

Trail Trash

2018 OHSAA Boys High School Basketball Tournament

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Featuring Commentary & Predictions by ...

The Swami

This is our twenty-fifth year for Trail Trash and the Swami. Hard to believe that we have been cranking this thing out for that many years. Welcome.

The 2018 tournament marks the first year for the OHSAA Competitive Balance plan. The Swami was skeptical to say the least, but it appears that the transition has been seamless. For Northwest Ohio, it does not "feel" much different even though more than 10% of the schools (16 of 159) are playing in different divisions as a result of CB. That includes a pair of state ranked teams in Cardinal Stritch (D4 without CB) and St. Henry (D3 without CB). If we get to the regional and state tournaments with some of the usual suspects missing, there will be more of a feel for the impact of CB.

Also new for the 2018 tourney is the running clock rule. Under

Since 1994, Trail Trash has been published twice annually in conjunction with the boys state basketball tournament brackets, Trail Trash has included the expert predictions of the Swami. For those of you familiar with the Swami, we say no more. For the small number of you not familiar with the Swami, he is the self-proclaimed guru on Northwest Ohio high school hoops.

Since the fall of 2004 Davey1.com has featured the most complete collection of Ohio Boys High School Basketball Schedules and results that can be found in one place anywhere on the internet. We have gathered all of the schedules from the schools in the OHSAA Northwest District. We wrote our own special software using a Microsoft Access database to compile and display our schedules. Nowhere else will you find the amount of information that we present on Davey1.com.

the rule, there will be a running clock in the second half of games once the margin reaches thirty-five points. The running clock will continue for the remainder of the game unless the margin falls below thirty points. The Swami has seen a couple of games this season where he would have bribed the timer for a running clock. The over/under for running clock games around NW Ohio is currently at seven.

Coach Ed Heintschel of Toledo St. John's Jesuit is now fourth all-time in Ohio with over 700 victories. Win #700 came in mid-January versus Lakewood St. Ed's. All of Coach Heintschel's wins have come at SJJ. He is currently in his thirty-ninth season as head coach of the Titans. Congratulations to Coach Heintschel. You have to wonder if this will be Ed's final season at St. John's.

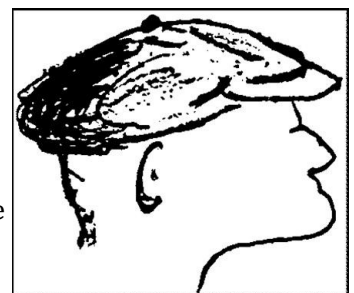
Down the road from St. John's at Maumee Valley Country Day, the basketball coaching staff recently filed a lawsuit against the parents (including a former assistant coach) of several former and current players for defamation of character. That followed an outside investigation of the basketball program. That might be a first.

Toledo Waite has not won a Toledo City League championship since 1953 but was this year's preseason choice to win the CL. Waite lost the leading scorer in the City League in mid-January when Carl Willis was arrested for his involvement in a November robbery and murder. Truly a sad story.

Time to knock the cobwebs off the Ouija board and go to the predictions.

DIVISION I

With an increase in the number of teams, D1 in NW Ohio is back to having two district tournaments after having just one the past two seasons. With the majority of the D1 schools being



from the Toledo area, both district tournaments will be held at the University of Toledo.

Toledo St. John's appears to be the class of the field in D1. The Titans have yet to lose this season to a team from Ohio. Sylvania Southview is right behind SJJ in the final Associated Press poll. Southview's only loss to date was to D2 Wauseon in early January. At the tournament draw, the third through sixth seeds all jumped to Southview's side of the bracket to avoid SJJ.

Toledo Central Catholic, Mansfield Madison, Toledo Rogers, Toledo Woodward, and Bowling Green all move up to D1 from D2. Central Catholic's move is the result of Competitive Balance. Mansfield Senior has moved down from D1 to D2. Genoa and Toledo Start are new sectional sites with the addition of the second district tournament.

The winner of the two district tournaments at UT will face off in a regional semifinal at Savage Arena. The other regional semifinal between district winners from Elyria Catholic (Lorain, Olmsted Falls, Elyria) and Strongsville (Lakewood St. Edward, Brunswick, Cleveland St. Ignatius) will be played at the University of Akron. The regional final is slated for the University of Toledo. There is a good chance we will see another matchup between St. John's and St Ed's in the regional final.

SECTIONALS

GENOA (UT DISTRICT 1): #1 Toledo St. John's Jesuit is the top seed at Genoa. St. John's is the TRAC champion. The Titans have won sectional championships the past twenty years and should cruise into the district this year. SJJ was the regional runner-up a year ago losing to eventual state champion Massillon Jackson. Bowsher will play in the Toledo City League's "final four". The Rebels were the district runner-up in 2017 but suffered heavy graduation losses. Toledo Central Catholic has won sectional championships the past eight seasons, but the streak is in jeopardy. Central, Bowsher, and Fremont Ross make for a very competitive bracket.

Semifinal – Toledo Central Catholic over Fremont Ross

Finals – Toledo Central Catholic over Toledo Bowsher; Toledo St. John's Jesuit over Ashland

FOSTORIA (UT DISTRICT 1): #7 Lima Senior and #8 Anthony Wayne are the top seeds at Fostoria. It looks like Lima Senior finally has their full roster intact. There had to be a number of coaches in the Start/Central Catholic district that were quite happy when the Spartans decided to head over to the St. John's district. Anthony Wayne will finish in the third spot in the NLL behind Southview and

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Northview. Lima Senior beat AW in overtime in the season opener while Findlay recently beat Lima in triple overtime. Findlay is solid as usual. The Trojans and Spartans are in a battle to finish in the top half of the TRAC.

Semifinal – Findlay over Toledo Waite

Finals – Findlay over Anthony Wayne; Lima Senior over Springfield

TOLEDO START (UT DISTRICT 2): #2 Sylvania Southview and #5 Sylvania Northview are the top seeds at Start. Southview is the NLL champion. Former University of Toledo coach Stan Joplin came out of retirement from coaching when he took the Southview job in September. Northview started the season with eleven straight wins before a loss to Southview in late January. The Wildcats will finish in 2nd place in the NLL. Perrysburg has taken a late season nosedive. Rogers finished in the 2nd spot in the City League and plays Start in the CL championship game. Christian Smith of Rogers recently scored 51 points against Woodward. The Rams (Rogers) gave Southview all they could handle in an early January matchup. Kyle Jackson of the Rams (Madison) recently broke the school's individual game scoring record.

Semifinal – Mansfield Madison over Perrysburg

Finals – Sylvania Northview over Mansfield Madison; Sylvania Southview over Toledo Rogers

TOLEDO CENTRAL CATHOLIC (UT DISTRICT 2): #3 Toledo St. Francis, #4 Toledo Start, and #6 Toledo Whitmer are the top seeds at Central. St. Francis should get at least a share of the runner-up spot in the TRAC. The Knights will be a tough out in the tournament if they can find a way to close out games. Start has been this season's biggest surprise in the Toledo area. The Spartans finished in the top spot in the City League standings and will meet Rogers in the CL's championship game. Whitmer beat Start handily the first week of the regular season. The Panthers jumped on Start's side of the bracket for a potential sectional final matchup with the Spartans rather than heading to Fostoria. Bowling Green and Clay are improved from a year ago. Clay broke their winless streak in the TRAC going back to February 2015.

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Semifinals – Bowling Green over Oregon Clay; Toledo Whitmer over Toledo Woodward

Finals – Toledo St. Francis over Bowling Green; Toledo Whitmer over Toledo Start

DISTRICTS

The winners of the two districts at UT will meet in a regional semifinal at Savage Arena. Toledo St. John's won the UT district in 2017 after Lima Senior took home the title in 2016.

UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO (DISTRICT 1):

Semifinals – Toledo St. John's Jesuit over Toledo Central Catholic; Lima Senior over Findlay

Final – Toledo St. John's Jesuit over Lima Senior

UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO (DISTRICT 2):

Semifinals – Sylvania Southview over Sylvania Northview; Toledo St. Francis over Toledo Whitmer

Final – Toledo St. Francis over Sylvania Southview0

DIVISION II

D2 for Northwest Ohio looks much different. Eleven teams that were D2 in 2017 have moved to D1 or D3. With the reduction in numbers, D2 is down to two districts after having three districts the past four seasons.

There is one constant in D2, and that is Wauseon. The Indians are currently undefeated and the top-ranked D2 team in the state according to the Associated Press. With the elimination of the Bowling Green district, Wauseon is now part of the Ohio Northern district. Elida, the team that Wauseon beat in overtime in the 2017 regional final, is also part of the ONU district. The Bulldogs started the season with eleven straight wins but have recently fallen out of the AP poll. Six of the fourteen teams in the Ohio Northern district were over .500 at the time of the draw.

In the Mansfield Madison district (not sure why they don't play this at Ashland University anymore), there aren't any teams that stick out. However, eleven of the fourteen teams in the Madison district had records above .500 at the time of the draw. That should make for a great district tournament.

Mansfield Senior has moved down from D1 to D2 while Clear Fork and Galion have moved from D3 to D2. Toledo Central Catholic, Mansfield Madison, Toledo Rogers, Toledo Woodward, and Bowling Green moved up to D1 while Huron, Upper Sandusky, Fostoria, Rossford, Oak Harbor, and Ottawa-Glandorf are now D3. Without CB, Wapakoneta would have been D1 this season. New sectional sites for 2018 are Bucyrus and Findlay.

The Mansfield Madison and Ohio Northern district winners will face off in a regional semifinal at BGSU. The other regional semifinal at the Stroh Center will have the North Ridgeville district winner (Parma Holy Name, Bay Village) facing one of the Columbus district winners (Columbus Beechcroft, Columbus Bishop Hartley).

SECTIONALS

BUCYRUS (MANSFIELD MADISON DISTRICT): #2 Mansfield Senior and #4 Sandusky are the top seeds at Bucyrus. Mansfield Senior is having a bounce back season. The Tygers will finish in 3rd place in the OCC. Sandusky is the SBC Lake champion. The Blue Streaks returned just one starter from the 2017 district title team. Sandusky recently lost a 21-point lead at the start of the 4th quarter against Mansfield when the Tygers scored 40 points. Clear Fork took the bye when Mansfield Senior passed on it. The Colts finished in 2nd place in the MOAC in their first year in the league.

Norwalk got hot in mid-January to move into contention in the SBC Lake. Perkins is the other team above .500 at Bucyrus.

Semifinals – Mansfield Senior over Port Clinton; Norwalk over Perkins; Sandusky over Tiffin Columbian

Finals – Mansfield Senior over Clear Fork; Sandusky over Norwalk

WILLARD (MANSFIELD MADISON DISTRICT): #1 Vermilion and #3 Lexington are the top seeds at Bob Haas. Vermilion is the SBC Bay champion. The Sailors passed on a first round bye and will face Bellevue in the first round. Lexington shares the OCC title with D1 Mount Vernon. Lex recently handed D3 Ottawa-Glandorf their only loss of the season. Lexington has won sectional titles the past six seasons. Several teams



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including Clyde passed on the bye in Vermilion's bracket with Shelby finally taking it. Both Clyde and Shelby were contenders in the tight SBC Lake race. Six teams at Willard were above .500 at the time of the draw including Ontario and Bellevue.

Semifinals – Vermilion over Bellevue; Clyde over Ontario; Lexington over Galion

Finals – Vermilion over Shelby; Lexington over Clyde

LIMA SENIOR (ONU DISTRICT): #2 Elida, #3 Lima Shawnee, and #4 Wapakoneta are the top seeds at Lima. Elida got the #2 seed despite WBL losses to Shawnee, Wapak, and Van Wert. Elida returns three starters and the top two subs from the 2017 regional runner-up team. Elida has won six straight sectional titles. Elida, Shawnee, and Wapak are in a battle for the runner-up spot in the WBL behind Ottawa-Glandorf. Wapakoneta has been plagued by injuries. Bryan is the only other team at Lima Senior above .500. Defiance took Elida to overtime in late January. Anyone who saw Toledo Scott play in the 80's and 90's would never believe that the Bulldogs would be a bottom seed.

Semifinals – Defiance over Bryan; Lima Shawnee over Toledo Scott; Wapakoneta over Napoleon

Finals – Elida over Defiance; Lima Shawnee over Wapakoneta

FINDLAY (ONU DISTRICT): #1 Wauseon is the top seed at Findlay. Wauseon is the NWOAL champion. Last year's state runner-up in D2 has not lost a regular season game since dropping one to Genoa in December 2016. Wauseon's closest games have been five point wins at Anthony Wayne and Sylvania Southview. With Elida, Shawnee, and Wapak all playing at Lima Senior, Van Wert is the next highest seed at Findlay. The Cougars are mid-pack in the WBL. A very young Kenton team has put together a nice season, but the Wildcats have struggled in the WBL. St. Marys has been competitive after a rough start. The Roughriders and Van Wert still have a shot at a share of the runner-up spot in the WBL heading into the final week of the regular season.

Semifinals – Celina over St. Marys; Van Wert over Maumee; Lima Bath over Kenton

Finals – Wauseon over Celina; Van Wert over Lima Bath

DISTRICTS

The winners of the two districts from Northwest Ohio will meet in a regional semifinal at BGSU.

MANSFIELD MADISON: Sandusky won the district championship at Mansfield Senior in 2017

Semifinals – Sandusky over Mansfield Senior; Lexington over Vermilion

Final – Lexington over Sandusky

OHIO NORTHERN UNIVERSITY: Elida won the district title at ONU in 2017 while Wauseon won the BGSU district.

Semifinals – Elida over Lima Shawnee; Wauseon over Van Wert

Final – Wauseon over Elida

DIVISION III

Ch-ch-changes (with apologies to the late David Bowie) but this is sounding like a broken record. Plenty of changes in D3 around NW Ohio for 2018. Even though there are only two fewer D3 teams this season, the number of districts has dropped from four to three for 2018.

Ottawa-Glandorf is at the top of list when it comes to D3 teams in NW Ohio. The Titans have been near the top of the Associated Press rankings all season. O-G's only loss was at D2 Lexington the day before the tournament draw. Cardinal Stritch has been a fixture in the top ten all season while 2017 state semifinalist Archbold has been in and out of the poll. Genoa has also recently gained a spot in the top ten.

The Lima Senior district is top heavy with Ottawa-Glandorf by far the best team. The rest of that district is down this year. Traditional powers Lima Central Catholic and Liberty-Benton have records well below .500. To say that O-G not advancing to the regional out of Lima would be huge is an understatement.

The Norwalk district has been the weakest of the D3 district the past two seasons. The district appears to be better, but isn't deep and still lacks a team with the potential to advance past the regional.

The Toledo Central Catholic district features Cardinal

Stritch, Archbold, and Genoa plus four other teams that had records above .500 at the time of the draw. This is by far the most competitive of the D3 districts.

Huron, Upper Sandusky, Fostoria, Rossford, Oak Harbor, and Ottawa-Glandorf have dropped from D2 to D3 while Lakota, Fort Recovery, and Wynford have moved up from D4. Clear Fork and Galion went from D3 to D2 while Montpelier, Ottawa Hills, Allen East, Parkway, Riverdale, Marion Local, Patrick Henry, and Wayne Trace moved down to D4. Huron, Upper Sandusky, Otsego, and Swanton are D3 because of Competitive Balance. Cardinal Stritch and Lima Central Catholic would have been D4 without CB. Hopewell-Loudon, Miller City, and Anthony Wayne are new sectional sites in D3.

The winner of the Lima Senior district will meet the winner of the Toledo Central Catholic district in a regional semifinal at Bowling Green. The Norwalk district winner will meet a Columbus district winner (Columbus Africentric, Columbus Wellington School, Galion Northmor) in the other regional semifinal at the Stroh Center.

SECTIONALS

HOPEWELL-LOUDON (NORWALK DISTRICT): #2 Oak Harbor and #3 Carey are the top seeds at Hopewell. Oak Harbor will finish no worse than 2nd place in the SBC Bay. The Rockets last won a sectional title in 1999. The Swami was more than a little surprised that Carey got the #3 seed ahead of Edison and Western Reserve. Carey will finish in 4th place in the N10. Heading into the final week of the regular season, Western Reserve is tied for the lead in the Firelands. There are only three teams at Hopewell with winning records (Oak Harbor, Carey, Western Reserve).

Semifinals – Willard over Ashland Crestview; Western Reserve over Bucyrus; Carey over Wynford

Finals – Oak Harbor over Willard; Western Reserve over Carey

SHELBY (NORWALK DISTRICT): #1 Upper Sandusky and #4 Edison are the top seeds at Shelby. Upper Sandusky faces Colonel Crawford for the N10 title the final Friday of the regular season. Upper's forty-nine game regular season winning streak ended with a December loss to Shelby. Edison has been streaky and still has a shot at a share of 2nd place in the SBC Bay. James Hill recently became Edison's career scoring leader. New London still has a chance at finishing the regular season with a .500

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mark. Margaretta was expected to be a contender in the SBC Bay. Huron has been very inconsistent. The Tigers handed Vermilion their only SBC Bay loss.

Semifinals – Huron over Fostoria; Margaretta over New London; Edison over Lakota

Finals – Upper Sandusky over Huron; Edison over Margaretta

MILLER CITY (LIMA SENIOR DISTRICT): #1 Ottawa-Glandorf and #2 Tinora are the top seeds at Miller City. Ottawa-Glandorf is the WBL champion. O-G has exceeded 90 points in a game five times this season. The Titans have a streak of twelve consecutive sectional championships. Last year's district semifinal loss to Elida ended O-G's hopes of winning a 7th straight district championship. In somewhat of a surprise, Tinora chose to go to Miller City. The Rams finished in 3rd place behind Wayne Trace and Hicksville in the GMC. Tinora is the typical Paul Wayne coached team. Paulding has a chance to finish the regular season at .500. Spencerville's run of seven straight sectional championship will end this year.

Semifinals – Spencerville over Fairview; Paulding over Bluffton

Finals – Ottawa-Glandorf over Spencerville; Tinora over Paulding

ELIDA (LIMA SENIOR DISTRICT): #3 Van Buren and #4 Coldwater are the top seeds at Elida. Van Buren should finish no worse than a tie for the runner-up spot in the BVC behind Pandora-Gilboa. Fort Recovery will finish the season with a winning record. It was somewhat surprising that Coldwater got a better seed than Fort Recovery. Coldwater and Fort Recovery will both finish in the bottom half of the MAC standings. Liberty-Benton's run of six straight sectional championships (and twenty-six in the last twenty-seven years) is in jeopardy. Lima Central Catholic will finish below .500 for the second straight year after winning D3 state championships in 2016 and 2014.



Semifinals – Fort Recovery over Liberty-Benton; Coldwater over Delphos Jefferson; Lima Central Catholic over Elmwood

Finals – Fort Recovery over Van Buren; Coldwater over Lima Central Catholic

ANTHONY WAYNE (TOLEDO CENTRAL CATHOLIC DISTRICT): #1 Archbold and #4 Woodmore are the top seeds at AW. Archbold returns four starters from the 2017 state semifinalist team. Archbold's only losses are to Wauseon (twice) and Ottawa-Glandorf. The lower bracket at AW is top notch with the #4 through #7 district seeds. Eastwood, Woodmore, and Otsego can all enter tournament play with at least 15 wins on the season. Those three will finish in the top half of the NBC behind Genoa. Evergreen might still be a year away, but the Vikings head into the final Friday of the regular season in a tie with Archbold for the runner-up spot in the NWOAL behind Wauseon. With Jerry and Bruce, you have to keep an eye on Evergreen.

Semifinals – Swanton over Liberty Center; Otsego over Woodmore; Eastwood over Evergreen

Finals – Archbold over Swanton; Eastwood over Otsego

TOLEDO BOWSHER (TOLEDO CENTRAL CATHOLIC DISTRICT): #2 Cardinal Stritch and #3 Genoa are the top seeds at ELB. Cardinal Stritch is the TAAC champion. That marks the first conference championship in boys basketball since the school opened in 1961. Stritch's only loss was to Toledo Central Catholic in December. Genoa is the NBC champion for the second straight year. Genoa had their thirteen game winning streak ended by Lake (Lake?) in the regular season finale. Genoa and Stritch in a district semifinal could be a classic. Rossford is the best of the other teams at Bowsher. This is Gibsonburg's final season in the TAAC as the Golden Bears are moving to the SBC River.

Semifinals – Lake over Gibsonburg; Rossford over Delta; Genoa over Northwood

Finals – Cardinal Stritch over Lake; Genoa over Rossford

DISTRICTS

The winner of the Norwalk district will meet one of the Columbus district winners and the Lima Senior district winner will play the Central Catholic district winner in regional semifinal games at BGSU.

NORWALK: Edison has won back-to-back district championships.

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Semifinals – Oak Harbor over Western Reserve; Upper Sandusky over Edison

Final – Oak Harbor over Upper Sandusky

LIMA SENIOR: Marion Local (now D4) broke Lima Central Catholic's streak of five straight district championships in 2017.

Semifinals – Ottawa-Glandorf over Tinora; Fort Recovery over Coldwater

Final – Ottawa-Glandorf over Fort Recovery

TOLEDO CENTRAL CATHOLIC: Cardinal Stritch won the district championship at Central in 2017 while Archbold won the district at Napoleon.

Semifinals – Archbold over Eastwood; Cardinal Stritch over Genoa

Final – Archbold over Cardinal Stritch

DIVISION IV

For the first time since 2011, NW Ohio will have six districts in D4. District winners from Liberty-Benton, Fostoria, Elida, and Napoleon will play in the regional tournament at BGSU. The Willard district winner will advance to the regional at the Canton Fieldhouse while the Wapakoneta district winner will advance to the Kettering Fairmont Regional. There could be three teams from D4 representing Northwest Ohio in Columbus this year.

Undefeated Mansfield St. Peter's is the top ranked D4 team in the state according to the Associated Press. St. Henry and Pettisville have also been fixtures in the poll's top ten. A number of other teams from NW Ohio have also made appearances in the poll. Convoy Crestview's absence has been conspicuous.

Mansfield St. Peter's is the clear-cut favorite in the Willard district. Colonel Crawford is the top challenger although there could be some upsets in this district. The winner at Willard will meet the Struthers district winner (McDonald, Lowellville) in a regional semifinal at Canton. The winner of the Norton district (Rittman,

Cuyahoga Heights) will face the winner of the Orwell (George?) district (Willoughby Cornerstone Christian) in the other regional semifinal at Canton.

Marion Local and St. Henry are the top teams in the Wapak district. Upper Scioto Valley is somewhat of an unknown because of their schedule while Minster is solid. Perry and New Bremen are considered the dark horses to get into the district. Is the balance of power at Wapak shifting back to the MAC? The winner at Wapak will face the winner of one of the Dayton districts (Springfield Catholic Central) in a regional semifinal at Kettering Fairmont. The winners of the other two Dayton districts (Fort Loramie, Russia) will meet in the other regional semifinal.

Of the four districts making up the regional tournament at Bowling Green, Elida is by far the strongest with eight of the eleven teams having at least thirteen wins heading into the final week of the regular season. The Liberty-Benton district has one-loss Pandora-Gilboa but is top heavy with only four teams having winning records. The Napoleon district has some quality teams including Pettisville, Toledo Christian, and Maumee Valley but is not overly deep. The Fostoria district should be very competitive but is clearly the weakest of the bunch.

Montpelier, Ottawa Hills, Allen East, Seneca East, Parkway, Riverdale, Marion Local, Patrick Henry, and Wayne Trace move from D3 to D4 for 2018 while Lakota, Wynford, and Fort Recovery are now D3. Ada, St. Henry, Montpelier, Ottawa Hills, Allen East, Seneca East, Hicksville, and Parkway are in D4 as a result of Competitive Balance.

In looking at the district assignments, the Swami still doesn't have a clue how some of the schools ended up where they did. Maybe look at a map? Buy an atlas? We've all got places to go. We've all got places to go.

SECTIONALS

GALION (WILLARD DISTRICT): #2 Colonel Crawford and #4 South Central are the top seeds at Galion. Colonel Crawford faces Upper Sandusky for the outright N10 title the final Friday of the regular season. Crawford has won six straight sectional championships. South Central is tied for the lead in the Firelands with Western Reserve going into the final weekend. Sandusky St. Mary is part of a four-way tie for the lead in the SBC River heading into the final week. The Panthers had three transfers become eligible for the second half of the season. St. Mary's coach Lyle Falknor earned career win #500 in January with the majority of those victories coming at Bellevue. Norwalk St. Paul was expected to contend for the Firelands title

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but the Flyers have been inconsistent.

Semifinals – Sandusky St. Mary over Buckeye Central; Norwalk St. Paul over Crestline

Finals – Colonel Crawford over Sandusky St. Mary; South Central over Norwalk St. Paul

LEXINGTON (WILLARD DISTRICT): #1 Mansfield St Peter's and #3 Lucas are the top seeds at Lex. St. Peter's is the MBC champion. St. Peter's had not had an undefeated regular season since going back-to-back in 1962 and 1963. The Spartans have overcome the transfer of HM All-Ohio Mason Campbell to Madison. The lower bracket at Lex will be much more interesting. Lucas is the MBC runner-up, but the Cubs are fading towards the finish. Mansfield Christian played St. Peter's tough in both their games and has some impressive non-conference performances. Plymouth has overachieved this season and should finish no lower than a tie for 3rd place in the Firelands. This is Danbury's final season in the TAAC with the Lakers headed to the SBC River.

Semifinals – Mansfield St. Peter's over Danbury; Mansfield Christian over Plymouth

Finals – Mansfield St. Peter's over Monroeville; Mansfield Christian over Lucas

VAN BUREN (LIBERTY-BENTON DISTRICT): #1 Pandora-Gilboa and #4 Miller City are the top seeds at VB. Pandora-Gilboa is the BVC and PCL champion. P-G's only loss on the season was at Upper Scioto Valley back in December. Drew Johnson became Pandora's all-time leading career scorer in January. Miller City is the only other team at VB with a winning record. The Wildcats have been on a roll since mid-January. Holgate won the district at Napoleon in 2017, but the Tigers were decimated by graduation. Holgate is scoring less than 27 points a game.

Semifinal – Cory-Rawson over McComb

Finals – Miller City over Cory-Rawson; Pandora-Gilboa over Holgate

OTTAWA-GLANDORF (LIBERTY-BENTON DISTRICT): #2 Kalida and #3 North Baltimore are the top seeds at O-G. Those top seeds are the only teams at O-G with

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winning records. Kalida has been solid in finishing in a tie with Miller City for 2nd place in the PCL. North Baltimore still has a shot for at least a share of 2nd place in the BVC with Van Buren. NB won their first district title in 2017. The Tigers are only 3-5 against teams with winning records. A young Columbus Grove team is mid-pack in the NWC. The Bulldogs have suffered a number of close losses and have to be considered the sleeper at O-G. Patrick Henry has been competitive in the majority of their games.

Semifinals – Patrick Henry over Leipsic; Columbus Grove over Arcadia

Finals – Kalida over Patrick Henry; Columbus Grove over North Baltimore

FREMONT ROSS (FOSTORIA DISTRICT): #1 Arlington and #4 Old Fort are the top seeds at Ross. Arlington caught a break by being assigned to the Fostoria district. The Red Devils could finish as high as a tie for 2nd place in the BVC. Old Fort and Fremont St. Joseph are part of a four-way tie for the top spot in the SBC River heading into the final week of the regular season. Vanlue has already exceeded their total number of wins for the past three seasons. The Wildcats also posted their first BVC victory since February 2015.

Semifinal – Fremont St. Joseph over Vanlue

Finals – Old Fort over Fremont St. Joseph; Arlington over Hardin Northern

CAREY (FOSTORIA DISTRICT): #2 Mohawk and #3 Hopewell-Loudon are the top seeds at Carey. Mohawk will finish in 3rd place in the nine-team N10 behind Upper Sandusky and Colonel Crawford. Hopewell is one of several teams that could finish as high as 2nd place in the BVC. New Riegel is the other team that is part of the four-way tie for the lead in the SBC River race. The Blue Jackets have really been scuffling of late. Seneca East is middle of the pack in the N10 but will finish above .500 overall. Tiffin Calvert is not tied for the lead in the SBC River.

Semifinals – Seneca East over Tiffin Calvert; Riverdale over New Riegel

Finals – Mohawk over Seneca East; Hopewell-Loudon over Riverdale

VAN WERT (ELIDA DISTRICT): #1 Convoy Crestview and #4 Fort Jennings are the top seeds are the top seeds at VW. Crestview is the NWC champion. The Knights are currently on a fourteen game unbeaten streak having not

lost since late December. Archrivals Fort Jennings and Ottoville face off in a great sectional final matchup. The two teams split their regular season matchups and should end up tied in the final PCL standings. Both Fort Jennings and Ottoville have December wins against Crestview. Despite being the #10 seed, Antwerp will finish the season above .500. Parkway has been competitive outside the MAC.

Semifinal - Antwerp over Parkway

Finals – Crestview over Antwerp; Ottoville over Fort Jennings

PAULDING (ELIDA DISTRICT): #2 Wayne Trace and #3 Delphos St. John's are the top seeds at Paulding. Wayne Trace finishes as the co-champion of the GMC. That is the sixth straight GMC championship for the Raiders. This is the 100th season of basketball at Delphos St. John's. The Blue Jays got their 1,500th win in January. DSJ will finish in the upper half of the MAC. Hicksville shares the GMC championship with Wayne Trace. That is the first league championship for the Aces since 1976. Hicksville started the season at 15-1 before a number of injuries hit. It appears the Aces will be healthy heading into the tourney but Hicksville isn't getting much love from the experts. Ayersville will finish the regular season with 15 wins, but the Pilots are only the #8 seed in this very tough district.

Semifinals – Lincolnview over Continental; Hicksville over Ayersville

Finals – Lincolnview over Wayne Trace; Delphos St. John's over Hicksville

BRYAN (NAPOLEON DISTRICT): #1 Pettisville and #3 Toledo Christian are the top seeds at Bryan. Pettisville has clinched at least a share of the BBC championship. The Blackbirds have 3 losses on the season but were competitive in their games with Archbold and Wauseon. Toledo Christian will finish no worse than a tie for 2nd place in the TAAC behind Cardinal Stritch. The Eagles appear to be coming out of a mini-slump with a win over D1 Anthony Wayne. Fayette will finish the season above .500 overall and in 3rd place in the BBC. The Eagles recently knocked Stryker out of a share of the league lead.

Semifinals – Edgerton over Hilltop; Fayette over Edon

Finals – Pettisville over Edgerton; Toledo Christian over Fayette

WAUSEON (NAPOLEON DISTRICT): #2 Maumee Valley Country Day and #4 Stryker are the top seeds at Wauseon. Maumee Valley Country Day still has a shot at a share of 2nd place in the TAAC. MVCD was dealt a major blow with the loss of double figure scorer and rebounder Jaiden Woodley to a late season injury. It is doubtful that he will be back for the tournament. MVCD is a very talented team. Stryker was in contention for the BBC title but will likely finish as the runner-up. Ottawa Hills is the dark horse in this district. The Green Bears still have a chance to share 2nd place in the TAAC. Kolden Uribes of Montpelier scored 50 points in a January game. He is the leading career scorer for the Locos.

Semifinals – Ottawa Hills over Montpelier; Emmanuel Christian over North Central

Finals – Ottawa Hills over Stryker; Maumee Valley Country Day over Emmanuel Christian

LIMA BATH (WAPAKONETA DISTRICT): #1 Marion Local and #3 Upper Scioto Valley are the top seeds at Bath. Marion Local has clinched at least a tie for the MAC championship. The Flyers return a veteran team from the 2017 D3 regional runner-up. Upper Scioto Valley shared the NWCC championship with Marion Elgin. #5 Lima Perry and #6 New Bremen jumped on USV's bracket. Perry had major graduation losses from the 2017 state semifinalist squad, but the Commodores have been on a roll since early January. New Bremen is much improved from a year ago and has been solid down the stretch. Lima Temple Christian tied Perry in the NWCC standings and has a chance to finish the regular season above .500.

Semifinals – Lima Temple Christian over Ridgemont; Lima Perry over New Bremen

Finals – Marion Local over Lima Temple Christian; Lima Perry over Upper Scioto Valley

COLDWATER (WAPAKONETA DISTRICT): #2 St. Henry and #4 Minster are the top seeds at Coldwater. St. Henry can still get a share of the MAC title. Marion Local handled the Redskins in their December matchup. St. Henry has won sectional titles the past six seasons. The Redskins are 6-1 against members of the WBL. Minster got off to a late start because of football. The Wildcats will finish in the top half of the MAC, but really struggled

Trail Trash

when they played Marion Local, St. Henry, and Versailles in an eight-day stretch in January. New Knoxville will finish near the bottom of the MAC but is the best of the rest of the teams at the Palace.

Semifinals – Waynesfield-Goshen over Ada; New Knoxville over Allen East

Finals – St. Henry over Waynesfield-Goshen; Minster over New Knoxville

DISTRICTS

The winner of the Liberty-Benton district and the Fostoria district winner will play in one regional semifinal at BGSU with the Elida district winner playing the Napoleon district winner in the other regional semifinal at Bowling Green.

WILLARD: Mansfield St. Peter's won their second straight district championship in 2017. The winner at Willard will face the winner of the Struthers district in the regional at the Canton Fieldhouse.

Semifinals – Colonel Crawford over South Central; Mansfield St. Peter's over Mansfield Christian

Final – Mansfield St. Peter's over Colonel Crawford

LIBERTY-BENTON: North Baltimore is the defending district champion at L-B.

Semifinals – Pandora-Gilboa over Miller City; Kalida over Columbus Grove

Final – Pandora-Gilboa over Kalida

FOSTORIA: The "new" district for 2018. This is the weakest of the six D4 districts in NW Ohio. The Swami has a headache from trying to figure this one out.

Semifinals – Arlington over Old Fort; Mohawk over Hopewell-Loudon

Final – Mohawk over Arlington

ELIDA: Delphos St. John's won the district title in 2017 at Elida.

Semifinals – Crestview over Ottoville; Delphos St. John's over Lincolnview

Final – Crestview over Delphos St. John's

NAPOLEON: Holgate won the district at Napoleon last season.

Semifinals – Pettisville over Toledo Christian; Maumee Valley Country Day over Ottawa Hills

Final – Pettisville over Maumee Valley Country Day

WAPAKONETA: Lima Perry has won back-to-back district championships at Wapak. The district winner will face the winner of one of the Dayton district winners in a regional semifinal at Kettering Fairmont.

Semifinals – Marion Local over Lima Perry; St. Henry over Minster

Final – Marion Local over St. Henry

That's a wrap for this edition. Thanks for staying awake. The Swami will be back with a very abbreviated version for the regional and state tournaments. All facts, fiction, and opinions are those of the Swami. Brackets are courtesy of davey1.com and Mr. David Spengler. Hope to see you along the tournament trail. Rock on.

The logo for "Trail Trash" is displayed in a blue, cursive font within a grey rectangular box. The text "Trail Trash" is written in a stylized, handwritten style.