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Big 2nd half fuels Little Giants

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LIMA -- Fremont Ross dominated the second half of a 45-17 Greater Buckeye Conference victory against Lima Senior on Friday.

Leading 14-10 at the start of the third quarter, the Little Giants (5-4, 1-3) scored 24 consecutive points on their first four possessions and forced the Spartans to punt on their first three second-half drives.

Greg Brown and Devante Woods ran for TDs and Victor Layton had a 31-yard field goal in the third quarter as Ross extended its lead to 17 before quarterback Cody Foos opened the fourth quarter with a 6-yard TD run.

"We played under control and we controlled the line of scrimmage," Little Giants coach Derek Kidwell said. "Our offensive line deserves a lot of credit because they have been beaten up (verbally) by the coaching staff. Cody Foos managed an outstanding game without any turnovers and hit the open receivers when he had to. (James Aaron) Spencer, (Tylor) Trautwein and Devante Woods all ran the ball well. And our defense played well."

Foos, who ended up throwing for 186 yards on 16-of-23 passing and no interceptions, found Kyle Damman open for a 24-yard TD strike with 30 seconds left before halftime as Ross went ahead for good at 14-10.

Ross outgained Lima Senior 489-288 in total yards and 303-144 in rushing, which Woods aided by running for TDs of 80 yards in the third quarter and 95 yards in the fourth quarter. He ended up with 178 yards on 4 carries.

"We were right where we wanted to be when we came out for the second half," Spartans coach Darnell Collins said. "We thought if we could come out and get a three-and-out on (Ross), that would give us good momentum to take the lead. But the Little Giants went right down and scored."

The scoring onslaught began with Brown, whose 6-yard TD capped an 8-play, 48-yard scoring drive on the Little Giants' first possession of the second half. A 42-yard kickoff return by Woods gave Ross the ball near midfield.

Thinking it was getting the ball back, Lima Senior was shocked to see Brett Mierke pounce on Layton's onside kick with 8 1/2 minutes left in the third quarter. The ensuing Ross possession ended with Layton's 31-yard boot.

"I think our kids responded in the second half," Kidwell said. "The onside kick was a big play. We wanted to get a comfortable lead because we've let some leads slip away from us this year."

The Spartans went three-and-out while Woods ran 80 yards for a TD at the 2:26 mark before Foos engineered a 2-play, 40-yard drive that gobbled up 34 yards on pass to Mierke. The Little Giants quarterback scored from 6 yards out on the next play.

The only drive Lima Senior put together in the second half when quarterback Adrian Hutchins connected for a 58-yard TD pass to Marc Johnson with 5:18 left.

But Woods found another opening with 32 seconds remaining, running 95 yards for his second TD of the game.

Ross had an answer for Lima Senior throughout the first half.

After Casey Reed gave the Spartans a 3-0 lead on a 43-yard field goal -- the second-longest in Lima Senior history -- with 4:37 left in the first quarter, the Little Giants came back with an 11-play, 54-yard drive.

Foos kept the Ross possession alive by connecting with Chris McCallister for 11 yards on fourth-and-5 at the Spartans' 37 before hitting Mierke for 26 yards on third-and-9 at the Lima Senior 27. Trautwein capped the drive with a 1-yard plunge into the end zone as 11:29 remained in the first half.

Both teams punted on each of their next possessions before the Spartans regained the lead. Hutchins hooked up with David Desenberg for 15 yards on third-and-8 at the Little Giants' 49. Keithie Lasenby, who ran 18 times for 133 yards, handled the next three carries, breaking off a 29-yard TD run on third-and-3.

Reed's extra-point kick put Lima Senior ahead 10-7 with 3:13 left in the first half.

But Ross offense executed effectively right before the intermission.

During an 11-play, 59-yard Little Giants' drive, Foos went 6-of-8 with completions to Spencer (twice), Brown, Mikel Stanley, Mierke and Damman, who hauled in a 24-yard TD strike as 30 seconds remained before halftime.

Layton gave Ross a 14-10 advantage with his second of six PATs in the game.
