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## Ross can't manage to put away Sandusky

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FREMONT -- When the match was on the line, the Fremont Ross volleyball team failed to put it away.

The Little Giants gained control by winning the first two games, but lost a Greater Buckeye Conference contest to Sandusky, which rallied to claim the final three games during a 21-25, 12-25, 25-15, 25-16, 19-17 decision Tuesday night at the Purple Pit.

"We have talked about having an opponent down and that a varsity-level team has the ability to come back at any point," Ross coach Randi Whitman said. "Our girls are taking responsibility for it, and I take responsibility for it, too. All of us agreed it was our lack of intensity and energy that was the difference."

The Blue Streaks took advantage of Ross's intensity level in Game 3, when Sandusky took a 10-1 lead. Tierra Hunter capped the set by scoring seven of the final eight points after the Little Giants rebounded to deficits of 12-11 and 17-14.

Hunter had a match-high 19 points while teammate Capreece Irby added 15 more.

"We got mentally tough and decided we wanted to win," Sandusky coach Stephanie Hotz said. "Against a really good Fremont (Ross) team, my girls accepted the challenge and we came out on top."

But it was Cara Croom (13 kills, nine digs) and Irby (11 kills, 10 blocks) who kickstarted Sandusky's attack. They combined to make 16 kills over the final three games as the Blue Streaks improved to 1-6 overall and 1-2 versus the GBC.

"One of the things that Cara and Capreece were doing that you don't notice on the stat sheet is they were passing the serve-receive really consistently," Hotz said. "When we can get that ball control inside-out, that's what helped us the third, fourth and fifth games."

Tied at two games apiece, Ross led 8-5 in Game 5 after Kassi Leasure served consecutive aces. But the Blue Streaks fought back and tied the final set at 12 on a Irby kill. After a Little Giants' hitting error gave Sandusky a 13-12 lead, both teams battled to a 17-all tie with neither squad having the ability to end the match.

Christy Meggitt and McKenzie Schneider each had a team-high eight kills for Ross. But as Meggitt's hitting attempt late in Game 5 went long, the Blue Streaks forged an 18-17 edge. Croom served the final point, which was awarded to Sandusky on a Ross hitting error.

Waggoner added five blocks while Schneider led Ross with 15 digs and Meggitt set up 19 assists. Carly Young contributed 10 digs and a block for Ross (1-4 overall, 1-3 GBC)

The Little Giants began the match with great energy.

During Game 2, Ross played at a near-flawless level.

The Little Giants committed only five unforced errors while Waggoner consecutively served 11 of her team-high 17 points, including three aces, as Ross built a 14-3 lead. The Little Giants increased their lead to 16 points (23-7) on a ace from Jordyn Gallagher before taking a 2-0 edge in games.

"At times, we played very well where it almost looked like we were at the top of our game," Whitman said. "For being early in the season, I was pleased we were at that level. But there were a couple times when we fell inconsistent and I think that's what did us in."

Ross rallied from a 15-10 deficit in Game 1 to score 15 of the final 21 points as it earned an early 1-0 advantage.

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