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Ross defeats Start

BY MATTHEW HORN

Sports writer

Anton Alm of Fremont Ross is used to playing hockey on a larger ice surface.

But that doesn't mean the foreign exchange student from Sweden doesn't like to grind, hit and maneuver on smaller American rinks.

Alm scored four goals as the host Little Giants defeated Toledo Start 11-1 on Sunday in a game shortened by a 10-goal rule less than 3 minutes into the third period.

"He's very stable," Ross coach Mike Sipsma said. "You know what you'll get. He works hard and skates fast. He's been a pleasant addition that fits in nicely."

Alm took a pass from Phred Schumacher to open the scoring Sunday. Austin Wilhelm added an assist on the play.

Alm scored off a pass from Kenny Ridley early in the second period and roofed a shot with an assist from Wilhelm for a 7-1 advantage about 5 minutes later. He collected a rebound off a shot from Alex Sipsma and scored while Toledo's goaltender was sprawled on his stomach early in the third.

Alm said he hasn't had to adapt his aggressive style. Wilhelm, Alm and Vaughn Schumacher are the team's goal-scoring leaders for the season.

"It's a little tighter here, which is fun," Alm said. "There's not as much open space. You have to work for goal opportunities."

Wilhelm also had a hat-trick for Ross (6-13-1, 2-2 Northwest Hockey Conference Blue Division). He scored from Sipsma only a few seconds into a first-period power play shortly after the Little Giants killed 3:58 of penalty time.

Wilhelm slammed in a rebound off a shot from Adam Hoffman late in the first period. He had a clear lane to the goal from just inside the blue line, but carried in for a closer look and put home a shot along the ice for an 8-1 margin late in the second.

"Our team came together," Wilhelm said. "Our passes started connecting. There was more skating -- people kept their feet moving."

Brandon Pridemore, who had never played in net before this season, allowed only one goal for Ross as the puck caromed off the back boards and was directed in on a power play in the second period. One of his six saves came when he flashed a pad out for a stop in the second.

The Little Giants made changes after a 4-3 setback to Lake on Saturday. Alex Sipsma, Wilhelm and Hoffman are normally forwards, but played defense Sunday for their ability to handle the puck, move away from pressure and transition to offense.

"We had some defensive issues and changed the groups," Coach Sipsma said. "We put some puck handlers back on defense. The offense started to click and guys got to the net for rebounds."

"We didn't have turnovers and (Start) didn't have it in our end much. Things started in the back."

Ridley and Phred Schumacher moved from the blue line to forward Sunday.

"Ridley was a monster," Coach Sipsma said. "His hustle and enthusiasm was unmatched. The other kids fed off that. He seemed like our spark plug.

"Phred's an on-ice leader by example. He hustles every time out on the ice. He and Vaughn created problems for the other team."

Vaughn Schumacher scored from Wilhelm and Tyler Lynch, Phred Schumacher tallied on a power play from about 10 feet from a bit of a tough angle off a pass from Alm and Jake McAfee notched a goal on a play generated right off the faceoff to start the third. Shane Durnwald, who played a part in spilling two Toledo players to the ice on the same sequence, capped the scoring with assists from each Schumacher brother.

"This was one of the better team games we've played the last several weeks," Coach Sipsma said. "A lot of guys contributed."
