

# *Trail Trash*

## **2009 OHSAA Boys High School Basketball Tournament**

**Published exclusively by Dave Spengler  
and on the net at [www.davey1.com](http://www.davey1.com)**

*Featuring Commentary & Predictions by ...*

# *The Swami*



Welcome to year sixteen of Trail Trash as well as our sixth year online at [www.davey1.com](http://www.davey1.com). We appreciate the support and compliments we have received over the years.

This has been the season of postponed games. To date, well over 180 games around Northwest Ohio have been postponed due to bad weather. Hopefully, we won't be flirting with the 200 mark by the end of the season. The crack staff at [davey1.com](http://davey1.com) has done an outstanding job of keeping track of all the scheduling changes this winter. Kudos to all the Athletic Directors throughout NW Ohio who not only have done a great job in rescheduling all the postponed boys basketball games, but also with all the other postponed athletic events as well. Last year, the weather hammered us at tournament time especially during the week of the regional tourney. Let's hope that the worst of the winter weather is behind us.

As the Swami has traveled around Northwest Ohio this season, he has heard a recurring theme. The NWOAL is down. The NOL is down. The Toledo City League is down. The SBC is down. This league is down. That league is down. The Swami has heard from a number of people that this is a down year for high school basketball in NW Ohio in general. Is it? Without going into a long dissertation, the Swami has a simple theory (and we all know that the Swami and simple are

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synonymous). There are a bunch of middle of the road teams along with the usual number of not so good and really bad teams, but there aren't the usual number of marquee teams around NW Ohio. Throw in a handful of traditional powers having losing seasons as well as what seems to be a large number of underclassmen playing varsity basketball throughout the district, and it plays into the belief that this might be a down year.

Before we close, we need to say something about the potential changes in league memberships. Lakota's exit from the SLL to the MAL as well as the NCC's interest in Upper Sandusky and Galion have fueled the fire this time around. The Swami is still trying to comprehend the idea that Fostoria could be a member of the SLL. It is naïve not to think that there will be some movement, but it remains to be seen whether there will be the wide spread ramifications that some have predicted. Since we started this publication back in 1994, new leagues have been formed and leagues have gone by the wayside with plenty of schools switching leagues. Since it's happened in the past, it will continue to happen in the future. The Swami feels a Bob Dylan quote coming so we better end this before everyone stops reading.

The Swami found a new ouija board at a garage sale

in Rollersville over the summer, so it's time to dust it off. Let's go to the picks.

## DIVISION I

Since this is not a year for new enrollment numbers, there is no need to talk about schools moving among the divisions. We can save that for next season.

Not a lot of statewide recognition for NW Ohio D1 teams this season. Lima Senior began the season with eleven straight wins becoming a fixture in the AP's top ten. The Spartans have disappeared from the poll during their recent slide. Sylvania Southview also has received some recognition in the polls. The Cougars, with 8 football players dotting their roster, lost their opener to Columbus Brookhaven one week after defeating Cincinnati Anderson for the D2 state football title. Much was expected of Toledo St. John's, but the Titans got off to a slow start. Toledo Waite has been running under the radar while Perrysburg and Mansfield Madison are also in the process of putting together outstanding seasons.

Similar to previous seasons, the D1 tourney in NW Ohio will use a "super sectional" format. Sectional winners at Willard and Liberty-Benton will remain at those sites for district semifinal games with the district final played at BGSU. The winners from the two Toledo sectionals will advance to the beautiful new Savage Arena (the Swami hasn't see it yet but that's what they said on the "T" Sports Report) at the University of Toledo with the winners from Waite playing in one semifinal game and the winners from Central Catholic playing in the second semifinal game. The two district winners from NW Ohio will advance to the regional at the University of Akron where they are slated to play each other in a semifinal game. Last season, Perrysburg and Toledo Whitmer traveled all the way to Akron to meet in a semifinal contest.. There was plenty of complaining in the Toledo area about the decision to keep the game in Akron. Savage Hall was not available and BGSU had three regional tournaments scheduled so there were some logistical issues. Some of the comments coming out of the OHSAA didn't make it their finest public relations moment. Let's hope some common sense prevails this year. If Mansfield Madison plays Toledo St. John's, it should be no big deal playing in Akron. If it's between Lima Senior and one of the Toledo schools, The OHSAA should move the game to Northwest Ohio. District winners from Copley (Barberton) and Canton (Canton Timken, Canton GlenOak) will join the two NW Ohio district winners at the JAR.

## SECTIONALS

**WILLARD:** Mansfield Madison and Mansfield Senior are the top seeds. Madison hadn't received the top seed since 1980 when Joe Jakubick was scoring in bunches for the Rams. Madison currently leads a tight OCC race. Mansfield Senior is in a reloading year, but will still be a force at Willard. Effie James is in his first year as head

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coach of the Tygers. Mansfield is gunning for their 8<sup>th</sup> straight sectional crown. Fremont Ross has been inconsistent but appears to be the best of the rest. Ashland was hit with heavy graduation losses from their district runner-up squad.. Marion Harding is improved, and has an upset win over Lima Senior, but .500 seasons and tournament success haven't been a tradition for the Presidents. Sandusky is in the midst of a down year.

Semifinals-Marion Harding over Ashland; Fremont Ross over Sandusky

Finals-Mansfield Senior over Marion Harding; Mansfield Madison over Fremont Ross

**LIBERTY-BENTON:** Perrysburg and Lima Senior are the top seeds. Perrysburg has returning starters Charlie Hughes and David Hieber back from last year's district championship team. Pburg's only losses to date are to Southview and O-G with another game against Southview looming. Lima Senior was rarely tested during their eleven game winning streak to start the season. The Spartans have come back to the pack with losses to Napoleon, Grove City, and Marion Harding.. Anton Hutchins is the top player for Lima. Findlay has a D1 recruit in Luke Kraus (BGSU). The Trojans' Jim Rucki is one of the top coaches in NW Ohio. Bowling Green is talented but young while Anthony Wayne and Maumee have had difficult seasons.

Semifinals-Bowling Green over Anthony Wayne; Findlay over Maumee

Finals-Lima Senior over Bowling Green; Findlay over Perrysburg

**TOLEDO WAITE:** Sylvania Southview and Toledo St. John's are the top seeds. Waite is one of the Swami's favorite venues, but don't forget to wear the deodorant. Tim Hausfeld is Southview's all-time leading scorer while Shaun Joplin might be the most athletic player in NW Ohio. The Cougars have five players tossing in at least nine points a game. St. John's was expected to be the dominant team in Toledo after returning all five starters from last year's district runner-up. The Titans look like they have righted the ship, but is it partly because they've hit the soft part of their schedule? Time will tell. SJJ has won 11 straight sectional titles. Springfield has some good young talent while Clay is competitive but finds a way to lose close games.

Semifinals-Northview over Bowsher; Clay over Springfield

Finals-St. John's Jesuit over Northview; Southview over Clay

TOLEDO CENTRAL CATHOLIC: Toledo Waite and Toledo Rogers are the top seeds. Add Central to the Swami's list of favorite tournament sites. Waite lost all five starters from their 2008 district qualifier. Darius Glover might be the top player in the City League while Ke-Sean Harris is one of the top sophomores in NW Ohio. The Indians just find a way to win. Rogers has as much talent as anyone in the CL. The Rams missed 6 consecutive free throws in a span of 3.6 seconds during the final minute of a one-point loss to Start. Coach Earl Morris said after the game that the Rams aren't a very good foul-shooting team. Thanks Earl. Who would have ever guessed? Start has two of the better players in Toledo in Anthony Henderson and 6'9" Devin Russell. St. Francis and Scott are both sleepers in the tournament due at least in part to some key players regaining their eligibility for the second semester.. Whitmer lost their top 8 players from last year's surprise state qualifier.

Semifinals-St. Francis over Scott; Rogers over Woodward; Start over Whitmer

Finals-Waite over St. Francis; Start over Rogers

### DISTRICTS

Mansfield Senior and Mansfield Madison will play in the district semifinal at Willard while Lima Senior and Findlay will meet in the district semifinal at Liberty-Benton.

Semifinals-Mansfield Madison over Mansfield Senior; Lima Senior over Findlay

BGSU: Perrysburg won this district in 2008. There have been 4 different winners (Mansfield Senior, Ashland, Findlay, Perrysburg) in the past 7 seasons at the BG district.

Finals-Lima Senior over Mansfield Madison

UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO: Whitmer won this district in 2008. St. John's has won 5 district championships in the past 7 years.

Semifinals-St. John's Jesuit over Southview; Waite over Start

Finals-St. John's Jesuit over Waite

### DIVISION II

No D2 teams from Northwest Ohio are currently being shown in the statewide D2 poll. Napoleon who handed Lima Senior their first loss of the season, Eastwood, and 2007 state runner-up Upper Sandusky are all having outstanding seasons but there has been no love for any of them statewide. Celina and several other teams are also having solid seasons, but parody appears to be the word when describing D2 hoops in NW Ohio this year. Toledo Libbey advanced to the state championship game in D2 last season before suffering a stunning loss to Chillicothe in the

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final. Libbey experienced heavy graduation losses including Mr. Basketball William Buford, and the Cowboys are not expected to make a long tournament run this season.

Swanton replaces Anthony Wayne as a sectional site in one of the few venue changes for 2009. The sectional had been held at AW for the past three seasons.

The D2 regional tournament will again be played at Bowling Green's ancient Anderson Arena. The Ashland district winner will play the Westlake district winner (Vermilion. Parma Heights Holy Name) and the BG district winner will play one of the Columbus district winners (Columbus St. Francis DeSales, Columbus Eastmoor) in regional semifinal games at Bowling Green.

It's not completely out of the question that a NW Ohio team could make it to Columbus this season, but they will certainly have their work cut out.

### SECTIONALS

LIMA SENIOR: Celina and Lima Shawnee are the top seeds. Seven WBL teams comprise the Lima Senior sectional. Celina is the surprise leader in the WBL and is headed for a late season showdown with Ottawa-Glandorf. Derek Gagle and Jake Green are the top players for the Bulldogs who have found a way to win the close games. Shawnee also remains a contender in the league race. The Indians' strength is in guards Cody Smith and Garrick Warthem. Elida is the sleeper in this sectional.. The Bulldogs handed O-G their first loss of the season back in January. Van Wert is in a rebuilding year while Bath always seems to be rebuilding. St. Marys and Wapak won back-to-back district titles in '05 and '06. That was a long time ago.

Semifinals-Van Wert over Lima Bath; Lima Shawnee over Wapakoneta; Elida over St. Marys

Finals-Celina over Van Wert; Elida over Lima Shawnee

SWANTON: Napoleon and Defiance are the top seeds. Swanton is one of those boring new cookie-cutter gyms. A boring gym but a very good sectional. Napoleon has been a major surprise under new coach Tim Badenhop. The Wildcats have a strong backcourt led by the Hunter twins. Last year Defiance had a bunch of little guys who shot the 3. This year, the Bulldogs have some big guys and don't shoot the 3 all that well. Just shows that a good coach can adapt to the talent on hand. Toledo Central Catholic has been a surprise under former Owens Community College boss Jim Welling. How



did Toledo Libbey lose to Chillicothe in last year's D2 state championship game? The Cowboys have only one player, Brandon Ham, with much varsity experience, but seven sophomores are contributing. The Cowboys appear to be a year away. Wauseon and Bryan have been competitive in the NWOAL while Tommy Kralovic and Zach Leahy of Rossford are both scoring close to 20 a game.

Semifinals-Defiance over Libbey; Central Catholic over Bryan; Rossford over Wauseon

Finals-Central Catholic over Defiance; Napoleon over Rossford

SANDUSKY: Eastwood and Tiffin Columbian are the top seeds. The Big House (it's really not all that big) is another one of the Swami's favorite gyms. Seven teams (sorry Oak Harbor) appear to have a shot in this sectional. Eastwood has already clinched the SLL title. The Eagles' only losses to date are to Napoleon and Margaretta. Columbian, Bellevue, Fostoria, and Norwalk have taken turns beating up on each other in the NOL. D1 football recruit Micah Hyde is an outstanding player for Fostoria, the pre-season NOL favorite. Clyde has played as well as anyone in this sectional since the return of multi-talented Alex Gillett from an injury. Shon Alexander from Perkins is a big-time scorer who recently dropped in 51 points in a game.. Oak Harbor has an excellent wrestling program.

Semifinals-Eastwood over Norwalk; Bellevue over Perkins; Tiffin Columbian over Oak Harbor; Fostoria over Clyde

Finals-Bellevue over Eastwood; Tiffin Columbian over Fostoria

MANSFIELD SENIOR: Upper Sandusky and Lexington are the top seeds. Surprising Upper Sandusky is in the driver's seat in the NOL. Upper's Alex Falk will end his career as one of the top scorers in NOL history. The Rams aren't putting up (or giving up) the mind-numbing numbers that we have grown accustomed to although they will never be confused with Holgate. Lexington has been consistently inconsistent. Courtney Avery is a top-notch player for Lex. Kenton's 6'10" Garrick Sherman (Michigan State) is one of the top seniors in Ohio. The Wildcats don't have the supporting cast to make a tournament run. Galion got off to a blazing start, but is now part of the six-team fight for 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the NOL. Shelby is young and continues to improve. Look out for the Whippets. Clear Fork has a win over Lexington but little else to show. Willard is down although the Flashers took Akron St. Vincent-St. Mary to the wire. Whatever happened to the Willard elephant?

Semifinals-Lexington over Clear Fork; Kenton over Willard; Shelby over Galion

Finals-Lexington over Kenton; Upper Sandusky over Shelby

## DISTRICTS

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BGSU: Libbey won this district in 2008. Libbey's win marked the first time since 1994 that one of the teams coming from the Lima sectional had not advanced to the regional.

Semifinals-Toledo Central Catholic over Celina; Napoleon over Elida

Finals-Toledo Central Catholic over Napoleon

ASHLAND UNIVERSITY: Lexington won this district in 2008. Lexington's win broke up an eleven year run by the NOL at Ashland.

Semifinals-Bellevue over Lexington; Tiffin Columbian over Upper Sandusky

Finals-Tiffin Columbian over Bellevue

## DIVISION III

Northwest Ohio has three of the top D3 teams in the state in Liberty-Benton, defending D3 state champ Ottawa-Glandorf, and St. Henry. All three should end up playing in the district at Elida. Milan Edison has also received some recognition in the AP poll.. Colonel Crawford, Tinora, and Ottawa Hills are also having excellent seasons.

There are two site changes for 2009 in D3. Toledo Whitmer replaces Sylvania Southview and Norwalk replaces Old Fort (love those chair backs) as sectional locations.

The three NW Ohio district winners will join the Elyria district winner (Cuyahoga Valley Christian Academy, Lorain Clearview) for the Bowling Green regional. The Napoleon district will take on the Elyria district winner in one semifinal with the Elida district winner playing the Mansfield district winner in the second semifinal contest.

The Swami will be shocked and mystified if the Elida district winner does not advance to the state in D3.

## SECTIONALS

DEFIANCE: Tinora and Hicksville are the top seeds. Tinora is the frontrunner in the GMC. The Rams' only losses have been to Pettisville and Evergreen. Tinora is deep and balanced. Josh Vandemark recently became the all-time leading scorer at Hicksville. He has a chance to become the first player in Hicksville history to go over 1,000 career points.. Fairview and Archbold (at least until they met Tinora) have both been on

a roll. They both jumped at the chance to play the Aces and avoid Tinora making for what should be a very interesting lower bracket. Archbold's string of 8 straight sectional titles could be in jeopardy. It's been business as usual at Paulding as it appears that coach Chuck Schroeder has been suspended for the remainder of the season. Speaking of Locos, it's been another long year in Montpelier.

Semifinals-Paulding over Montpelier; Archbold over Fairview

Finals-Tinora over Paulding; Archbold over Hicksville

TOLEDO WHITMER: Ottawa Hills and Evergreen are the top seeds. The Swami's last tournament memory from Whitmer is Elmwood beating big, bad Rossford in the 1976 "AA" district final. Whitmer remained a tournament site for a couple more years after that, but that was a long time ago. Ottawa Hills is in a fight with Toledo Christian for the TAAC. 6'8" Phil Beans from OH is a D1 recruit (Holy Cross). Evergreen will get no worse than a share of the NWOAL crown. 6'9" Brock Bates and Chad Mousing are the top players for the Vikings. Genoa jumped on Evergreen's side of the bracket. The Comets have the size and talent to compete with the Vikes. Swanton's Chad Lewis has returned from a serious knee injury that sidelined him for the first part of the season. Swanton has shown a great deal of improvement with Lewis, one of the top players in the NWOAL despite not being 100%. Delta could pull an upset while Liberty Center recently won their first game of the season.

Semifinals-Evergreen over Liberty Center; Genoa over Swanton; Delta over Lake

Finals-Evergreen over Genoa; Ottawa Hills over Delta

WAPAKONETA: St. Henry and Coldwater are the top seeds. This is an excellent sectional. St. Henry's only losses are to Delphos St. John's and Coldwater. The Redskins close the season at New Knoxville. St. Henry has their usual assortment of Niekamp's and Post's. Coldwater is another team from the MAC to be reckoned with. Junior Eric Lefeld is the leading scorer and rebounder for the balanced Cavaliers. A young Lima Central Catholic team is in the driver's seat in the NWC. T-Bird coach Bob Seggerson is in his 31<sup>st</sup> year at LCC with very few wardrobe changes. Parkway is an also ran in this season's MAC race but could easily finish the regular season with 15 wins. Despite a down year, Marion Local has enough tournament history to pull off an upset at Wapak.

Semifinals-Parkway over Spencerville; Lima Central Catholic over Marion Local

Finals-St. Henry over Parkway; Coldwater over Lima Central Catholic

FINDLAY: Liberty-Benton and Ottawa-Glandorf are the

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top seeds. L-B and O-G are prohibitive favorites to advance to the district tournament. Junior Aaron Craft of L-B may be the top player in NW Ohio. He has already made a verbal commitment to the University of Tennessee. L-B's only loss to date is to D2 Tallmadge. L-B has won an astounding 18 consecutive sectional championships. O-G returns two starters (with one of them currently coming off the bench) and several other experienced players from last year's D3 state champions. The Titans' lone losses are to Elida and Lima Senior. Taylor Kuhlman is the leading scorer for O-G. Elmwood appears to be the best of the rest at Findlay while Mohawk and Otsego are also having solid seasons. Keith Zeigler from Mohawk is one of the top scorers in NW Ohio.

Semifinals-Ottawa-Glandorf over Lakota; Mohawk over Bluffton; Elmwood over Otsego

Finals-Ottawa-Glandorf over Mohawk; Liberty-Benton over Elmwood

GALION: Colonel Crawford and Wynford are the top seeds. Colonel Crawford is the current leader in the NCC. Austin Smith recently became the all-time leading scorer for Crawford. Wynford and Ontario are experiencing rare down seasons although they will both be factors at Galion. Wynford has won 13 straight sectional titles as well as three straight district titles (one in D3 & 2 a pair in D4). In the years that Ontario and Wynford have been D3 schools (Ontario has been in both D2 and D3 while Wynford has been D3 and D4), they have dominated this sectional. New London and South Central are both middle of the pack Firelands Conference teams. Sectional titles and seasons over the .500 mark are foreign to Bucyrus.

Semifinals-Bucyrus over South Central; Wynford over Ashland Crestview; Ontario over New London

Finals-Colonel Crawford over Bucyrus; Wynford over Ontario

NORWALK: Edison and Margaretta are the top seeds. Surprising Edison currently enjoys a narrow lead in the SBC. Edison has never won a league title in basketball. Margaretta is having a solid season. The Polar Bears will play Sandusky Perkins on back-to-back nights February 19 and 20. The game on the 19<sup>th</sup> is a makeup game, but that is truly some strange scheduling. For once, Western Reserve isn't a factor in the Firelands Conference race. If you had asked the Swami back in September, he would have told you that Port Clinton was the favorite to win the Mansfield district. That was before junior guard Tory Horne was suspended for the season and later



“moved” to Portsmouth to continue his basketball career. More suspensions and injuries have followed for PC. Gibsonburg’s Tony Egbert is one of the top players in the SLL. Woodmore has shown steady improvement during the season.

Semifinals-Port Clinton over Huron; Margaretta over Gibsonburg; Western Reserve over Woodmore

Finals-Margaretta over Port Clinton; Edison over Western Reserve

#### DISTRICTS

NAPOLEON: Archbold won this district in 2008. Archbold also won back-to-back district titles in 2005 and 2006.

Semifinals-Tinora over Evergreen; Ottawa Hills over Archbold

Finals-Tinora over Ottawa Hills

ELIDA: Ottawa-Glandorf won this district in 2008. St. Henry won back-to-back district titles in ’06 and ’07. Liberty-Benton last won a district title in 2007 when they were part of the Fostoria district.

Semifinals-Ottawa-Glandorf over St. Henry; Liberty-Benton over Coldwater

Finals-Ottawa-Glandorf over Liberty-Benton

MANSFIELD SENIOR: Wynford won this district in 2008.

Semifinals-Colonel Crawford over Margaretta; Edison over Wynford

Finals-Colonel Crawford over Edison

#### DIVISION IV

Defending state champion New Knoxville is the state’s top ranked D4 team according to the Associated Press. The Rangers were also D4 state poll champs in 2007 and 2008. New Knoxville has not lost a regular season game since St. Henry beat them in February 2006. Other than New Knoxville, NW Ohio isn’t receiving a great deal of state recognition. Plymouth has finally broken into the top ten while Delphos St. John’s, Pettisville, and Pandora-Gilboa have all received some recognition in the poll. Several other teams including Ada, Antwerp, McComb, and Continental are also having solid seasons.

Fostoria has replaced Tiffin Columbian as a sectional site. The remaining tournament locations as well as the team assignments are unchanged from the 2008 season.

District winners from Liberty-Benton and Napoleon will play in one regional semifinal at BG’s Anderson Arena with

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the Willard and Elida district winners meeting in the other semifinal. The Wapakoneta district winner will travel to Kettering Fairmont’s Trent Arena to be joined by the winners from the three Dayton districts. The Wapak winner will meet the winner of the Dayton district that includes Cincinnati Seven Hills and Sidney Lehman.

#### SECTIONALS

COLDWATER: New Knoxville and Fort Recovery are the top seeds. Four starters return from New Knoxville’s undefeated 2008 state champs with all four averaging in double figures this year.. Although undefeated, the Rangers appear to be mere mortals this season with 6 single digit wins including triple overtime over Fort Recovery. New Knoxville has a D1 signee in 6’8” Brad Piehl (Robert Morris). Junior Greg Kahlig from Fort Recovery recently went over 1,000 career points. New Bremen is another MAC team with a double-digit win total. Although mired near the bottom of the MAC, Minster has been playing well and took New Knoxville down to the wire. Lima Perry is undefeated in the NWCC, but will be hard pressed to challenge any of the MAC teams at Coldwater.

Semifinals-Lima Perry over Waynesfield-Goshen; Minster over New Bremen

Finals-New Knoxville over Lima Perry; Fort Recovery over Minster

LIMA BATH: Ada and Lima Temple Christian are the top seeds. Ada is having another solid season. They threw a scare into New Knoxville with their other losses to Pandora-Gilboa and NWC rival Lima Central Catholic. Lima Temple Christian gets the second seed basically by default. With Allen East, Hardin Northern, Upper Scioto Valley, and Ridgemont, you have a combined win/loss record of 8-60 and counting. This isn’t the first time the Bath sectional has been blessed with records like that, and it probably won’t be the last time either. What happened to the USV program? Anyone who wants to make an argument in favor of switching to a combined sectional/district format need only look at the Coldwater and Bath sectionals

Semifinals-Allen East over Upper Scioto Valley; Hardin-Northern over Ridgemont

Finals-Lima Temple Christian over Allen East; Ada over Hardin-Northern

VAN WERT: Delphos St. John's and Antwerp are the top seeds. After a couple of down years, Delphos St. John's is back. The Blue Jays aren't going to win the MAC, but they could do some damage in the tournament. Antwerp began the season with 11 straight wins before losing to North Central. The Archers are chasing Tinora in the GMC. Ottoville is having an excellent season as well. Take away a 3 game losing streak in early February, and the Big Green are a top ten D4 team statewide. The other Delphos team has put together a solid season as well. It's mind blowing (does anyone ever say that anymore?) that both Convoy Crestview and Wayne Trace will end up with at least 15 losses. Wayne Trace made it to the state in 2008 but was obviously hurt by the graduation of several key players. Former D4 state champ Lincolnview rounds out the cast at Van Wert.

Semifinals-Convoy Crestview over Wayne Trace; Ottoville over Lincolnview; Antwerp over Delphos Jefferson

Finals-Delphos St. John's over Convoy Crestview; Ottoville over Antwerp

BLUFFTON: Pandora-Gilboa and Kalida are the top seeds. The top two seeds are the clear-cut favorites, but this is a good sectional nonetheless. Pandora-Gilboa is near the top in the BVC and still has a shot at winning the PCL. Pandora was in a similar situation record-wise in 2008, but the Rockets were "upset" by Kalida in their sectional opener. Long-time (only his 49<sup>th</sup> year as a head coach at Fort Jennings, Ottoville, and Kalida) coach Dick Kortokrax is winding down his career at Kalida. We haven't been checking the Kettering Alter results lately, but we'll go out on a limb and proclaim Coach Kortokrax as the all-time winningest coach Ohio. The Wildcats weren't playing up to expectations earlier in the season but appear to be peaking at the right time. If you sit anywhere near Korto when he's watching a game, make sure you hold on to your program. Riverdale has put together a nice season. Playing in the NCC, you don't see the Falcons going head-to-head with many of the BVC or PCL teams. Both Arlington and Columbus Grove have been playing under the radar this season. Both are over .500 and could spring a tournament upset. 2000 D4 state champ Fort Jennings is another dangerous team at Bluffton.

Semifinals-Kalida over Arlington; Columbus Grove over Riverdale; Fort Jennings over Cory-Rawson

Finals-Kalida over Columbus Grove; Pandora-Gilboa over Fort Jennings

BRYAN: Pettisville and North Central are the top seeds. The six BBC teams are joined by Edgerton at the Bryan sectional. Pettisville ran off 9 straight wins to open the season before losing at North Central. The Blackbirds are poised to take their seventh straight BBC crown. Pettisville doesn't have much size, but the Blackbirds are quick and deep. Surprising North Central hasn't lost since mid-January. Derick Wyrick and freshman Anthony Kidston are

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leading the turnaround for the Eagles. Inconsistent Stryker has been a disappointment. Both Fayette and Hilltop are much improved this season, but either of them winning a sectional title would be considered an upset. There were years when you couldn't pay the Swami to watch this sectional, but things have gotten much better.

Semifinals-Fayette over Hilltop; Stryker over Edgerton; North Central over Edon

Finals-Pettisville over Fayette; North Central over Stryker

OTTAWA-GLANDORF: McComb and Continental are the top seeds. With L-B and P-G getting most of the publicity in the BVC, McComb has quietly put together an outstanding season. Continental was very young last season and really took their lumps. The Pirates are still junior and sophomore dominated but the youth movement has paid off. Ayersville has been somewhat of a disappointment. The Pilots have a player named Magic Trapps? Please tell me that's an alias, and his name is really Gary Bradds or Larry Senvisky. Miller City got off to a quick start, but the last month has not been kind to the Wildcats. Leipsic could be the surprise team at O-G. When was the last time that both Patrick Henry and Holgate had losing seasons? Maybe PH should now be considered a football school. Could we have a repeat of the 1973 season when Holgate had a 4-14 regular season before advancing to the regional tournament where they lost to Wapak St. Joe's? No. Where have all the Jesse Mendizabal's and Earnest Ferguson's gone?

Semifinals-Ayersville over Leipsic; Continental over Patrick Henry; Miller City over Holgate

Finals-Continental over Ayersville; McComb over Miller City

BOWLING GREEN: Toledo Christian and Van Buren are the top seeds. Toledo Christian has reached the district final in each of the past four seasons, but has been unable to capture that elusive district championship. The Eagles have beefed up their schedule this season as they try to get over the hump. 6'7" Ethan Michael is the top player for a veteran TC team. Van Buren experienced heavy graduation losses following two straight district championships. The Black Knights are a middle of the pack BVC team, but will be competitive at BG. Cardinal Stritch looks like the sleeper in this sectional. The Cardinals have been very inconsistent. The very veteran Jim Robinson has taken the reins at Maumee Valley but the results are yet to show in the win column.

Semifinals-North Baltimore over Northwood; Cardinal Stritch over Maumee Valley Country Day; Van Buren over Arcadia

Finals-Toledo Christian over North Baltimore; Van Buren over

## Cardinal Stritch

FOSTORIA: New Riegel and Carey are the top seeds. Six teams have a shot at advancing in this mostly MAL sectional. New Riegel got the top seed despite trailing Carey by a game in the MAL race. To add insult to injury, Carey beat New Riegel when they went head-to-head earlier in the season. Go figure. Carey has played very well since Brock Tong returned from a suspension at the beginning of the season. The Blue Devils (not to confused with the Blue Jackets) also have backboard breaking big man Michael Dennis. Hopewell-Loudon, Tiffin Calvert, Vanlue, and Fostoria St. Wendelin are all slightly above .500. Calvert looked like a contender in both the MAL and at FHS before a recent 5 game skid. Those 1970 vintage bleachers at Fostoria sure are uncomfortable.

Semifinals-Carey over Tiffin Calvert; Vanlue over Fostoria St. Wendelin; Hopewell-Loudon over Seneca East

Finals-Carey over Vanlue; New Riegel over Hopewell-Loudon

PORT CLINTON: Sandusky St. Mary's and Norwalk St. Paul are the top seeds. Not a great sectional at PC. Sandusky St. Mary's is a middle of the pack SBC team, but the Panthers are undefeated against D4 teams. 5'4" Dane Windisch is the top player for SMCC. Norwalk St. Paul has 5 overtime losses so far this season. Danbury is having a solid season, but trails the big 2 (Toledo Christian and Ottawa Hills) in the TAAC. Michael Hamann, a D1 baseball recruit, is the leading scorer for the Lakers. Monroeville has gone over 80 points in seven games this season while giving up 80 or more in a like number of games including 120 to Edison. The three teams at the bottom of the MAL round out the sectional. The bleachers at PC are just as uncomfortable as Fostoria and older too.

Semifinals-Danbury over Monroeville; Norwalk St. Paul over Old Fort; Bettsville over Fremont St. Joseph

Finals-Sandusky St. Mary over Danbury; Norwalk St. Paul over Bettsville

LEXINGTON: Plymouth and Buckeye Central are the top seeds. Junior Brook Turson averages a double double (points and rebounds) for Plymouth as well as leading the team in assists. Plymouth's lone loss is to Wooster Triway. Buckeye Central is chasing Colonel Crawford in the NCC race. Blaine Erwin of the Bucks recently went over 1,000 career points. Expectations were high at Mansfield St. Peter's with the hiring of veteran coach Gregg Collins. Collins owned a long record of success at Mansfield Senior as well as 2 state championships at Lexington. Unfortunately for the Spartans, the Collins era was very short as he stepped down midway through his first season at St. Peter's. Mansfield Christian is much improved.

Semifinals-Mansfield St. Peter's over Crestline; Lucas over Mansfield Christian

Final-Plymouth over Mansfield St. Peter's; Buckeye Central over Lucas

# The Swami

## DISTRICTS

WAPAKONETA: New Knoxville won this district in 2008.

Semifinals-New Knoxville over Lima Temple Christian; Fort Recovery over Ada

Finals-New Knoxville over Fort Recovery

ELIDA: Wayne Trace won this district in 2008.

Semifinals-Kalida over Delphos St. John's; Pandora-Gilboa over Ottoville

Finals-Pandora-Gilboa over Kalida

NAPOLEON: Ayersville won this district in 2008. Prior to that, Holgate had won seven straight district titles.

Semifinals-Pettisville over Continental; McComb over North Central

Finals-McComb over Pettisville

LIBERTY-BENTON: Van Buren won this district in 2008. It was the second straight district title for VB. Toledo Christian lost district title games to Continental in 2005 and 2006 and Van Buren in 2007 and 2008.

Semifinals-Toledo Christian over Carey; New Riegel over Van Buren

Finals-Toledo Christian over New Riegel

WILLARD: Plymouth won this district in 2008.

Semifinals-Plymouth over Sandusky St. Mary; Buckeye Central over Norwalk St. Paul

Finals-Plymouth over Buckeye Central

That appears to be all for now. We will be back with our much shorter regional and state edition just before regional tournaments begin. Records and statistics are current as of February 18, 2009. All facts, fiction, and opinions in Trail Trash are those of the Swami. Brackets are courtesy of davey1 himself, Dave Spengler. Hope to see you somewhere along the tournament trail. Rock on.