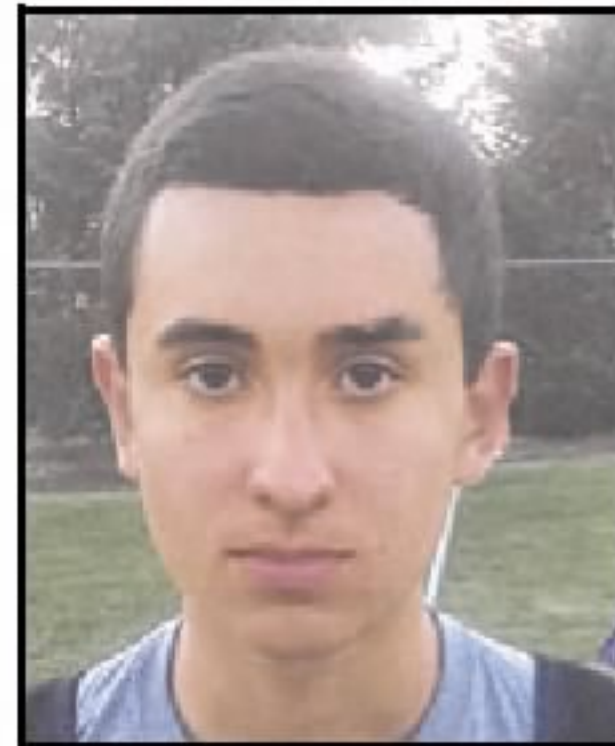
Every save was huge Wednesday.

Fremont Ross freshman Mikey Contreras made three outstanding saves in the first half that allowed the Little Giants to earn a 1-1 tie with visiting Port Clinton. Contreras made strong saves on either



**Nate
Domiray**

side of the Redskins' goal and added another as he cut down



**Mikey
Contreras**

the angle and made a sprawling stop with three minutes left in the half.

"I love the pressure," Contreras said. "It gets me motivated to succeed. I thrive in those types of environments."

Contreras is always ready for an opponent's best effort. This helps with preparation, identifying tendencies and focus.

"No matter your name... no matter who it is, they'll play their best game," he said. "Everybody wants to win."

Ross coach Tom Ackerman anxiously awaited Contreras' arrival to the varsity program.

"He's huge," Ackerman said. "All you heard the last

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Tie

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few years was about this kid coming up. We've been waiting. That's what I expect and that's what he'll bring. It will be nice for four years."

The Little Giants' Steven Blodgett also helped preserve the tie as he took the ball off an attacker's foot from point-blank range late in the second half. Contreras tried to take in the whole picture around the goal.

"They'd come down the right side and cross," Contreras said. "That was challenging because I was out of position for a touch or one-timer and I had to get in position for a shot."

Nate Domiray scored Ross's goal off a penalty kick as he put home his own rebound to tie the game in the second half.

"I was trying not to let the moment get in my head," Domiray said. "I usually go to the same side and he took it away, but I was able to get the rebound."

Port Clinton did not generate as many scoring chances in the second

half as it did in the first. Ross hit the post with a shot in the first half and the crossbar with another in the second.

"Not only do we have to lock down their offense, but we have to get a goal," Domiray said of the mentality. "Although we're down, we're definitely not out. The motivation this season is that it doesn't matter who they are or where they're from. If we play our best game, we can take anybody on."

Port Clinton topped Ross 8-1 last season.

"We hustled," Ackerman said. "We recognized where we were going with the ball. We didn't get outrun. The first two games, we've done a good job passing for chances to score. Port Clinton had more scoring chances but we were in position for chances. Now, we have to finish."

The Little Giants might not have to capitalize on many with Contreras in goal.

"That will go down as one of his best games," Domiray said. "He directed the defense. It's early ... he couldn't have stepped up any better."

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BOYS SOCCER FREMONT ROSS

Coach: Tom Ackerman
(second year, 5-10-2)

Last year: 5-10-2 (0-6-1
Three Rivers Athletic Conference)

Key losses: Ben Moroney (GK).

Key returners: Nate Domiray (Sr., MF); Steven Blodgett (Jr., D); Trent Damschroeder (Jr., D); James Gibson (So., D); Trent Bishop (So., MF); Jared Fox (So., MF); Zach Zimmerman (Jr., MF); Alex Terraza-Cobo (Jr., F).

Impact newcomers: Mikey Contreas (Fr., GK); Sam Durbin (Fr., D); Drew Miesley (Fr., F); Spencer Batey (Fr., MF); Nick Madro (Jr. MF); Kaleb Bickley (Jr., D/GK).

Outlook: Entering its fourth year of play in the Three Rivers Athletic Conference Fremont Ross is still searching for its first league victory. After fielding a young team in 2013, the Little Giants remain young, but return eight starters from a season ago. "We had three freshmen start last year," coach Tom Ackerman said. "I think one year in will help them be a little faster and stronger. About midway through last year they started to adjust to the speed and things got a little better." The Little Giants' back-end is going to continue to be young, with freshmen defenders and goalkeepers seeing playing time. "Defense is a major concern," Ackerman said. "We haven't figured out who belongs where yet. Our strength right now are up front and hopefully we'll score a lot of goals this year."