

Trail Trash

for the 2003 OHSAA Boys High School
Basketball Tournament

Published exclusively by Dave Spengler

Featuring Commentary & Predictions by ...



The Swami

Welcome to the Tenth Anniversary issue of Trail Trash. Trail Trash features the expert opinions and predictions of the Swami. Nowhere else will you find as much meaningless information about Northwest Ohio high school tournament basketball as in Trail Trash.

We may have been doing this since 1994 but for a number of years prior to that, the publisher would draw up tournament brackets. Not only would he distribute them to some of his friends, but he would also take his copy to each of the numerous tournament games that he attended. Many a time envious fans were caught gawking as the mysterious man later to be known simply as the publisher (small p) meticulously filled in his brackets. In 1994, a decision was made to go big-time by adding predictions and commentary. There was only one person who could fill those large shoes and that was the Swami. Not the most original of names but he always talked a good game. A title was needed for this concoction and Trail Trash was born.

The Swami normally mentions all the state champions that he picked in the previous year's second edition. Okay, so he didn't pick any winners in 2002, but at least he had the four state championship teams making it to the state tournament. Maybe we could add some LeBron James editorial comments, but there just cannot be anything that has not already been written or said about that whole ordeal. We will predict that \$V\$M will play in the state tournament unless United Nations inspectors show up in Akron. If you don't think that the Irish will make it to Columbus, please send your D2 state tournament tickets to the Swami.

On a serious note, Trail Trash and high school basketball in general lost a great friend with the passing of Gordon "Gordie" Shipley. Gordie, the first basketball coach at Clear Fork High School, loved to talk high school basketball and it was always great fun to sit down and talk high school hoops with him. We will greatly miss not seeing him along the tournament trail.



If you have any comments, questions, or suggestions for Trail Trash, the Swami can be contacted through swamisig@aol.com. No hummer jokes please. Let's roll, it's Swami time.

DIVISION I

This has been a down year for D1 in NW Ohio. Toledo St. John's Jesuit, Toledo Central Catholic, and Fremont Ross lead the field. Ashland, Mansfield Senior, and Toledo Libbey also appear capable of doing some damage along the trail. The mediocre seasons experienced by Lima Senior and Toledo Scott along with the overall play in a weak Toledo City League have been surprises in this less than memorable D1 season. St. John's started slowly with early losses to Ross, Lakewood St. Edward, and Libbey. The Titans were able to fight through injuries and inexperience to put together a nine-game winning streak until being beaten soundly by D2 Elida. Ross has lost only to Ottawa-Glandorf and Central Catholic while going undefeated in the GLL. Central started the season with nine straight victories including a win at Elida before getting tripped up by St. John's and Libbey. District semi-final games will again be played at the sectional sites with district final games scheduled for Elida (Willard and Liberty-Benton winners) and BG's Anderson Arena (Waite and Libbey winners). The district winners will advance to UT's Savage Hall with the BG winner playing the Grafton district winner (Lakewood St. Edward, Olmsted Falls, Elyria, and Lakewood are the top contenders) and the Elida winner playing the Berea district winner (probably St. Ignatius with North Royalton figuring).

SECTIONALS

Willard: Fremont Ross and Ashland are seeded. A top notch "super sectional" with four very solid teams. Ross starts five seniors and is led by outstanding guards Luke Lyle and Terrence Jones while methodical Ashland is led by inside players Greg Emmons and Mark Hess. Mansfield has been hurt by the loss of Kris Mathews to grades but the Tygers have an outstanding player in Antonio Graves. John Schlessman has returned to coach Sandusky along with long-time assistant TJ James. The Streaks were annual district qualifiers in Schlessman's previous tenure. Mansfield Senior over Madison and Sandusky over Tiffin Columbian in the first round. Ross and Senior have had some terrific battles at Willard over the years. Take Ross over Mansfield and Ashland over Sandusky in the finals.

Liberty-Benton: Perrysburg and Bowling Green are seeded. Perrysburg has lost only to St. John's, Sylvania Southview, and Bowling Green. BG has been a major surprise under first-year coach Von Graffin. The Bobcats are currently tied for first in the NLL after being picked for the basement. Findlay, led by an outstanding guard in Rob Young, has been strong down the stretch. Lima Senior has been a big-time disappointment as the Spartans are currently under .500. Neither Willie Tisdale nor Travis Walton have

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met expectations and both have missed games for disciplinary reasons. Findlay over Maumee and Lima Senior over Anthony Wayne in the first round. Look for a couple of "upsets" in the finals as Findlay edges BG and Lima Senior stops Perrysburg.

Toledo Libbey: Toledo St. John's and Sylvania Southview are seeded. The Libbey sectional appears to be the stronger of the two Toledo sectionals. Junior point guard Brian Roberts and sophomore forward B.J. Raymond lead St. John's. Returning starter Brandon Barabino has recently returned from an injury suffered during the pre-season. His play will be a key to the Titans' tournament success. Southview was the pre-season favorite in the NLL but started slowly while Whitmer began the season at 10-3 before injuries and suspensions took their toll. Scott has had a very uncharacteristic season. The Bulldogs lost four starters and several other key performers from their district runner-up team but few expected the Dogs to be 7-8 at this point in the season. A highly touted freshman, Chris Pollnitz, has been Scott's second leading scorer but he recently left the team. Speculation is that he will play at St. John's next year. Take Whitmer barely over Northview, Southview over Bowsher, St. John's over Start, and Scott over St. Francis in the first round. In the finals, take Southview over Whitmer and St. John's over Scott.

Toledo Waite: Toledo Central Catholic and Toledo Libbey are seeded. Central may have only two losses but the Irish have struggled recently against Rogers, Springfield, and Woodward. The Irish have a dominant big man in Chris Commons. Libbey is undefeated in the City League but only 2-5 outside the city. Woodward may be only 2-14 but the Polar Bears have a two-point loss at Central and were recently edged by state-ranked Thomas Worthington in Columbus. Rivals Clay and Waite will kick things off at Waite. Only in Toledo can you get a home game in the tournament. Clay recently defeated the Indians but had to go two overtimes to get it done. Take the Eagles in regulation this time. Central over Rogers and Springfield over Woodward in other first round games. Take Libbey over Clay and Central Catholic over Springfield in the finals.

DISTRICTS

The district semi-final games will be played at the sectional sites (Willard, Liberty-Benton, Libbey, Waite). In the district semi-final at Willard, look for Fremont Ross to run past Ashland. Lima Senior will avenge a late season loss at Findlay with a win over the Trojans at Liberty-Benton. At Libbey, St. John's will defeat Southview in a repeat of a 2002 district semi-final. Let's hope that the fans of these two schools don't embarrass themselves this time. Meanwhile, Libbey gets its

(Continued after Division I Brackets)

second win of the season over Central in a mild upset at Waite.

Elida: Fremont Ross can run with Lima Senior, but can the Spartans match the Little Giants' inside game? Fremont has too many weapons in a win over Lima Senior for the district championship.

BGSU: Libbey easily defeated St. John's back in December at Libbey. The Cowboys are 0-4 outside of Toledo this season. Libbey's woes away from Toledo continue as St. John's Jesuit defeats the Cowboys for the district championship.

DIVISION II

Ottawa-Glandorf and Willard once again are both being shown in the state rankings although neither has flirted with the top spot. O-G started slowly with losses to Olmsted Falls, Elida, and St. Marys before turning up their defense and intensity. The Titans should end the regular season on an eleven-game winning streak. Willard, led by Nick Dials, has lost to Akron \$V\$M, Sandusky, and Fremont Ross but could run the table in the NOL. Dials broke Larry Siegfried's forty-six year old NOL scoring record earlier in the season. Port Clinton has actually been the top state-ranked team from NW Ohio topping out at #6 before a loss to Clyde. However, it does not appear that PC can compete with the big dogs. Elida, Lima Shawnee, Fostoria, Celina, and Upper Sandusky are other potential contenders in D2 from NW Ohio. Shawnee is led by junior Jamar Butler who has averaged over thirty points a game for the season with a high of fifty-one against Coldwater. Butler has already made a verbal commitment to the University of Cincinnati. There are several site changes for 2003. The sectional at Perrysburg has replaced Sylvania Southview while Mansfield Madison will hold a sectional in place of Bucyrus. Ashland University will return as a district location after a one-year stay at Ontario. The district winners will advance to UT's Savage Hall to face each other in a regional semi-final. The Barberton (Akron \$V\$M) and Stow (really doesn't matter) winners are currently scheduled to play in the other regional semi-final at UT.

SECTIONALS

Lima Senior: Elida and Ottawa-Glandorf are seeded. This will be an excellent and very competitive sectional with all eight teams coming from the WBL. Elida currently leads the league and has big wins over Delphos St. John's, Ottawa-Glandorf, and Toledo St. John's. Led by Ryan Lee and Drew Adams, the Bulldogs will shoot the three. Elida appeared to gel when freshman Dustin Mathias was inserted into the starting lineup. A key for O-G is getting scoring from someone other than the Pollitz twins. The juniors are both scoring over twenty a game. Titans' coach Dave Sweet won his 400th game against Celina in January. Shawnee has had trouble getting

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someone other than Butler to step up on a consistent basis. Celina drops down from D1 this year. There have been times during the season when the Bulldogs looked like the team to beat in the WBL. St Marys led the league early in the season after winning at O-G, but the 'Riders have gone into a major slump. O-G over Van Wert, Celina over Bath, Shawnee over Wapak, and Elida over St Marys in the first round. O-G over Celina and Elida over Shawnee in the finals. That will be twice in two weeks that Shawnee and Elida have met. With so many league rivals playing, do not be surprised if there are some upsets at Lima.

Perrysburg: Fostoria and Eastwood are seeded. Eight teams from seven leagues at Perrysburg with Fostoria the class of the field. The Redmen are led by sophomore Jacob Diebler and have gotten help from big man Ryan Pessell, a transfer from Arcadia. Fostoria moved to the NOL this season after many years in the GLL. The Redmen are currently tied for second in the NOL behind Willard. The rest of this sectional can be described either as mediocre or balanced. Eastwood is currently tied for the SLL lead. The Eagles have been hurt by the loss of point guard D. J. Michel whose career ended after re-aggravating a knee injury. Bryan, the district runner-up in 2002, started slowly after returning only Chris Carpenter. The Bears have been playing much better lately. Napoleon has struggled upon their return to the GLL while Defiance has been overmatched in the WBL. Take Napoleon over Rossford, Fostoria over Bryan, Eastwood over Lake, and Defiance over Paulding in the first round. Fostoria crashed and burned in last year's sectional final against Napoleon. Fostoria appears to have a little better chemistry as this season closes down. Take Fostoria over Napoleon in one final and Defiance to upset Eastwood in the other final.



Sandusky: Port Clinton and Clyde are seeded. Port Clinton hasn't been pretty but they win. The Redskins have a huge front line in 7' Drew Walker, 6'8" Matt Engler, and 6'5" Andrew Lemmon but PC has not shot the ball well from the perimeter. A veteran Clyde team has had an excellent season under new coach Steve Keller, Jr., the son of the former Oak Harbor coach. Norwalk is dominated by several talented sophomores, but the Truckers have been inconsistent. Genoa is another team with a lot of size and the Comets have become a factor in the SLL race. Bellevue is having their worst year in many seasons. The Redmen made it to the regional in 2002 and played O-G even until finally losing by six. Take Port Clinton over Genoa, Norwalk over Perkins, Clyde over Bellevue and Oak Harbor over Vermilion in the first round. Norwalk upset PC in last year's sectional final. At the draw,

(Continued after Division II Brackets)

Norwalk immediately jumped on to the same bracket as the Redskins. Expect the same result as a year ago as the Truckers are just a bit too quick for Port Clinton. Take Clyde over Oak Harbor in the other final

Madison: Willard and Upper Sandusky are seeded. Excellent sectional with Willard the class of the field. Upper, Ontario, and Bucyrus all thought they were deserving of the second seed. All three ended up on the lower bracket so they can settle the argument on the court. Nick Dials has carried Willard again. The Flashes aren't big and they don't have a consistent #2 scorer. Dials should go over 2000 career points and 500 career assists on February 14 against Galion to become only the second player in state history to reach that combination. Willard also has an excellent freshman starting in point guard Jimmy Langhurst. Upper took Willard to two overtimes at Willard and boasts two wins over Fostoria. The Rams have an outstanding sophomore in Greg Micheli. Bucyrus was an original member of the NOL before going to the NCC this season. Before this year, the Redmen only had one winning season since 1970 and have never won a sectional title. Not much was expected from Ontario this year but the Warriors have been a surprise. This is their first year in D2. Lexington has played consistently late in the season. Take Willard over Lex, Shelby over Galion, Upper over Ontario, and Bucyrus over Kenton and Benny Mauk in the first round. Take Willard big over Shelby and Upper over Bucyrus in the finals. This sectional should be similar to the Lima Senior sectional. There is a good chance that there will be a number of upsets.

DISTRICTS

BGSU: This district is normally dominated by the WBL. You would probably have to go back to 1994 and Wauseon when someone other than a WBL school won this district. Take Ottawa-Glandorf big over Defiance in one semi-final. Elida and Fostoria gives us a Chris Adams/Keith Diebler coaching matchup that should really get the fans going. Take Elida over Fostoria. Elida already has a win over O-G and the Bulldogs have been very impressive late in the season. However, the Swami thinks that Elida may be a bit too dependent on the perimeter shot and O-G has such tournament tradition. Take Ottawa-Glandorf over Elida.

Ashland University: Willard, Norwalk, and Upper Sandusky were all here a year ago although Bellevue won the 2002 district championship. Take Upper over Norwalk and Willard over Clyde in semi-final games. Willard will attempt to knock off Upper Sandusky for the third time this season. This one will be close but no double overtime this time. Take Willard over Upper for the district crown.

DIVISION III

A year ago we commented about the lack of outstanding teams in D3 in NW Ohio. Then a NW Ohio team, Clear Fork, went out and won the state championship. 2003

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looks to be more of the same with only St. Henry, Patrick Henry, and New London getting any recognition in the most recent state poll. That could all change quickly with PH having dropped back-to-back games to Liberty Center and Holgate, and New London losing their first game of the season to Plymouth. St. Henry and Patrick Henry had been ranked #2 and #3 respectively in the initial state poll until both went into slumps. There are a number of other very competitive D3 teams in NW Ohio including Archbold, Coldwater, Lima Central Catholic, Liberty Center, Wynford, and Huron. Throw in potential surprise teams like Margaretta, Delphos Jefferson, and Wauseon along with traditional powers Liberty-Benton and Wayne Trace and D3 is more unpredictable than ever. There are a couple of changes in location with Findlay replacing Old Fort as a sectional site and Ontario replacing Ashland University as a district site. The three NW Ohio district winners will advance to BG's Anderson Arena where they will be joined by the Elyria district winner (Elyria Catholic is again a heavy favorite).

SECTIONALS

Elida: St. Henry and Coldwater are seeded. Four excellent teams here. You can normally expect a surprise or two at this sectional. Last year fans were looking forward to a St. Henry/LCC sectional final. Instead an Allen East team that was under .500 had no problems with either the Redskins or the 'Birds to take a sectional championship. St. Henry and Coldwater are currently chasing Delphos St. John's for the MAC title. Todd Boeckman, an OSU football recruit (where he'll be gray-shirted whatever that means), leads St. Henry. Coldwater features 6'11" Matt Lefeld who is headed to BGSU to play basketball. Lima Central Catholic coach Bob Seggerson recently won his 400th career game with a win over Anna. Junior Dustin Looser has already scored over 1,000 career points for Delphos Jefferson and has a good chance to become the Wildcats' career scoring leader. Spencerville had a six-game winning streak earlier in the season. Delphos Jeff big over Parkway and LCC over Spencerville in the first round. Two outstanding championship games. Take St. Henry over Delphos Jefferson in the first Friday night game. Coldwater and LCC is too close to call. Go with Coldwater over the T-Birds.

Defiance: Archbold and Tinora are seeded. Archbold has lost only to O-G, PH, and Continental. Soph Dan Borchardt (son of former UT player Bob Borchardt) and D. J. Selgo (son of former BGSU player Dick Selgo) lead the Blue Streaks. Tinora is currently tied with Hicksville and Holgate for the Green Meadows lead. The Rams gave Holgate their only GMC loss. Biggest surprise at Defiance is that traditional power

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Wayne Trace is under .500. Take the Raiders over Montpelier in the only first round game. In the finals, look for Wayne Trace to "upset" Tinora and Archbold to win big over Fairview.

Sylvania Northview: Liberty Center and Wauseon are seeded. Not a good place to watch a game and Northview is ill suited to handle large crowds. Too bad they didn't move this site to Southview. Liberty Center and Wauseon are chasing Archbold for the NWOAL crown. LC, with only one senior and one junior on the roster, has an outstanding shooter in Greg Badenhop. Wauseon has good overall size. Evergreen has been extremely inconsistent and appears to be fading at the finish. The Vikings handled Liberty easily back in January. Delta over Swanton in the first round. Take Wauseon over Delta and Liberty Center over Evergreen in the finals.

Findlay: Patrick Henry and Liberty-Benton are seeded. PH slumped prior to the tournament last year before winning the district and playing Elyria Catholic tough in the regional. Zach Wensink leads PH in scoring. L-B is tied with D4's Arlington, Leipsic, and Van Buren for the BVC lead after getting surprised at Leipsic. Otsego appeared to be a contender in the SLL before losing four of their last five. The Knights can shoot the three but are undisciplined. Take Bluffton over Otsego in a mild upset in the first round. In the finals, go with Liberty-Benton over Bluffton and PH over Lakota.

Norwalk: Huron and Margaretta are seeded. Veteran Dino Caporini has returned to Huron and the Tigers have been competitive in every game losing only to Port Clinton twice, Sandusky, and Clyde. A strong defensive club, methodical Huron is led on the floor by Michael Eiron. In a repeat of last year, Margaretta started slowly following the football playoffs. Woodmore is currently tied with Eastwood for the SLL lead. The Wildcats have an excellent soph in Tyler Rosenberger. Huron, Margaretta, and Woodmore play similar styles. Junior Shawn Shriver, the District 6 player of the year, leads Western Reserve. Take WR over Milan Edison in the only first round game. In the finals, take Huron over Western Reserve and Margaretta over Woodmore.

Galion: Wynford and New London are seeded. Wynford along with Bucyrus is chasing Ontario for the NCC crown. New London was undefeated and unloved before being upset at home by league rival Plymouth on February 8. The Wildcats lead the Firelands Conference. Clear Fork returned no experienced players from their state championship team. The Colts graduated their top eight players and their coach, Kevin Logsdon, left for Hilliard Davidson. CF started slowly but recently got above .500. In the only opening game, take Clear Fork over Ashland Crestview. In the finals, take Wynford over Clear Fork and New London over Colonel Crawford.

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DISTRICTS

Napoleon: Wayne Trace, Coldwater, and Archbold all advanced to the not so Grand Canyon in 2002 with Wayne Trace winning the district. St. Henry will join those three this year. Take Archbold in a mild upset of St. Henry in one semi-final with Coldwater over Wayne Trace in the other semi-final. In the final, Coldwater advances to BG with a win over Archbold.

Toledo Waite: What would March and tournament basketball be without an evening at the Waite Field House. Three teams from the NWOAL are joined by Liberty-Benton. Take Wauseon over Patrick Henry and Liberty Center over Liberty-Benton in semi-final games. In the final, Wauseon avenges a January loss at Liberty with a win over the Tigers.

Ontario: This is an outstanding facility at Ontario. In the semi-finals, take Huron over New London and Margaretta over Wynford. This could be the final game for veteran Wynford coach Rob Sheldon. The final is a battle of SBC teams in Huron and Margaretta. Margaretta avenges two regular season losses to the Tigers with a win over Huron and the school's first district championship.

DIVISION IV

Ever since we started printing Trail Trash in 1994, we have been saying that the best D4 basketball in the state is played in NW Ohio. 2002 proved us correct once again with Delphos St. John's taking home the state crown. 2003 is no exception with top-ranked and undefeated Tiffin Calvert and Marion Local dominating the rankings. The Senecas replaced ML in the top spot after Marion lost to Coldwater. The Flyers also recently lost to St. Henry. DSJ and Holgate have been fixtures in the top ten while Minster, Convoy Crestview, Danbury Lakeside, Mansfield St. Pete, and Ottoville have also received votes. Throw in Lima Perry, Miller City, Continental, Hicksville, and Ayersville, and D4 is as strong as ever. The Findlay sectional has moved to Fostoria and the Fostoria district has moved to Findlay for the only site changes. District winners from Elida, Liberty-Benton, Napoleon, and Findlay will advance to the regional at BG's Anderson Arena. The Wapakoneta district winner advances to the Miami University regional while the Galion district winner advances to the Columbus regional. Three teams might be a long shot, but NW Ohio has a legitimate chance at advancing two teams to the 2003 state tournament.



SECTIONALS

Coldwater: Marion Local and Minster are seeded. Five teams from the MAC are featured here. Marion Local is currently undefeated in D4 with their only losses to D3's Coldwater and St. Henry. Minster has solid wins over St. Henry and Russia. The Wildcats are led by the Sommer twins. Dustin Sommer recently became Minster's all-time leading score. New Knoxville has a big win versus St. Henry but otherwise has not been a factor in the MAC race. Waynesfield-Goshen has had a solid season but doesn't face the same level of competition as the MAC schools. Take New Knoxville over New Bremen and Fort Recovery over W-G in the opening games. Take Minster over New Knoxville and Marion Local over Fort Recovery in the finals.

Waynesfield-Goshen: Lima Perry and Upper Scioto Valley are seeded. This sectional has gotten better but has not fared well in the district. Perry has had an outstanding season losing only to Crestview, Ottoville, and Delphos Jefferson. The Commodores are led on the floor by guard Joel Kirschner. USV has been on a roll of late and is battling Perry and Delphos Jeff for second in the NWC. Allen East won a sectional championship in D3 in 2002. Take Hardin Northern over Ridgemont and Allen East over Ada in first round games. Take Upper Scioto Valley over HN and Perry over Allen East in the finals.

Van Wert: Delphos St. John's and Convoy Crestview are seeded. Tons of tradition here. DSJ is the defending D4 state champ after a runner-up finish in 2001. The Blue Jays return a great point guard in state tourney MVP Nate Klaus along with two other starters. Add in an outstanding three-point shooter in sophomore Chad Reynolds and this year's team may be better yet. The Jays hit seventeen 3's against Lincolnview and are averaging right around ten a game. Crestview was rolling along with only a loss to Elida before panic set in with back-to-back losses to DSJ and Wayne Trace. The Knights have a history of fading late in the season and in the tourney. Big man Kory Lichtensteiger leads Crestview. Ottoville appears to be following the same script as Crestview. Ottoville recently lost back-to-back home games to Fort Jennings and Continental when it appeared the Big Green had a chance to win the PCL. Ottoville has a good big man in Brent Schnipke. Kalida's Dick Kortokrax is the state's all-time winningest coach. After slow starts, both 2000 D4 state champ Fort Jennings and 1997 D4 state champ Lincolnview have been playing well. Take Ottoville over Fort Jennings and Kalida over Lincolnview in close first round games. In the finals, take Delphos St. John's over Ottoville and Convoy Crestview over Kalida. With the tradition in this sectional, do not rule out upsets.

Lima Bath: Arlington and Cory-Rawson are seeded. Not to be confused with the sectional at Van Wert. Arlington was the only team above .500 at the time of the draw. The Red Devils are in a position to at least take home a share

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of the BVC championship. Pandora-Gilboa was a district runner-up a year ago but had heavy graduation losses. Take Lima Temple Christian over P-G and Riverdale over Columbus Grove in opening games. Take Arlington over Temple Christian and Riverdale in a mild upset over Cory-Rawson in the finals.

Ottawa-Glandorf: Continental and Miller City are seeded. Continental is undefeated in the PCL with a home game against Kalida coming up. The Pirates won a district championship in 2002 and are led by Casey Spitale and Ryan Winkle. Continental has lost to Hicksville, Crestview, Perry, and Liberty Center with wins over Archbold and Miller City. Miller City has also had a solid season with an impressive win over PH. Van Buren and Leipsic are still in contention to win the BVC. VB has an excellent player in Tristan Tagliapietra. Take Leipsic over North Baltimore and Van Buren over McComb in first round games. Take Miller City over Leipsic and Continental over Van Buren in the finals.

Springfield: Ottawa Hills and Northwood are seeded. The TAAC(y) sectional. Ottawa Hills appears to be the class of the field. The Green Bears recently ended Danbury's fourteen-game winning streak. Brad Morrison, a frequent and annoying contributor to JJ Huddle, coaches Northwood. Toledo Christian is much improved with the return of Andrew Boggs from illness while Gibsonburg has only a win over Otsego. Monclova Christian is a first-year OHSAA member. Take Cardinal Stritch over Monclova Christian and Toledo Christian over Gibsonburg in first round games. Take Ottawa Hills over Stritch and Toledo Christian over Northwood in the finals.

Bryan: Hicksville and Stryker are seeded. Hicksville has quietly had a great season. The Aces can take home a share of the GMC championship with a win at Ayersville. Hicksville's lone GMC loss was at Holgate. Edon and Stryker have been in a battle for second behind Pettisville in the BBC. Edon had a legitimate claim to the second seed but fell into Hicksville's bracket at the draw. Take Edgerton over North Central and Edon over Antwerp in opening games. Take Stryker over Edgerton and Hicksville over Edon in the finals.

Wauseon: Holgate and Ayersville are seeded. Holgate was the regional runner-up in 2002. The Tigers, currently tied for the lead in the GMC, are led in scoring by Charlie Kelly. Ayersville has been a contender in the GMC while Pettisville is the BBC champ. Pettisville fell into Holgate's bracket at the draw. Take Pettisville over Hilltop and Maumee Valley

(Continued after Division IV Brackets)

over Fayette in opening games. Take Holgate over Pettisville and Ayersville over MVCDS in the finals.

Fostoria: Elmwood and Hopewell-Loudon are seeded. Elmwood spent several weeks as the leader in the SLL before falling behind Eastwood and Woodmore. Elmwood's Travis Rothenbuhler leads the SLL in scoring. This is the Royals' first year as a D4 school. Take Carey over Vanlue and Fostoria St. Wendelin over Vanlue in first round games. Take Elmwood over Carey and St. Wendelin over Hopewell-Loudon in the finals.

Hopewell-Loudon: Tiffin Calvert and Fremont St. Joseph are seeded. Calvert is the state's top-ranked D4 team. The Senecas have impressive wins over Danbury, Liberty-Benton, Wooster Triway, Clyde, and Mansfield St. Peter. The Senecas are senior dominated and led by Phillip Borer. St. Joe has an outstanding shooter in David Babione. Old Fort was a regional qualifier in 2002 and gave Delphos St. John's their toughest tournament test. Take Mohawk in an upset over Old Fort and New Riegel over Bettsville in opening games. Take Calvert over Mohawk and Fremont St. Joe over New Riegel in the finals.

Port Clinton: Danbury and Norwalk St. Paul are seeded. Danbury fans shed few tears when Brian Vorst took his coaching act to Wapak. Vorst had success with the Lakers but the rumor around the peninsula was that Keith Diebler and son Jacob were headed to Marblehead. Instead, the Dieblers stayed in Fotown and Danbury hired a guy named Joe Miller. The former assistant at Oak Harbor has led the Lakers to an outstanding season losing only to Calvert and Ottawa Hills. Danbury is led by a talented sophomore point guard in Jake Fanning. Sandusky St. Mary was a regional qualifier in 2002 but had heavy graduation losses. The Panthers are junior-laden and a year away. Norwalk St. Paul has pushed New London in the Firelands Conference. Take Sandusky St. Mary over Monroeville and South Central over Seneca East in opening games. Take Danbury over Sandusky St. Mary and St. Paul over South Central in the finals.

Lexington: Mansfield St. Peter and Buckeye Central are seeded. Mansfield St. Peter has a do-everything player in junior Marcus Butler. Buckeye Central was the state's top-ranked D4 school for a part of the 2002 season. The Bucks are a mid-level NCC team in 2003. Plymouth ended New London's undefeated season on February 7. After going more than a year without a win, Crestline is on a two-game winning streak. Take Lucas over Crestline and Plymouth over Mansfield Christian in opening games. Take Buckeye Central over Lucas and Mansfield St. Peter over Plymouth in the finals.

DISTRICTS

Wapakoneta: Minster, Marion Local, Lima Perry, and Upper Scioto Valley are repeat qualifiers from 2002. Take Perry over Minster in a mild upset and Marion Local over

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USV in semi-final games. Take Marion Local over Lima Perry in the championship game.

Elida: Take Delphos St. John's big over Riverdale and Convoy Crestview over Arlington in semi-final games. Take DSJ big over Crestview in the finals.

Liberty-Benton: Take Miller City big over Toledo Christian and Continental over Ottawa Hills in semi-final games. Continental has a home win over Miller City in the regular season. Take Miller City over Continental in two overtimes for the district championship.

Napoleon: Ayersville, Hicksville, and Holgate were district qualifiers in 2002. Take Ayersville over Stryker and Hicksville over Holgate in the semi-final games. Take Hicksville over Ayersville for the district title.

Findlay: MAL members Fremont St. Joseph, Tiffin Calvert, and Fostoria St. Wendelin join Elmwood for the district at Findlay. Take St. Joe over Elmwood and Calvert over St. Wendelin. Take Calvert over St. Joe in the finals.

Galion: Take Mansfield St. Peter over Danbury Lakeside in what amounts to the championship game in one semi-final. Take Norwalk St. Paul over Buckeye Central in the other semi-final. Take Mansfield St. Peter over Norwalk St. Paul for the district crown.

Trail Trash would not be possible without information provided by the Toledo Blade, Findlay Courier, Mansfield News Journal, Sandusky Register, and Lima News.

See you on the trail. All records and rankings are as of February 10, 2003. The facts and opinions expressed in Trail Trash are not necessarily factual or those of the publisher. Rock on.

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Predictions: The Swami