

Trail Trash

for the 2002 OHSAA Boys High School Basketball Tournament

Published exclusively by Dave Spengler

Featuring Commentary & Predictions by ...



The Swami

For the ninth consecutive year, Trail Trash presents for your reading pleasure the opinions and predictions of the Swami, Northwest Ohio's self-proclaimed high school basketball expert and guru. Nowhere else will you find so much information on Northwest Ohio high school tournament basketball for 2002. Nowhere else will you find so much meaningless trash.

It hardly seems possible that we've been doing this deal for nine years. Back in 1994 when we gave this a name and added the predictions, the Swami was not even paid. Come to think of it, the Swami is still waiting on his check for 2001 and 2000 and..... Back in 1994, our circulation was limited. Through aggressive and savvy marketing, our circulation remains in the ten's. Back in 1994, the Swami wondered why any sane human being would admit to publishing this exclusively. Nine years later the Swami still does not know why anyone would make that admission, let alone what it even means.

The Swami started slowly in 2001, but was on fire in last year's second issue. He ended 2001 with a 48-12 (80%) win/loss record for the regional and state tournaments with three state champions. With those

kinds of numbers, the Swami could have followed several of our readers into semi-retirement. That just would not have been fair to our thousands of faithful followers. Out came the ouija board. Scouting trips became the rule for Tuesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays to make this the best publication possible.

Let's roll, it's Swami time.

DIVISION I

Top ranked Toledo St John's Jesuit heads up D1. The Titans, picked to finish third in the Toledo City League, are currently undefeated although they have been tested lately. The Johnnies moved into the top spot according to the Associated Press when nationally ranked Columbus Brookhaven fell to Columbus Mifflin. Toledo Scott is the only other NW Ohio D1 team to appear regularly in the weekly poll although the Dawgs are not in the top ten. Toledo Central Catholic and surprising Lima Senior have hardly gotten a sniff despite each having only two losses as of the tournament draw on February 10. Other teams with the potential to do some damage include Mansfield Senior (with losses to Lima Senior and Scott), Perrysburg, Celina, and 2001 district champ Ashland. After playing at Springfield in 2001, sectional games for Toledo area schools will be split between Waite and Libbey. That is a definite setback given the



condition of those two antiquated facilities not to mention their accessibility and parking woe. District semi-final games will be played at the sectional sites with the two district final games set for BG's Anderson Arena. Those two district winners will meet in a regional semi-final at UT's Savage Hall with the winner playing the Gund Arena (Cleveland) regional semi-final winner (St. Edward, St Ignatius, Medina, Lakewood, or Elyria) in the regional final at UT. Look for a NW Ohio D1 team to make it to the state tournament in '02.

SECTIONALS

Willard: Mansfield Senior and Ashland are seeded. This sectional has featured classic battles between Mansfield Senior and Fremont Ross the past two seasons. The two teams will match up again after Ross gets by Columbian in the tourney opener. Neither Ross nor Senior will be at full strength as the Little Giants have lost Terrence Jones to academics and Mansfield post player Chad Fisher is out with a broken leg. This once again will be a donnybrook with the Tygers edging Ross to advance. Sandusky coach Rich Wennes has led his team while battling a brain tumor. The Blue Streaks defeat Madison. The Rams feature Ryan Pore the most underrated player in NW Ohio. Ashland has had injury problems of their own but big man Mark Hess is back at full strength. Look for the Arrows to defeat Sandusky despite the efforts of the Streaks' Issian Redding.

Liberty-Benton: Lima Senior and Perrysburg are seeded. Perrysburg was able to wrestle the second seed away from Celina and avoid Lima Senior. The Jackets should thank their NLL brethren for the help. No one expected Lima to have this kind of season. The Spartans lost ten seniors and Coach Dick Heath from their regional runner-up team. New coach Mark Gaffney inherited only one starter in Bryan Andrews but has gotten major contributions from Willie Tisdale and frosh Travis Walton. The Spartans had a thirteen game winning streak prior to their February 12 loss to Toledo Scott. Lima passed up the bye and will face a tough Celina team in the opener. The Spartans already own an easy win over Celina and will prevail again. That game should again raise the question about how many seats are in the L-B facility. Findlay bests Bowling Green in the other semi. The Trojans sport an outstanding junior in Rob Young. In the finals take Lima Senior over Anthony Wayne and Pburg over Findlay.

Toledo Waite: St. John's Jesuit and Sylvania Southview are seeded. SJJ is the state's top ranked D1 team. The Titans can be beaten, but it will not happen in the sectional. Take the Johnnies over Clay. It appears that Libbey coach Leroy Bates was able to make this year's tournament draw. That was not the case last year when the favored but unseeded Cowboys were thumped by underdog Northview. The Cowboys are rebuilding in 2002 but remain respectable. Take Libbey over Rogers but expect the Rams' Mario Peters to be the show. In the final, balanced St. John's defeats Libbey. Maumee has been quietly gaining momentum. The Panthers defeat a small Northview team. Look for Whitmer to upset a

The Swami

young Southview team in another semi-final. In the final, Maumee edges Whitmer in a low-scoring struggle.

Toledo Libbey: Scott and Central Catholic are seeded. Scott and Central were expected to battle for the City League title. Both teams have been somewhat of a disappointment despite having only three and two losses respectively to date. Scott appears to have the easier road. Take the Bulldogs over Waite. Bowsher, behind TCL scoring leader Mike Menchaca, edges Springfield in a pick 'em game. In the final Scott rolls over the Rebels. Central has size, depth, and talent. The Irish appear to have come to life after being drubbed by St. John's. The Irish will be tested in their opener but will get by rival St. Francis. Woodward has been a surprise so far with a .500 record at the draw, a first in a number of years. Take the Polar Bears over the Start Spartans. In the final, Central Catholic advances to the district with a win over Woodward.

DISTRICTS

District semi-final games will be played at the sectional sites (Willard, Liberty-Benton, Waite, Libbey) with the finals scheduled for BGSU's Anderson Arena. Ashland has not found a way to defeat a Gregg Collins coached Mansfield team. The Tygers have won the last eleven meetings with the Arrows under Collins. The jinx continues as Mansfield's quickness prevails over the Ashland's size. After a slow start, Perrysburg has quietly put together an outstanding season. That continues as the Yellow Jackets upset Lima Senior. At Waite, St John's is just too talented for Maumee. At Libbey, Scott and Central Catholic meet for a third time. The key for Scott is getting big man Derrick Ford involved in the offense. The Bulldogs get caught looking ahead to St. John's and are defeated by Central. In the district finals on Saturday at BG, the Swami likes Perrysburg over Mansfield and Toledo St. John's over Toledo Central Catholic. This marks Pburg's first district title since 1991 (then as a D2 school) and the Titans first title since 1998.

DIVISION II

Ottawa-Glandorf and Willard once again have been near the top of the state rankings in 2002. O-G was not even pushed during the first half of the season but has since lost to Shawnee and posted a narrow home victory over Van Wert. 2001 state qualifier Willard has been much less dominant than a year ago with Northern Ohio League losses to Bellevue and Upper Sandusky. The Flashes also have a loss to Montrose Christian from Maryland. Bryan, with losses to only O-G and Columbus West, has recently been receiving notice in the state polls. Fostoria and Port Clinton were top ten teams early in January according to the Associated Press before reality set in. Van

(Continued after Division I Brackets)

Wert, Bellevue, and Upper Sandusky are other solid D2 teams. Shawnee features the outstanding sophomore in Jamar Butler. The Indians have fallen on hard times since defeating O-G and do not figure to go deep into the tournament. The only site change in D2 for 2002 will have a district tournament being played at Ontario rather than Ashland University. The two district winners will play a regional semi-final at BGSU's Anderson Arena with the winner playing the Gund Arena (LeBron=\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$) regional semi-final winner (Akron St. Vincent-St. Mary) in the regional final at UT's Savage Hall. With St. Vincent-St. Mary looming on the horizon, a D2 team from NW Ohio qualifying for the state tournament is not likely in 2002.

SECTIONALS

Lima Senior: Ottawa-Glandorf and Van Wert are seeded. This sectional features state-ranked Ottawa-Glandorf and six other WBL teams along with some outstanding talent in Shawnee's Jamar Butler and Van Werts' Cory Sinning. O-G has depth and size and is led by Todd Schumaker and the Pollitz twins. It appeared that there would be a debate over the second seed after Shawnee's win over O-G, but that quickly quieted when the Indians lost consecutive games to Coldwater, Kenton, and Findlay. Shawnee has been hurt by the loss of Doug Beldon to injury. In opening round games take O-G over Wapak and Shawnee over St. Marys Memorial. The Indians better not be caught looking ahead to O-G. In other semi-final games, take Van Wert big over Paulding and Elida by a slim margin over Bath. In the finals, O-G gets revenge over Shawnee with an easy win while Van Wert holds on to stop Elida.

Sylvania Southview: Bryan and Fostoria are seeded. Seven teams from six different leagues and an independent. If played in 2003, these teams would represent seven different leagues. Bryan has won sectional titles the past two years and is led by veterans from those teams in Nate Ward and Doug Carpenter. Fostoria began its resurgence a year ago with the hiring of Coach Keith Diebler. Freshman Jacob Diebler, the coach's son, has joined seniors Treyvon McBeth and Brice Fuller to make this a potent club. SLL champ Eastwood opens up sectional play against much improved Rossford. Take the Eagles' quickness over the Bulldogs' size. In other first round action, take Napoleon over Oak Harbor and Fostoria in a thriller over Defiance. Napoleon lost standout point Brett Wesche for a majority of the season. Wesche has just returned, but it has not made much of a difference for the Wildcats. In the first championship game, take Bryan over Eastwood leaving the Eagles to wish they had remained in D3 (and a probable regional berth). In the other final, go with Fostoria over Napoleon.

Sandusky: Bellevue and Port Clinton are seeded. Bellevue has a win over Willard but recently suffered back-to-back losses to the Flashes and Upper Sandusky. Port Clinton was state-ranked after winning their first ten games but

The Swami

then dropped four in a row. The Redskins are big (6'11 and 6'7") and young (start two sophomores) and appear to be a year away. Bellevue skipped the bye and starts off the tournament with Vermilion. The Sailors play in the Ohio Heartland Conference against the likes of Mansfield Senior and Ashland so Bellevue will not intimidate them. Bellevue wins. An improving Norwalk nips Clyde in the other opener. The Truckers recently took Willard to the wire before losing. In the finals, Bellevue dominates a bad Sandusky Perkins team while Norwalk moves to the district by upsetting Port Clinton.

Bucyrus: Willard and Upper Sandusky are seeded. This is a very good sectional with five of the six teams over .500 at the time of the draw. The sixth team, Shelby, was 8-9 at the tournament draw. Willard is state-ranked and features guard Nick Dials. In typical Willard fashion, the Flashes added three transfers to their roster this season. In their defense, none of them have made a major contribution. For Willard to be successful, Dials must score big. Upper has been a factor in the Northern Ohio League race with wins over Willard and Bellevue. Kenton won a D4 state football championship. The Wildcats started slowly but have come on strong of late. In the openers, the Swami has Kenton edging Galion and traditional Swami favorite Lexington defeating the Shelby Whippets. In the finals, Willard wins over Kenton. Kenton's size hurts the Flashes, but the Wildcats have no answer for Dials. In the other final, look for Upper to edge Lexington.

DISTRICTS

BGSU: Ottawa-Glandorf meets Fostoria in the opener. The Titans' size and depth are just too much for Fostoria. The Redmen are lucky to keep it within twenty. In the nightcap, Bryan faces Van Wert. Van Wert has close losses this year both at Bryan and at Ottawa-Glandorf. Van Wert gains a bit of revenge by edging the Golden Bears. Anderson Arena is jammed for a rematch of the 2001 final when O-G destroyed Van Wert. That was after the Swami took Van Wert in an upset. This year, the Swami will not be fooled again as Ottawa-Glandorf hangs on to defeat Van Wert. The Titans are getting closer to playing Akron St. Vincent- St. Mary.



Ontario: The initial district tournament at the new Ontario facility features four Northern Ohio League teams. Bellevue and Upper Sandusky meet in their rubber game in the opener. Bellevue advances with a narrow win over the Upper Rams. In the other semi-final, Willard advances with an easy win over Norwalk. There is no need for Dials to score a bundle of points. The district final matches long-time rivals Willard and

(Continued after Division II Brackets)

Bellevue. Bellevue advances to regional play at BG by holding on to defeat Willard. The Redmen will meet Ottawa-Glandorf in the regional.

DIVISION III

Northwest Ohio featured several outstanding Division III teams in 2001 including Wayne Trace, Liberty-Benton, and Ontario. Both Wayne Trace and L-B won district titles with Wayne Trace also winning the regional title. The Raiders gave Akron St. Vincent-St. Mary all they could handle in their state semi-final before being edged by the Irish. 2002 is a totally different story for D3 basketball in NW Ohio. Wayne Trace hung around the state top ten for several weeks before their losses mounted. Clear Fork has recently begun to receive some recognition. There may not be very many top-notch teams, but there is clearly a great deal of parity. A number of the names are familiar including Wynford, Lima Central Catholic, L-B, Coldwater, St. Henry, Archbold, and Ontario. Throw in Delphos Jefferson, Liberty Center, Huron, and Woodmore and you have all the makings for very competitive sectional and district tournaments. One minor site change at the sectional level as the Norwalk tournament moves from the middle school to the new high school. Napoleon replacing Ohio Northern University is the only district site change. The three NW Ohio district winners will be joined by the Elyria district winner (Elyria Catholic is a heavy favorite) for the regional at BG's Anderson Arena. If EC falters, look for a surprise NW Ohio team to make it to Columbus for the state tournament.

SECTIONALS

Elida: Coldwater and Lima Central Catholic are seeded. Traditional powers LCC, Coldwater, and St. Henry make this an interesting group. LCC has shown a tendency to play at the level of their competition. The T-Birds always seem to gel at tournament time. Coldwater and St. Henry have been hovering around the middle of the pack in the Midwest Athletic Conference with Coldwater hot of late and St. Henry inconsistent. In first round action, take St. Henry with Todd Boeckman over Allen East and Parkway over the Spencerville Bearcats. In sectional final action, look for LCC to nip St. Henry. Coldwater will eliminate league rival Parkway in the other final behind the play of big (6'11") Matt Lefeld.

Defiance: Archbold and Wayne Trace are seeded. Wayne Trace had heavy graduation losses from the 2001 state qualifying team with Jake Sinn the only returning starter. The Raiders started strong but have recently struggled. Archbold was a pre-season favorite to win the NWOAL but early losses knocked them from contention. Tinora hosted Wayne Trace and Archbold the weekend of the draw losing by a bucket to each of them. Delphos Jeff has put together a solid season. In the first semi-final take Montpelier over Bluffton. In the nightcap, Tinora will knock off Delphos Jeff in a slight upset. In the finals, Archbold will knock off Montpelier while Tinora will

The Swami

record its second upset of the tournament by edging defending regional champ Wayne Trace.

Sylvania Northview: Liberty Center and Patrick Henry are seeded. This is an all NWOAL sectional. Swanton has won two consecutive sectionals at Northview while Evergreen has won five consecutive sectional titles at this site. PH played in the D4 sectional at Ottawa last year after being in the Defiance D3 sectional for a number of years. Liberty is led by an outstanding shooter in Greg Badenhop. Delta, Swanton, and Wauseon have all struggled this year. Take Wauseon in the opener over Swanton with Evergreen beating Delta in the second game. Got to go with the seeds in the finals. Liberty Center and Wauseon should be interesting with the Tigers winning. The Indians will have their opportunities. '97 D3 state champ Patrick Henry will eliminate Evergreen in the other final.

Old Fort: Liberty-Benton and Genoa are seeded. Liberty-Benton is the only team with a winning record at this sectional. L-B is a middle of the pack BVC team this season after dominating the league for a number of years. The Eagles have played well outside the conference. Genoa got the second seed as a result of their two wins over Otsego. The Knights started the season slowly before coming on strong at mid-season. Lately they have resorted to their early season form. Jimmy Robinson, the son of the long-time Maumee coach, coaches Lake. Lake started strong before slumping. In the opener, take Otsego over Elmwood in a high-scoring, close game. Look for Lake to stop Lakota in the second contest. In the championship games, L-B will be too disciplined for Otsego and Genoa will be too big for Lake.

Norwalk: Huron and Woodmore are seeded. Only five teams in this sectional. Huron has been somewhat of a surprise in the SBC. The Tigers handed Sandusky St. Mary one of their two losses to date. Woodmore was the overwhelming favorite to win the SLL but has been unable to figure out Eastwood. The Wildcats struggled while leading scorer Scott Bergman was out with a leg injury. Woodmore's five losses have all been to quality teams. Margareta is dangerous but inconsistent. The Polar Bears have also been decimated by injuries. In the only semi-final, Edison defeats Ashland Crestview. Woodmore wins a sectional championship with a win over Edison in one final. Huron eases past Margareta in the other final despite the long-range shooting of Rob Lewis.

Galion: Clear Fork and Wynford are seeded. This is a very good sectional. Ontario and Wynford typically dominate this sectional. Wynford was the regional runner-up in 2001. Ontario started slowly but has played extremely well of late. The Warriors handed Buckeye Central their first loss of the

(Continued after Division III Brackets)

The Swami

season when the Bucks were the state's top ranked D4 club. Clear Fork has had an outstanding season as expected. Bucyrus is leaving the NOL after this season to join Ontario, Wynford, and others in the NCC. In the only semi-final game, Ontario will edge past Bucyrus. In the finals, look for Ontario to pull off a minor upset with a win over Wynford. Clear Fork will hang on to win over Colonel Crawford in the other final

DISTRICTS

Napoleon: D3 district play returns to the Grand Canyon with Lima Central Catholic matched up against Tinora in the opener. The T-Bird's tournament savvy is too much for the Rams as LCC defeats Tinora. Coldwater and Archbold face each other in a battle of top seeds. Coldwater takes advantage of its superior size to eliminate a cold-shooting Archbold team. Lima Central Catholic and Coldwater meet for the district title. This one is almost too close to call but the Swami has to give the win to the T-Birds. LCC advances to the BG regional.

Toledo Waite: Two weeks in a row at the Waite Field House. How did we get so lucky? Got to go with Eastwood in this one. The Eagles are now in D2? Then I guess we go with Woodmore to take it all. The Wildcats are traveling all the way to Ashland for the district? SLL teams seldom get out of this district anyway. In the opener, take Liberty Center over Genoa. Genoa's size will give LC fits, but the Tigers should hang on. Patrick Henry and Liberty-Benton meet in the second game. This will be a very low-scoring basketball game. The Swami is going with L-B over PH. In the final, '95 D4 state champ Liberty-Benton advances to the regional tournament with a narrow win over Liberty Center.

Ashland University: Woodmore meets Clear Fork in the opener. Clear Fork advances to the district final with a win over the Wildcats. Huron and Ontario meet in the second game. Ontario has eliminated the Tigers a number of times at the Ashland district including last year. 2002 is no exception as the Warriors move on with a narrow victory over Huron. In the final, Clear Fork takes the district championship with a win over Ontario.

DIVISION IV

Year in and year out the best Division IV basketball in the state is played in NW Ohio. That argument was made once again in 2001 even though a NW Ohio team did not win the state championship. Delphos St. John's was the state runner-up while Marion Local lost to eventual D4 champ Tipp City Bethel by two in a regional final. 2002 is no exception with a number of very good teams. Convoy Crestview leads the way in D4 for 2002. Buckeye Central was the state's top ranked

D4 team before blowout losses to Ontario and Colonel Crawford pushed them out of the top spot. Upper Scioto Valley has been a fixture in the top ten in '02 while Sandusky St. Mary and Ayersville have also received mention. Minster, Marion Local, Delphos, Van Buren, Pandora-Gilboa, McComb, Old Fort, and Plymouth are other top-notch D4 teams. The Ottawa-Glandorf sectional is probably the best sectional tournament in the state. It features six good teams (all with records over .500) that have beaten up each other all season long. Springfield replacing Owens Community College at the sectional level is the only site change. District winners from Elida, Liberty-Benton, Napoleon, and Fostoria will advance to the regional tournament at UT's Savage Hall. The Wapakoneta district winner advances to the Miami University regional while the Galion district winner advances to the Columbus regional. NW Ohio legitimately could have 3 teams at the state tournament in D4 this year.

SECTIONALS

Coldwater: Minster and Marion Local are seeded. Marion, Minster, and Fort Recovery have all been chasing Versailles and Delphos St. John's in the Midwest Athletic Conference race. Waynesfield-Goshen has put together an excellent season and is the champion of the new Northwest Central Conference. W-G and Fort Recovery meet in the opener with Fort Recovery winning. In the second game, MAC rivals New Knoxville and New Bremen meet. Take New Knoxville. Fort Recovery and Minster play in the upper bracket final with Minster winning. In the lower bracket final, defensive-minded Marion Local defeats New Knoxville.



Waynesfield-Goshen: Upper Scioto Valley and Lima Perry are seeded. Both USV and Perry have winning records, which is an improvement over '00 and '01 when USV was the only team in this sectional with a winning mark. Riverdale and Hardin-Northern meet in the opener with H-N the winner. The second game pits Ada against Ridgemont with Ridgemont the winner. In final round action, Perry defeats Hardin-Northern and '94 D4 state champ Upper Scioto Valley pounds Ridgemont.

Van Wert: Convoy Crestview and Ottoville are seeded. Crestview has had an outstanding season losing only to Continental and D2 Elida. Ottoville has been inconsistent but is still in position to win the Putnam County League championship. Both Kalida and '00 D4 state champ Fort Jennings have had disappointing seasons while Lincolnview has been in the middle of the pack in the NWC. In the opener take Jennings over '97 D4 state champ Lincolnview. In the second game, Kalida and legendary coach Dick Kortokrax

defeat Fairview. Convoy Crestview defeats Fort Jennings in the upper bracket final. In the second game, Kalida avenges a big regular season loss by upsetting the Big Green of Ottoville.

Lima Bath: Delphos St. John's and Arlington are seeded. Delphos has moved over from the Van Wert sectional and is the new bully at Bath. Without the Blue Jays, this is a fairly weak sectional. Vanlue has also been added to this sectional with Pandora-Gilboa moving to Ottawa and Waynesfield-Goshen moving to the Coldwater sectional. In the first game, Columbus Grove defeats Vanlue. Lima Temple Christian defeats Cory-Rawson in the nightcap. Delphos wins big over Grove in one final while the Arlington Red Devils advance to the district with a win over Temple Christian

Ottawa-Glandorf: Van Buren and McComb are seeded. This is an excellent sectional with great balance. Van Buren has had a turnaround season after going 2-19 in 2001. The Black Knights were 15-2 at the tournament drawing. McComb was the regional runner-up in 2001 and returns the Aldrich twins and Eric Tracy. Continental has bounced back from the tragic loss of Pat Britsch in an automobile accident. Pandora-Gilboa, Leipsic, and Miller City have all had solid seasons. In the opening game, look for Continental to defeat Leipsic. McComb once again passed up a bye to play an opening round game. That is always risky, but the Panthers defeat Miller City. In the championship games, Continental defeats Van Buren and Pandora-Gilboa edges McComb.

Springfield: Northwood and Ottawa Hills are seeded. This is not to be confused with the O-G sectional. The Springfield site features four TAAC schools, the SLL cellar dwellers, and a North Baltimore team that has somehow managed to stay out of the MAL basement. If you can look beyond some of the antics both on and off the floor, Northwood and Ottawa Hills have had good seasons. In the first round, take Toledo Christian over Cardinal Stritch and Gibsonburg over North Baltimore. NB was outscored 44-2 during the second and third quarters of their loss to Woodmore. In the finals, go with Northwood over Toledo Christian while Ottawa Hills should defeat Gibsonburg.

Bryan: Edon and Antwerp are seeded. This sectional is split evenly between teams from the Green Meadows Conference and the Buckeye Border Conference. Very balanced group with five of the teams having ten or eleven wins at the time of the draw. Edon and North Central are battling for the BBC title while Antwerp is still in the hunt for the GMC crown. In semi-final games, North Central defeats Edgerton and Stryker edges Hicksville. In the championship games, it will be North Central with a win over the Edon Bombers and the Antwerp Archers nipping Stryker.

Wauseon: Ayersville and Holgate are seeded. Ayersville continues to show up in the state polls despite some one-sided losses. The Pilots are trying to stay in contention in the GMC. Defending district champ Holgate had high expectations at the beginning of the season but have struggled. Pettisville has played well the second half of the

The Swami

season. Maumee Valley has outstanding guards in Josh Radtkin and Chris Joo. Radtkin has been the center of a controversy involving a December ejection. He just recently sat out the state-mandated two games. Questions remain whether MV may have to forfeit any games. The Hawks also recently lost their head coach following a dispute with a parent. The Swami has never been convinced that anything is normal in the TAAC. In first round games, Pettisville defeats Maumee Valley and Hilltop stops Fayette. Ayersville defeats Pettisville and Holgate eliminates Hilltop in the championship games.

Findlay: Mohawk and Arcadia are seeded. Five MAL teams and Arcadia from the BVC make up the field at Findlay. The seeds are the only teams with records above .500. Arcadia, an also ran in the BVC, is 8-1 against MAL teams this season including a win over Mohawk. Fostoria St. Wendelin defeats Hopewell-Loudon while New Riegel edges Carey in the opening round games. The Swami looks for Mohawk and Arcadia to advance with wins over the St. Wendelin Mohawks and New Riegel respectively.

Hopewell-Loudon: Buckeye Central and Old Fort are seeded. Buckeye Central has held on to its state ranking despite the two blowout losses. Defending district champ Old Fort has received no state recognition even after defeating then state-ranked D2 Fostoria. Fremont St. Joseph Central Catholic and Tiffin Calvert are both solid teams but do not appear to be at the same level as the Bucks or the Stockaders. St Joe and Calvert meet in the opening game. The Swami likes Calvert in a squeaker. Take Seneca East over Bettsville in the second game. In the finals, Buckeye Central advances with a win over Fremont St. Joe while Old Fort is a big winner over Seneca East.

Port Clinton: Sandusky St. Mary and Western Reserve are seeded. Seeded teams have had a difficult time advancing at Port Clinton. St Mary Central Catholic has lost only to Port Clinton and Huron to date. Patrick Phillips leads the Panthers. South Central starts off tournament play with a win over Firelands Conference rival Monroeville. Danbury with freshman Jake Fanning leading the way edges Norwalk St. Paul in the other semi-final contest. The Swami looks for Sandusky St. Mary to advance with a big win over South Central while Western Reserve also moves to the district with a narrow victory over the Danbury Lakers.

Lexington: Plymouth and Mansfield St. Peter are seeded. Plymouth is currently on top in the Firelands Conference despite losing the King brothers to Willard. Craig Turson and a Willard transfer, Josh Patterson, are leading the Big

(Continued after Division IV Brackets)

Red. Defending district champ Mansfield St. Pete is led by an outstanding sophomore in Marcus Butler. Crestline is still looking for their first win of the season. In opening round action, Lucas wins over Crestline and New London posts a win over the Mansfield Christian Flames. The seeds prevail in the championship games with Plymouth defeating Lucas and St. Pete winning over New London.

DISTRICTS

Wapakoneta: Minster and Upper Scioto Valley open district play at Wapak in a battle of top seeds. It is difficult to go against any MAC teams at tournament time. Minster is the winner although it will be close. In the second game, Marion Local should not have any trouble with Lima Perry. In the championship game, look for Marion Local to win another district crown by defeating Minster. The Flyers advance to the Miami regional hoping to add to their D6 state football championship.

Elida: Convoy Crestview and Arlington match up in the first game at the Elida Field House. Playing at Elida brings back no bad memories for the Knights as Crestview easily defeats Arlington. Two of the state's legendary programs, Kalida and Delphos St. John's meet in the second game. Delphos advances to the district final with a big win over the Wildcats. Crestview easily defeated St. John's early in the season. This time around is a bit closer but the result remains the same. Convoy Crestview to the regional at Toledo with a win over Delphos St. John's.

Liberty-Benton: The winners from Ottawa normally advance to the district final. When was the last time a team from the Springfield (or Owens) sectional won a game at the district? In the first game, Continental moves on with a win over the Ottawa Hills Green Bears. Pandora -Gilboa and Northwood meet in the second game with Pandora defeating the Rangers. The final matches two Putnam County League teams in Pandora-Gilboa and Continental. Pandora wins the district championship.

Napoleon: North Central, Antwerp, Ayersville, and Holgate make a visit to the Grand Canyon. Holgate stays alive with a win over North Central in the first game. In the nightcap, Ayersville squeezes past the Archers. The district final is a battle of GMC teams. The Swami has to go with Ayersville over Holgate for the district championship. The Ayersville Pilots advance to the UT regional.

Fostoria: I can almost see the light from here. MAL rivals Mohawk and Old Fort face off in the opener. The Swami likes Old Fort in this one. The second game has Arcadia against Buckeye Central. This is no contest. Buckeye Central wins big over Arcadia. Excellent championship game with Old Fort and Buckeye Central. Old Fort wins their second consecutive district championship with a win over Buckeye Central. The Stockaders head to Toledo.

Galion: We finally reached the end of this thing.

The Swami

Sandusky St Mary Central Catholic and Mansfield St. Peter meet in the opener. SMCC already owns a victory at St. Pete. The Swami has to take St. Mary in this one. Firelands Conference foes Plymouth and Western Reserve meet in the second game. This one belongs to the Big Red. In the championship game, Sandusky St. Mary Central Catholic is victorious over Plymouth and advances to the Columbus regional.

See you on the trail. All records and rankings are as of February 11, 2002. The opinions expressed in Trail Trash are not necessarily those of the publisher, David L. Spengler. Rock on.

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