

Trail Trash

2012 OHSAA Boys High School Basketball Tournament

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Featuring Commentary & Predictions by ...

The Swami

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Welcome to year number nineteen for Trail Trash, a Northwest Ohio institution since 1994. It's that great time of the year; it's tournament time.

The 2011-2012 basketball season has seen new conferences and changes in other conferences throughout Northwest Ohio. The Three Rivers (is the Sandusky or the Auglaize the third one?) Athletic Conference opened to much hoopla although the top of the league resembles last year's Toledo City League standings. Meanwhile, the City League isn't the train wreck that so many predicted. The Northern Buckeye Conference is also in its first year, but to the Swami it's just the Suburban Lakes League on steroids. Six of the eight members of the North Central Conference welcomed Galion and Upper Sandusky to the league by jumping ship to form a new conference that will also include MAL members Carey, Mohawk, and Seneca East. Lima Central Catholic and the Northwest Conference reached an agreement that will have the T-Birds leaving the conference after the 2012-2013 school year. Is that the politically correct way to say booted out? This and other conference changes (NOL, NWCC, etc.) will continue the domino effect throughout NW Ohio over the next few years.

A number of teams will be changing divisions for the 2012 tournament as a result of

OHSAA's biennial **Issue 2012-1** reclassification process using October 2010 enrollment numbers. In addition to the impact on individual schools, Northwest Ohio will see a reduction from three districts (six sectional sites) to two districts (four sectional sites) in Division II and from six districts (twelve sectional sites) to five districts (ten sectional sites) in Division IV. One of the surprises is Sandusky now being a D3 sectional site after having hosted a D2 sectional since 1988. Although we are not privy to all of the information used by the NW District Board in choosing the sites and making the assignments, some of the decisions don't seem to make much sense. Having schools travel well over an hour for a mid-week sectional game just doesn't cut it.

Based on an unofficial tally, there have been well over 100 games in NW Ohio so far this season where at least one of the teams failed to score 30 points. Not all of those games involved Holgate. There have been several games where a team didn't even make it out of the teens. Is a shot clock needed? Not going there. Good defense? A lack of offensive execution? Bad shooting? Poor fundamentals?



All the hand checking and bumping that is now allowed? Numbers being down in terms of participation? The answer is probably somewhere in all of the above.

Fans attending games at schools in the Toledo City League are required to pass through metal detectors prior to entering the gym. I understand why it's done, but it bothers me nonetheless. I don't know if any weapons have been confiscated. I can only assume that it acts as a deterrent although it hasn't stopped me from bringing my car keys and cell phone into games. One evening as I was waiting to enter a game at Bowsher, I noticed that one of the game officials didn't pass through the metal detectors. Made me wonder why they don't have to pass through the metal detectors as well. That was before an incident in January when an official had his gun stolen from the locker room while officiating a girls game at Sylvania Southview. I recently saw that official working a game at one of the City League schools. Why would that individual be allowed to officiate after bringing a firearm into a school?

Assuming it hasn't been confiscated, let's knock the dust off the Ouija board. Time to go to the picks.

DIVISION I

D1 gets bigger with Mansfield Madison, Maumee, and Norwalk moving up for 2012 while Toledo Rogers and Toledo Waite return after a one-year hiatus in D2. Bowling Green has dropped down to D2. Toledo Whitmer has replaced Toledo Waite as a sectional site.

Toledo Whitmer has received most of the statewide recognition among the D1 schools from Northwest Ohio. Whitmer, Toledo St. John's, and 2011 state final four participant Toledo Central Catholic are in a battle for the TRAC championship. Undefeated Norwalk and traditional power Mansfield Senior are also having strong seasons while Findlay is another contender.

D1 will continue to use a "Super Sectional" format. Sectional winners from Willard and Liberty-Benton will remain at those sites to square off in district semifinal games on March 8. Their district final will be played at BGSU's brand new Stroh Center on March 10. The sectional winners from Toledo Central Catholic will face each other in a district semifinal at the University of Toledo on March 8 with the sectional winners from Toledo Whitmer playing in the second game of the doubleheader at Savage Arena.

The two NW Ohio district champions will play in a regional semifinal at UT. That winner will advance to face the winner of the regional semifinal at Akron between the Copley (Stow, Brunswick, Nordonia) and Midview (Elyria, Brecksville-Broadview Heights, Westlake) district champs.

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The Copley district appears to be the stronger of those two sites. The regional final will be played at the University of Akron.

SECTIONALS

TOLEDO CENTRAL CATHOLIC: Toledo Whitmer and Toledo St. John's Jesuit are the top seeds. Despite being ranked in the top ten in the Associated Press poll, Whitmer hasn't looked very pretty doing so. With LeRoy Alexander coming over from Springfield to join Nigel Hayes, many figured that Whitmer would be a juggernaut. The Panthers at times suffer from the lack of a true point guard. St. John's with 6'8" OSU commit Marc Loving was picked to win the TRAC. The Titans have been hurt by injuries including the loss of point guard Austin Gardner. Winners of fourteen consecutive sectional titles, the Titans are more of a perimeter team than in previous seasons. With Gardner back, look for SJ to be a factor in the tournament. Start has put together a nice season and match up well with St. John's except for one Mr. Loving. Northview, Maumee, and Springfield reside in the bottom half of the NLL and shouldn't make much noise in the tourney. Maumee's top player, Shawn Flanagan, made stops at Whitmer and St. John's before landing with the Panthers. Former University of Toledo boss Stan Joplin coaches Springfield.

Semifinals – Toledo Start over Springfield; Sylvania Northview over Maumee

Finals – Toledo St. John's over Toledo Start; Toledo Whitmer over Sylvania Northview

TOLEDO WHITMER: Toledo Central Catholic and Toledo Rogers are the top seeds. Central Catholic graduated four starters and a key sub from last year's final four team that took state champion Cincinnati LaSalle to the wire. Central has reloaded under Jim Welling. The Irish have gotten it done playing a number of underclassmen. Rogers returned two starters from their 2011 D2 final four team. The Rams, under the tutelage of Big Earl, won the Toledo City League regular season title. Bowsher has been a surprise. The Rebels have adopted Assistant Coach Keith Diebler's frenetic style of play averaging over eighty points a game. Bowsher's Mookie Mustafaa leads the City League in scoring. It's a little surprising that Bowsher jumped on Central's side of the bracket. Sylvania Southview has been a disappointment, but the Cougars are now at full strength and they do own a victory over Rogers. Toledo Waite and Toledo St. Francis round out the sectional. St Francis replaced their head coach at mid-season.

Semifinals – Sylvania Southview over Toledo St. Francis; Toledo Bowsher over Toledo Waite

Finals – Toledo Rogers over Sylvania Southview; Toledo Central Catholic over Toledo Bowsher

WILLARD: Norwalk and Mansfield Senior are the top seeds. Norwalk is the NOL champion and currently undefeated. The Truckers are young starting a junior and two sophomores. Norwalk has only two D1 schools (Ashland and Sandusky) on their schedule. Mansfield Senior has ten straight sectional titles. The Tygers are in a battle with Lexington for the Ohio Cardinal Conference title. Mansfield has a terrific guard in junior Keon Johnson. Inconsistency describes the rest of the sectional. Mansfield Madison won the D2 district championship at Ashland University last year. The Rams have a win over Mansfield Senior but chose to go to Norwalk's side of the bracket. Madison currently has some injury problems. Sandusky has the leading scorer and rebounder in the NOL in Xavier Turner. The Blue Streaks have been involved in a number of close games. Ashland has been streaky but also owns a win over Mansfield Senior. Marion Harding rounds out the cast of characters at the House that Haas built. This sectional could have a number of surprises.

Semifinals – Mansfield Madison over Sandusky; Ashland over Marion Harding

Finals – Norwalk over Mansfield Madison; Mansfield Senior over Ashland

LIBERTY-BENTON: Findlay and Anthony Wayne are the top seeds. The top of the bracket is anyone's guess. Anthony Wayne with Michigan commit Mark Donnal, a 6'9" junior, has been a pleasant surprise. The Generals play a number of underclassmen. Perrysburg is solid as usual, but have been a bit more inconsistent than in previous seasons. Perrysburg coach Dave Boyce recently garnered career win number 400. Undersized Lima Senior's first year in the TRAC has not been good. The Spartans had a nine game losing streak earlier in the year, the longest such streak in school history. Lima Senior remains a dangerous team and it would not be a shock if they won the sectional. With 6'11" center CJ Gettys, Findlay has size and is well coached. The Trojans losses are to Whitmer, St. John's, and Defiance. Fremont Ross is much improved. The Little Giants have been solid in the TRAC, and came close to upsetting both Whitmer and St. John's. Clay rounds out the sectional and has a couple of underclassmen that can put the ball in the basket.

Semifinals – Perrysburg over Lima Senior; Fremont Ross over Clay

Finals – Perrysburg over Anthony Wayne; Findlay over Fremont Ross

DISTRICTS

UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO: Toledo Central Catholic is the defending district champion. Toledo St. John's has won

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seven district championships in the past ten years. Whitmer ('08) and Scott ('05) along with Central are the teams to break that string.

Semifinals – Toledo St. John's over Toledo Whitmer; Toledo Central Catholic over Toledo Rogers

Final – Toledo St. John's over Toledo Central Catholic

BGSU: Norwalk will play Mansfield Senior in the semifinal at Willard while Findlay will play Perrysburg in the district semifinal at Liberty-Benton. Findlay is the defending district champion.

Semifinal (at Willard) – Mansfield Senior over Norwalk

Semifinal (at Liberty-Benton) – Findlay over Perrysburg

Final – Mansfield Senior over Findlay

DIVISION II

Plenty of movement in D2 with Bowling Green dropping from D1 and Otsego and Galion moving up from D3. Mansfield Madison, Maumee, Norwalk, defending regional champion Toledo Rogers, and Toledo Waite have all moved to D1 while Fostoria is now in D3. The downsizing and restructuring of D2 eliminated the aforementioned Sandusky sectional along with the Riverdale sectional. Ashland University which had hosted a district tournament in Class AA or D2 going all the way back to 1982 with the exception of one season is also gone. So much for tradition. Bucyrus has replaced Mansfield Senior as a sectional venue.



Undefeated Defiance is the top ranked D2 team in NW Ohio with Lexington and Wauseon also mentioned in the state polls. Elida, Napoleon, and Sandusky Perkins are also having strong seasons. Several other squads have the potential to win district championships.

The two Northwest Ohio district winners in D2 will head to the regional at the University of Toledo where they will be joined by the winner of the Westlake district (Cleveland Benedictine is the prohibitive favorite) along with one of the Columbus district winners (Brookhaven, Bishop Hartley, Bishop Watterson). Plain City Jonathan Alder, the top seeded team in D2 out of Columbus, surprisingly chose the bracket that feeds into the loaded Kettering Fairmont regional.

SECTIONALS

SWANTON: Defiance and Wauseon are the top seeds. This is

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a very good sectional. Defiance has been challenged on several occasions but has come through it unscathed. The Bulldogs are guard oriented and are deadly from behind the three-point line and at the foul line. Anthony Kidston is the leading scorer for Defiance, but the Bulldogs are balanced and deep. Wauseon has gotten it done with defense losing only to Defiance and Archbold. 6'9" Wade Wooley has been dominant at times for the Indians. Napoleon's first season in the NLL has been a successful one winning the league crown. The Wildcats are loaded with experience. Junior Jordan Lauf is the top player for Napoleon. Bowling Green has one of the better players in NW Ohio in 6'7" junior Vitto Brown. Keeping Vitto on the floor has been a challenge for the Bobcats. With him, Bowling Green is a very dangerous team. When he's not on the floor, not so much. Eastwood is chasing Lake for the NBC championship. Otsego was the pre-season pick to win the NBC, but the junior-dominated Knights appear to be a year away. Bryan and Rossford round things out at Swanton.

Semifinals - Defiance over Bryan; Bowling Green over Otsego; Napoleon over Rossford; Wauseon over Eastwood

Finals – Defiance over Bowling Green; Napoleon over Wauseon

CLAY: Sandusky Perkins and Toledo Scott are the top seeds. Despite their record, Sandusky Perkins has flown under the radar. The Pirates are the Sandusky Bay Conference champions. The top player for Perkins, junior Brandon Smith, is likely out for the tournament with an injury. Scott is talented, but has been inconsistent. The Bulldogs have played a D1 dominated schedule. After a two-year absence, Scott resumed playing home games in the refurbished Ben E. Williams Fieldhouse in late January. Clyde appears to be the best of the rest in a relatively weak sectional. Clyde and Bellevue might be the best game of the tournament at Clay. Given Smith's absence, it is very surprising that both decided to avoid Perkins and jump on Scott's side of the bracket. Toledo Woodward is improved despite their record. The Polar Bears recently broke their fifty-two game Toledo City League losing streak with a win over Waite. You ask when was the last time that Woodward won a tournament game. Just last year. Injury wracked Port Clinton, Edison, and Oak Harbor make the scenic trip to Clay. The view of the BP refinery on a cold night from the parking lot is truly breathtaking. At least PC and OH have shorter trips than the Chargers.

Semifinals – Sandusky Perkins over Edison; Toledo Woodward over Port Clinton; Clyde over Bellevue; Toledo Scott over Oak Harbor

Finals – Sandusky Perkins over Toledo Woodward; Toledo Scott over Clyde

LIMA SENIOR: Elida and Lima Bath are the top seeds. The WBL tournament except for Defiance and D3 Ottawa-Glandorf. Elida appears to be the best team in the WBL not named Defiance. Two-time WBL player of the year Reggie McAdams is the all-time leading score for the Bulldogs.

Lima Bath's solid season includes two wins over Lima Central Catholic. Bath's Brad Davis could become the all-time leading scorer for the Wildcats before the tournament gets under way. Three of Van Wert's losses are to D4 schools. However, the Cougars own a win over Elida. Celina is the dark horse at Lima especially if Van Wert is focusing on a rematch with Bath. The Bulldogs have won three straight sectional championships. Wapakoneta and St. Marys both played Defiance down to the wire. There haven't been many other highlights this season for either Wapak or the Roughriders. Lima Shawnee and Kenton are at the bottom of the WBL. Shawnee has some good young players while Kenton's Maty Mauk has missed several games due to injury and football commitments.

Semifinals – Elida over Lima Shawnee; Wapakoneta over St. Marys; Lima Bath over Kenton; Van Wert over Celina

Finals – Elida over Wapakoneta; Van Wert over Lima Bath

BUCYRUS: Lexington and Shelby are the top seeds. This sectional formerly lived at Mansfield Senior and at Mansfield Madison. Lexington is in a fight with Mansfield Senior for the OCC title. Former NBA player Jamie Feick coaches the Minutemen. Lex's tournament resume has been less than stellar since losing to William Buford and Toledo Libbey in the 2008 D2 regional final. Lexington was a one seed in 2010 and a two seed in 2011, but lost their tournament opener each year. Shelby has continued their run of success. The Whippets have to be ecstatic that Mansfield Madison moved back to D1 this year. Earlier this season, Garrett Arnold became only the third player in Shelby basketball history to surpass 1,000 career points. Upper Sandusky is the North Central Conference Black Division champion. The Rams are deliberate offensively and stingy defensively. Tell me that several years ago, and I wouldn't have believed you. Willard is my dark horse at Bucyrus. It would be no surprise if the Flashes reach the district. Tiffin Columbian, Clear Fork, and Galion round out the teams at Bucyrus. All are capable of an upset.

Semifinals – Upper Sandusky over Galion; Willard over Tiffin Columbian; Shelby over Clear Fork

Finals – Lexington over Upper Sandusky; Shelby over Willard

DISTRICTS

BGSU: Toledo Rogers was the 2011 district champion. The Rams are back in D1 this year. Western Buckeye League teams have won fifteen of the last seventeen district tournaments played at BG. Just like in 2010 and 2011, Defiance is the only WBL team that remains part of the BG district.

Semifinals – Defiance over Toledo Scott; Napoleon over Sandusky Perkins

Final – Defiance over Napoleon

OHIO NORTHERN: The Swami's least favorite tournament venue. Van Wert is the defending district champion. ONU will have a new look since the majority of the teams from the Bucyrus sectional previously played in the Ashland University district.

Semifinals – Elida over Shelby; Lexington over Van Wert

Final – Elida over Lexington

DIVISION III

D3 in NW Ohio has a much different look with Fostoria dropping from D2 and a whopping eight teams (Allen East, Carey, New London, Seneca East, Spencerville, Wayne Trace, Wynford, Van Buren) moving up from D4. Otsego and Galion are now in D2 while five teams (Colonel Crawford, Gibsonburg, Plymouth, Riverdale, St. Henry) move to D4.

Anthony Wayne has replaced Toledo Whitmer and Sandusky has replaced Norwalk as sectional sites. Norwalk has replaced Mansfield Senior as a district venue.

2010 D3 state champion Lima Central Catholic is clearly the top D3 team in NW Ohio. Traditional powers Ottawa-Glandorf, Archbold, and Liberty-Benton are having successful seasons but all three have been stronger in previous years. With the exception of LCC, there is a great deal of parity in D3. This could result in a number of surprises.

The regional will be played at the Stroh Center in Bowling Green. The three district winners from Northwest Ohio will be joined by one of the Columbus district winners. The state's top ranked D3 team, Bloom-Carroll, is included in that district. The regional final will be played on a Friday evening rather than the traditional Saturday evening. It will part of a doubleheader along with the D4 regional final. The change in schedule was precipitated by BG being chosen to host first round games in the NCAA women's tourney.

SECTIONALS

DEFIANCE: Ottawa-Glandorf and Tinora are the top seeds. Ottawa-Glandorf had previously played in the Findlay sectional following their move to D3 several years ago. This is not your vintage O-G team although they are in the upper half of the WBL. The Titans have a string of six straight sectional titles. O-G is clearly the cream of the crop in this sectional. Tinora finished third behind Edgerton and Holgate in the Green Meadows Conference. The Rams live by the three to go along with a stingy defense. Paulding was the district runner up in 2011. The Panthers

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experienced heavy graduation losses but have been competitive. Wayne Trace is young. The Raiders have recently run into a tough stretch as they hit the rugged part of their schedule. Rivals Hicksville and Fairview have been scuffling near the bottom of the GMC standings although the Aces have shown a bit of life late in the season.

Semifinals – Hicksville over Fairview; Paulding over Wayne Trace

Finals – Ottawa-Glandorf over Hicksville; Tinora over Paulding

ANTHONY WAYNE: Archbold and Delta are the top seeds. With several of the current NBC/former SLL teams headed east, the sectional was relocated from Whitmer to AW. Nothing but NWOAL teams making the trek to Whitehouse. Archbold has clinched the NWOAL championship. The Blue Streaks return three starters from their 2011 D3 regional runner-up team. Despite their experience, they have been offensively challenged at times. Delta has hit a rough stretch late in the season. It will be interesting to see which Delta team shows up for the tournament. Patrick Henry is better than their record indicates. The Patriots have played a challenging schedule and put a scare into Defiance on a night when they dominated the Bulldogs inside. Swanton is much improved from a year ago while Evergreen has played better during the second half of the season. The Vikings are facing their first losing season since the '95-'96 season. Despite averaging only twenty-seven points a game, a young Liberty Center team has still found a way to win twice in the NWOAL.

Semifinals – Evergreen over Swanton; Patrick Henry over Liberty Center

Finals – Archbold over Evergreen; Patrick Henry over Delta



FINDLAY: Liberty-Benton and Fostoria are the top seeds. Liberty-Benton remains in the hunt for a BVC co-championship. L-B coach Steve Williman picked up career win number 500 earlier this season in a game against McComb. The Eagles have come on strong during the second half of the season. Fostoria, Carey, and Elmwood appear to be evenly matched. Carey is in a battle for third in the MAL. The Blue Devils have impressive league wins over New Riegel and Tiffin Calvert. As usual, Fostoria is athletic and will present some matchup problems. Elmwood has been somewhat of a surprise. Picked for the bottom of the NBC, few thought that Elmwood would end the season anywhere close to being a .500 team. Van Buren is in the midst of a rebuilding year following

five straight sectional titles. Lakota is improved from a year ago but will not be a factor.

Semifinals – Van Buren over Lakota; Elmwood over Carey

Finals- Liberty-Benton over Van Buren; Fostoria over Elmwood

WAPAKONETA: Lima Central Catholic and Spencerville are the top seeds. As mentioned previously, Lima Central Catholic is head and shoulders better than any other D3 team in NW Ohio. The T-Birds have two losses, both to Lima Bath. Seniors Billy Taflinger and Ty O'Connor were key contributors in LCC's run to the D3 state championship in 2010. We commented a year ago that this sectional had fallen off a bit. That trend has continued in 2012. Spencerville is one of several teams fighting for third place in the Northwest Conference behind LCC and Columbus Grove. Coldwater is the best of the rest although the Cavaliers are one of five teams below .500 at Wapak. Coldwater started slowly but have been playing better late in the season. Bluffton, Allen East, and Delphos Jefferson are at the bottom of the Northwest Conference while Parkway is in the MAC cellar.

Semifinals – Delphos Jefferson over Bluffton; Spencerville over Parkway; Coldwater over Allen East

Finals – Lima Central Catholic over Delphos Jefferson; Spencerville over Coldwater

LEXINGTON: Ontario and New London are the top seeds. This should be a competitive sectional with five of the teams above .500 at the time of the draw. This was supposed to be a rebuilding year for Ontario, but the Warriors are in a battle for second in the North Central Conference Black Division. Ontario was undefeated against D3 and D4 teams when the draw was held. New London is tied with Western Reserve for the Firelands Conference lead. The Wildcats are currently on an eleven game winning streak. Wynford is currently in the battle with Ontario for the second spot in the NCC Black. Splitting their time between D3 and D4, Wynford has won sixteen straight sectional championships dating all the way back to 1996. Ashland Crestview and Seneca East are the other teams at Lexington above .500 at the time of the draw with Bucyrus rounding things out. The lower bracket with Wynford and New London will be interesting.

Semifinals – Bucyrus over Seneca East; Wynford over Ashland Crestview

Finals - Ontario over Seneca East; Wynford over New London

SANDUSKY: Western Reserve and Lake are the top seeds. Western Reserve is currently the co-leader in the Firelands Conference. The Roughriders win over D2 Perkins the night before the draw vaulted them to the top seed. Lake currently leads the Northern Buckeye Conference. The Flyers play an up tempo style. Two freshmen start for Lake

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in addition to the NBC's leading scorer, RaShad Smith. Huron is also young and athletic. The Tigers are tied with Clyde for second place in the Sandusky Bay Conference behind Perkins. Margaretta, Woodmore, and Genoa round out the group at Sandusky. Margaretta has a chance to finish in the upper half of the SBC. Woodmore has been somewhat of a disappointment although the Wildcats have just one senior. Genoa has athletes and shouldn't be overlooked. Huron and Lake should be the best matchup if the Tigers can get by Genoa.

Semifinals – Woodmore over Margaretta; Huron over Genoa

Finals – Western Reserve over Woodmore; Huron over Lake

DISTRICTS

NAPOLEON: Archbold is the two-time defending district champion. The Blue Streaks have won six district titles in the last nine years.

Semifinals – Ottawa-Glandorf over Patrick Henry; Archbold over Tinora

Final – Ottawa-Glandorf over Archbold

LIMA SENIOR: Ottawa-Glandorf was the 2011 district champion. The Titans are now part of the Napoleon district.

Semifinals – Liberty-Benton over Spencerville; Lima Central Catholic over Fostoria

Final – Lima Central Catholic over Liberty-Benton

NORWALK: The district tournament was played at Mansfield Senior in 2011 with Ontario winning the championship.

Semifinals – Ontario over Huron; Western Reserve over Wynford

Final – Western Reserve over Ontario

DIVISION IV

D4 will look significantly different in 2012 with eight teams (see our D3 intro) moving up to D3 and five teams (Colonel Crawford, Gibsonburg, Plymouth, Riverdale, St. Henry) dropping down to D4. Four of those newcomers could make an impact in D4.

The decrease in D4 teams will result in the downsizing of the tournament to ten sectionals and five districts. That results in a number of seven team sectionals compared to the six

team sectionals of a year ago.

There are numerous venue changes. Elida, Hicksville, Port Clinton, Rossford, Galion, and Bucyrus will no longer host sectional tournaments. Paulding, Ontario, Norwalk, and Eastwood are new sectional sites. Lakota and Elida have replaced Gibsonburg, Lima Senior, and Wapakoneta as district sites.

Fort Recovery and Edgerton head the list of D4 teams this season. There are a number of other good D4 teams in Northwest Ohio. They may not be getting a lot of statewide recognition but are solid teams nonetheless. St. Henry, Columbus Grove, Maumee Valley Country Day, Leipsic, Vanlue, Colonel Crawford, and Vanlue are among those teams.

BGSU's Stroh Center will host the regional D4 tournament with the Lakota district winner facing the Liberty-Benton district winner in the first semifinal and the Willard and Napoleon winners meeting in the other semifinal. The Elida district winner will head south and be joined by the three Dayton district winners at Kettering Fairmont. The Elida district champ will square off against the winner of the Dayton district featuring undefeated Jackson Center.

SECTIONALS

COLDWATER: Fort Recovery and St. Henry are the top seeds. Six MAC teams and Waynesfield-Goshen make up the sectional at Coldwater. Fort Recovery's losses are to D1 Columbus Walnut Ridge and St. Henry. With their win over Delphos St. John's, the Indians are in position to win an outright MAC title. Fort Recovery last accomplished that in 1999. St. Henry has been on a roll having won eleven of their last twelve games with only a January loss to New Bremen. The Cardinals, Minster, Marion Local, and New Knoxville are fairly even with New Bremen probably the best of the bunch. Waynesfield-Goshen appears overmatched by the MAC teams. As is normally the case at Coldwater, don't be surprised if there is an upset or two among the MAC teams.

Semifinals - Minster over New Knoxville; St. Henry over Waynesfield-Goshen; New Bremen over Marion Local

Finals – Fort Recovery over Minster; St. Henry over New Bremen

VAN WERT: Convoy Crestview and Delphos St. John's are the top seeds. Convoy Crestview is riding a six game winning streak. The Knights were the top seed at Van Wert a year ago, but lost in their tournament opener. Delphos St. John's fell out of a share of the lead in the MAC with their February 17 loss to Fort Recovery. The Blue Jays were below .500 in mid-January before stringing some wins together. Lincolnview has also been able to put some wins together after losing seven of their first ten games. The Lancers, Lima Temple Christian, Fort Jennings, and Lima Perry appear to be fairly evenly matched. Fort Jennings has bounced back after going winless last season. The

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Musketeers own a win at Kalida. Temple Christian finished the season a game behind co-champions Fairbanks and Ridgemont in the NWCC. Ottoville finished the season winless in the PCL although they were competitive in a number of games.

Semifinals – Lincolnview over Lima Temple Christian; Delphos St. John's over Ottoville; Fort Jennings over Lima Perry

Finals – Convoy Crestview over Lincolnview; Delphos St. John's over Fort Jennings

KENTON: Vanlue and Arlington are the top seeds. Three excellent teams at Kenton in Vanlue, Arlington, Ada. Throw in NWCC co-champ Ridgemont and it makes for an interesting sectional. A big part of Vanlue getting the top seed was their win over Arlington. The Wildcats have a D1 prospect in 6'9" junior Zach Garber. Vanlue finished in a tie for third in the BVC while Arlington grabbed a share of the BVC crown. Thayne Recker of Arlington is the only boy in a set of quadruplets. Both Thayne and sister Amelia went over 1,000 points this season. Ada also owns a win over Arlington but chose to go into Vanlue's bracket. Konnor Baker became Ada's all-time leading scorer earlier this season. Ridgemont has thirteen wins headed into their regular season finale after winning a total of seventeen games over the past seven seasons. Riverdale, Upper Scioto Valley, and Hardin Northern round out the sectional. Saying Hardin Northern has had a rough season is an understatement. One weekend in December, they were shut out in the first quarter of their games on both Friday and Saturday night. They've trailed at halftime in two of their BVC games by 45-3 and 34-2 scores. Probably their toughest loss was the night the Polar Bears faced North Baltimore. Hardin Northern led 20-0 after the first quarter only to end up losing 53-47.

Semifinals – Ada over Hardin Northern; Arlington over Riverdale; Ridgemont over Upper Scioto Valley

Finals – Vanlue over Ada; Arlington over Ridgemont

OTTAWA-GLANDORF: Columbus Grove and Leipsic are the top seeds. Columbus Grove has clinched a share of the Putnam County League championship. Grove has a win over Ottawa-Glandorf and will finish no worse than a tie for second behind LCC in the Northwest Conference standings. Leipsic still has a shot at co-championships in both the PCL and BVC. The Vikings began the season by winning eight straight but have fallen off a little in February. McComb has bounced back to have a solid season despite heavy graduation losses from last season's 24-1 regional runner-up team. Pandora-Gilboa, Cory-Rawson, and Arcadia will all finish in the lower half of the

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BVC standings. North Baltimore rounds out the sectional at O-G. North Baltimore's lone win of the season came in the game with Hardin Northern when the Tigers trailed 20-0 after the first quarter.

Semifinals - McComb over Pandora-Gilboa; Columbus Grove over North Baltimore; Cory-Rawson over Arcadia

Finals – Leipsic over McComb; Columbus Grove over Cory-Rawson

BRYAN: Pettisville and Stryker are the top seeds. The Bryan sectional never gets much respect. Maybe it was those seven straight years Holgate won district titles by beating schools from the Bryan sectional. Maybe it's not having state ranked Edgerton in the sectional despite the towns being separated by only twelve miles. This season, all six Buckeye Border Conference schools join Montpelier at Bryan. When you get a bunch of schools that have already played a double round within the conference, upsets are bound to happen. Pettisville is undefeated in the BBC with one game remaining. Fayette has a win at Holgate. Stryker has been consistent throughout the season winning the games they should. North Central has late season quality wins at Fayette and Delta. Hilltop and Edon are at the bottom of the BBC while Montpelier went winless in the NWOAL. Assuming there are no upsets in the semifinals, the sectional final games should be very competitive. Don't rule anything out.

Semifinals – Fayette over Edon; North Central over Hilltop; Stryker over Montpelier

Finals – Pettisville over Fayette; North Central over Stryker

PAULDING: Edgerton and Kalida are the top seeds. An excellent sectional. Edgerton is the GMC champion. The Bulldogs are currently undefeated but have a tough regular season finale against Delta. Edgerton won at Holgate and has a win over Delphos St. John's. Kalida coach Richard Kortokrax has won a few games during his career. When all the drama was happening in Kalida three years ago regarding Mr. Kortokrax's coaching future, much was made about the potential of this year's senior class. The Wildcats have been inconsistent at times this season, but nobody will be looking past them in the tournament. Holgate didn't. With the third seed, the Tigers jumped on Edgerton's side of the bracket rather than facing the possibility of playing Kalida in a sectional final. Holgate is playing up-tempo this season averaging a little over thirty-seven points a game. That didn't stop them from playing a scoreless tie in the first quarter of their GMC game with Antwerp. Miller City was in contention for a share of the PCL title until losing their final two conference games. The Wildcats along with Antwerp are the sleepers in this sectional with all the talk about Edgerton, Kalida, and Holgate. The Archers are on an eight game winning streak. 2011 state final four participant Continental is rebuilding. The Pirates have played well during the second half of the season. Ayersville rounds out the sectional.

Semifinals – Holgate over Continental; Kalida over Ayersville; Miller City over Antwerp

Finals – Holgate over Edgerton; Kalida over Miller City

ONTARIO: Colonel Crawford and Buckeye Central are the top seeds. Colonel Crawford wins the North Central Conference Silver Division. The Eagles finished the regular season 9-0 against D4 teams. Buckeye Central was the only other team over .500 at the time of the draw. BC's only losses to D4 teams are Colonel Crawford (twice) and New Riegel. The rest of this sectional doesn't have much to offer with Crestline, Mansfield St. Peter's, and Mansfield Christian fairly even. As the third and fourth seeds, Crestline went to Buckeye Central's side of the bracket and avoided Crawford. Not much has gone well for Lucas this season. The Cubs have only had two games where they've come within ten points of an opponent. Their junior varsity has been shut out twice.

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

Finals – Colonel Crawford over Mansfield Christian; Buckeye Central over Crestline

NORWALK: Plymouth and Sandusky St. Mary are the top seeds. This sectional is similar to the group at Ontario although the top teams don't appear to be quite as strong as Colonel Crawford. Plymouth's season has been a pleasant surprise. The Big Red should finish the season in third place in the Firelands Conference. The future bodes well as Plymouth starts two freshmen. Sandusky St. Mary CC got off to a slow start but is 10-3 over their last thirteen games heading into their regular season finale. The second seed at Norwalk, St. Mary's passed on a bye and will play a semifinal game. South Central, Norwalk St. Paul, and Monroeville are in the bottom half of the FC standings. South Central has a win over New London and will finish the season no worse than .500. Danbury has been in position to win several games but is still searching for their first victory of the season.

Semifinals – Sandusky St. Mary CC over Danbury; Norwalk St. Paul over Monroeville

Finals – Sandusky St. Mary CC over South Central; Plymouth over Norwalk St. Paul

FOSTORIA: New Riegel and Tiffin Calvert are the top seeds. Seven Midland Athletic League members meet up at Fostoria. New Riegel has clinched a tie for the MAL title and will have it outright with a February 24 win over Lakota. New Riegel's lone league defeat was at Carey in December. The Blue Jackets have also lost to Colonel Crawford and D1 Anthony Wayne. Tiffin Calvert still has a shot at a share of the league crown but will need help. Old Fort and Hopewell-Loudon are

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in a scramble for third place in the league. Old Fort is much improved this season. The Stockaders are similar to NR and Calvert as they like to go up and down the floor, while Hopewell is more deliberate. Mohawk, Fostoria St. Wendelin, and Bettsville are near the bottom of the MAL standings. On a night they were playing shorthanded due to injuries and suspensions, Bettsville trailed New Riegel 76-8 after three quarters.

Semifinals – Hopewell-Loudon over Mohawk; Tiffin Calvert over Bettsville; Old Fort over Fostoria St. Wendelin

Finals – New Riegel over Hopewell-Loudon; Tiffin Calvert over Old Fort

EASTWOOD: Maumee Valley Country Day and Gibsonburg are the top seeds. The best of the TAAC head to Eastwood. Maumee Valley Country Day is this year's TAAC champion. It is only their second TAAC title with the other one coming in 2002. Coach Jim Robinson is in his final year of coaching. Robby has over 500 career wins but has never won a district title. There is plenty of skepticism regarding the strength of MVCD's non-league schedule. Gibsonburg was the 2011 runner-up in the district tournament at Norwalk. The Golden Bears returned the nucleus of that team in 2012 and handed Maumee Valley their only loss of the season. Toledo Christian is 10-2 over their past twelve games. TC has won sectional championships the past nine seasons. Ottawa Hills has also caught on fire after starting the season at 3-6. Winners of five consecutive sectional titles, the Green Bears are young with only one senior getting significant minutes and long. Don't count Fremont St. Joseph Central Catholic out. The Crimson Streaks are still in the hunt for third place in the MAL. Cardinal Stritch is much improved this season but the Cardinals are on the same side of the bracket as TC and Gibsonburg. Northwood rounds out the sectional. The sectional finals have a chance to be outstanding

Semifinals – Ottawa Hills over Fremont St. Joseph CC; Toledo Christian over Cardinal Stritch; Gibsonburg over Northwood

Finals – Maumee Valley Country Day over Ottawa Hills; Toledo Christian over Gibsonburg

DISTRICTS

ELIDA: Minster won the district played last year at Wapakoneta.

Semifinals – Fort Recovery over Delphos St. John's; St. Henry over Convoy Crestview

Final – Fort Recovery over St. Henry

LIBERTY-BENTON: McComb is the defending district champion at L-B. The founder of Davey1.com and publisher of Trail Trash, Dave Spengler, normally makes the journey to L-B. The Swami may make an appearance as well.

Semifinals – Columbus Grove over Vanlue; Arlington over Leipsic

Final – Arlington over Columbus Grove

NAPOLEON: Edgerton is the defending district champion at Napoleon. Continental won the district title at Lima Senior in 2011.

Semifinals – Kalida over Pettisville; Holgate over North Central

Final – Kalida over Holgate

WILLARD: Wynford won the Willard district in 2011. Several of the teams were part of the Gibsonburg district last year.

Semifinals – Colonel Crawford over Plymouth; Sandusky St. Mary CC over Buckeye Central

Final – Colonel Crawford over Sandusky St. Mary CC

LAKOTA: It's not the end of the world, but you can see it from here. Conveniently located near Risingsun, Burgoon, Kansas, and Helena, we'll probably have a snowstorm the evening of March 6. Toledo Christian won the district championship in 2011 when it was played at Gibsonburg,

Semifinals – New Riegel over Toledo Christian; Maumee Valley Country Day over Tiffin Calvert

Final – New Riegel over Maumee Valley Country Day

That's it for now. Who knows, maybe we'll be back for a quick update the week of the district tournament. We will definitely be back for a much shorter 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. Rock on.