

Trail Trash

for the 2002 OHSAA Boys High School
Basketball Tournament

Published exclusively by Dave Spengler

Featuring Commentary & Predictions by ...

The Swami



Just like the economy, the Swami's numbers for the first edition of the 2002 Trail Trash took another downturn as he failed to reach the one hundred win barrier. His 99-49 (67%) win/loss record was two games worse than his not-so-stellar 2001 performance. The Swami once again picked only six district champions. With three projected district winners (Lima Central Catholic, Convoy Crestview, and Perrysburg) going into the dumper in their first tournament games, it was a disappointing performance. We can only hope that the Swami can rebound just like he did in the second edition for 2001.

The poor results did not stop the Swami from seeing some outstanding contests including Bryan/Eastwood (3 ot's), Elyria Catholic/Keystone, Continental/Pandora-Gilboa (4 ot's), Mansfield Senior/Lima Senior, and Toledo Scott/Toledo St. John's. We can only hope that we will see several comparable games at the regional and state levels.

One thing that has bothered the Swami during the past week has been a couple of situations where there has been a total lack of sportsmanship. One incident involved a team's fans during a district semi-final while the other situation involved a

player in a district final. The Ohio High School Athletic Association has preached sportsmanship for a number of years. It appears that their efforts have fallen on deaf ears. Although the actions of these students can not be condoned, we must keep in mind that they are kids. What is sad is when coaches and officials refuse to hold them accountable and when coaches and adult spectators exhibit behaviors no better than the students. This commentary is not meant to be critical of all participants. One only had to watch the Bryan/Eastwood and Continental/Pandora-Gilboa games to see teams laying it on the line and acting with class and dignity.

So much for the Swami's Springer moment. The Swami would like to thank all the people who have taken the time to look at Trail Trash and to the confused and troubled person who was actually complimentary. One of these days we will get this thing right and, hopefully, into the hands of a few more people.

The ouija board is somewhere between here and Oz after Saturday's storm. Time to get down to business. It's Swami time.

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Six of the fourteen teams ranked in the final Associated Press poll have reached the regional led by top ranked and undefeated Toledo St. John's Jesuit. Six teams (defending state champ Cleveland St. Ignatius, state qualifier Columbus Brookhaven, Dublin Coffman, Springfield South, Vandalia Butler, Mentor) will make a return trip to the regional in '02.

REGIONAL

The regional originally scheduled for the University of Toledo will be split between Toledo and Cleveland's Gund Arena for travel reasons. The semi-final between Iggy and Lakewood St. Edward will be played at the Gund while St. John's and Mansfield Senior will battle at UT. The final will be played as originally scheduled at Toledo.

University of Toledo/Gund Arena: #1 St. John's leads the way. What a great doubleheader at Gund Arena as bitter rivals St. Ignatius and St. Edward meet in the opener followed by the D2 clash between #1 Akron St. Vincent-St. Mary and #2 Warrensville Heights. Iggy and Ed's split their regular season games. Take Ignatius although it will be extremely close. St. John's could still have a hangover from their district final win over #11 Toledo Scott. Mansfield Senior is undersized but extremely quick while St. John's is very balanced. Look for St. John's to eliminate the Tygers at Toledo. The Johnnies already have defeated both St. Ignatius and St. Edward in Toledo with Iggy taking the Titans down to the wire back in early February. Toledo St. John's wins the regional with a win over Cleveland St. Ignatius.

Columbus Fairgrounds: #3 Columbus Brookhaven and #8 Dublin Coffman are ranked at the barn. Brookhaven eliminated #10 Zanesville in a district final while Pickerington eliminated #7 Columbus Independence at the district. After their dismal performance at last year's state tournament, Brookhaven has some unfinished business to take care of. The Bearcats defeat Pickerington. Coffman is led by one of the better players in the state in Chris Quinn. Unranked Centerville has quietly put together a 22-2 season. This will be the Elks' first trip to the barn. Got to give the advantage to Coffman. Brookhaven was the state's top-ranked team until losing to Columbus Mifflin. The Haven will barely get past Coffman to advance to the state tournament.

Xavier University: #2 Cincinnati Winton Woods and #13 Springfield South head the field at the Cintas Center. Winton Woods destroyed #14 Lebanon and unranked Vandalia Butler eliminated #5 Hamilton in district final games. Hard to believe but not a single Greater Catholic League (Elder, Moeller, St. Xavier, LaSalle) made it to the regional in D1. Winton Woods has breezed through the tournament so far. The Woods will have a little more trouble but will eliminate Dayton Colonel White. Neither South nor Butler has been seriously pushed in the tournament. The Swami likes

a big Vandalia team over Springfield South in a minor upset. Robert Hite leads the way in the regional final as Winton Woods eliminates Vandalia Butler.

University of Akron: #12 Shaker Heights is the only ranked team at the JAR. This is the weakest D1 regional but will be extremely competitive despite some of the disparity in records. Hard to believe but it has been twenty-six years since Barberton with the Bodnar twins and Carter Scott won the state championship. Mentor entered the tourney with a losing record but breezed through the sectional and district. Barberton's three tournament wins have been by a total of five points. This one will be close so take the Magics. Shaker won the always wild Cleveland South district. Shaker Heights edges past perennial power Canton McKinley. The Pups have not advanced to the state since 1998. In the final, Barberton advances to the state tournament with a win over Shaker Heights.

STATE

The final four consists of Toledo St. John's Jesuit, Columbus Brookhaven, Cincinnati Winton Woods, and Barberton. St. John's was the state runner-up in 1993 and 1996 while Brookhaven made their initial state appearance last year. Barberton has two runner-up finishes in addition to their 1976 "AAA" championship while Winton Woods will be making their first appearance. D1 will close out the tournament on Saturday night. In Friday night action, Brookhaven eliminates Toledo St. John's. BGSU recruits Ronald Lewis and Raheem Moss lead the Bearcats. In the other semi, Winton Woods easily defeats Barberton. In the final, the state crown returns to Cincinnati after a one-year absence as Winton Woods edges Columbus Brookhaven.

DIVISION II

Eight of the fifteen teams ranked in the final Associated Press poll will play in the regional. Six teams (defending state



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champion Kettering Alter, state runner-up Warrensville Heights, Dover, Cincinnati Roger Bacon, Canton South, Ottawa-Glandorf) return to D2 regional play in 2002 while Akron St. Vincent-St. Marys was the D3 state champ. Do not assume that this will be a cakewalk for St. Vincent-St. Mary. Three teams (Warrensville Heights, Ottawa-Glandorf, Cincinnati Roger Bacon) have a legitimate chance at defeating the Irish. D2 is loaded for 2002.

REGIONAL

The regional originally scheduled for Bowling Green has been changed. BG will host the semi-final between Bellevue and Ottawa-Glandorf while #1 SVSM and #2 Warrensville Heights will meet in the other semi-final as the second game of a doubleheader at Cleveland's Gund Arena. The final will be played at the University of Toledo.

Ohio University: #3 Washington Court House and #8 Dover top the field at the Convo. WCH eliminated #13 Gallia Academy in a district final. Undefeated Washington Court House is led by an outstanding guard in Dustin Pfeiffer. Washington defeats McConnellsville Morgan. Teams from the Columbus City League generally have good luck at the Convo. 2002 will be no exception as Beechcroft eliminates the Dover Tornados. In the championship game, Washington Court House advances to the final four with a narrow win over Columbus Beechcroft.

Wright State: #6 Cincinnati Roger Bacon is the only ranked team at the Nutter Center. This is an all-Catholic school regional. Alter suffered heavy graduation losses from their state championship team, but the Knights have breezed through the tournament. Badin also has had a tough regular season before easing through the tourney. Go with Kettering Alter in a close game. Bacon has destroyed all four tournament opponents to date. Roger Bacon appears to be too strong for Columbus Watterson in the other semi-final. A new D2 state champion is guaranteed as Cincinnati Roger Bacon advances with a win over Kettering Alter.

Canton Civic Center: #5 Canton South and #9 Poland Seminary lead the way at Canton. Akron East makes their first regional appearance in at least forty years. The Orientals' (we refuse to touch that one) record is deceiving as four victories were forfeited for using an ineligible player. University School has an outstanding player in Logan White who is headed to the University of Dayton. Take the Preppers over the Orientals. Canton South eliminated #10 Minerva while Poland Seminary eliminated #12 Niles McKinley in district final games. This is a great matchup but go with Poland Seminary. In the regional final, Poland South defeats Hunting Valley University School to advance to Columbus.

BGSU/Gund Arena/University of Toledo: #1 Akron St. Vincent-St. Mary, #2 Warrensville Heights, and #4 Ottawa-Glandorf are joined by Bellevue in a great regional. OG eliminated #11 Bryan, Bellevue eliminated #14 Willard, and SVSM eliminated #7 Akron Central-Hower in district finals. St. Vincent-St. Mary is undefeated against teams from Ohio

although the Irish struggled against Central-Hower. Warrensville Heights was the D2 state champ in 2000 and runner-up in 2001. The Tigers edged Orange and the Chones triplets in their district final. No team has benefited more from transfers over the past several years than Warrensville Heights. Rian Powell (formerly of Lakewood St. Edward and Cleveland Benedictine) has followed in the footsteps of Juby Johnson, Brian Swift and others in switching to Warrensville during their high school careers. Powell has teamed with Johnson's brother Meche to compose a formidable duo. The Swami doubts that Warrensville has the discipline or defense to stop St. Vincent-St. Mary. Take the Irish in the battle at the Gund. Ottawa had better not get caught looking ahead. Bellevue should match up fairly well with the Titans although the Redmen do not have the Titans' quickness. Go with Ottawa-Glandorf in the semi at BG. SVSM will need to understand that OG is more of a threat than Warrensville. Ottawa has only had three difficult games all season (Shawnee twice and Van Wert). In the Shawnee game, quickness and the outstanding play of Jamar Butler gave the Titans fits. They will see that and more against SVSM. Assuming the Irish take OG seriously and are able to control point guard Todd Schumaker, SVSM advances by edging Ottawa-Glandorf in the final at Toledo. These games are a scalper's dream.

STATE

Washington Court House, Cincinnati Roger Bacon, Poland Seminary, and Akron St. Vincent-St. Mary make up the final four. SVSM is the two-time defending state champ in D3. The Irish also won the 1984 "AA" championship. Roger Bacon won the 1982 "AAA" championship. Poland's last appearance was in 1972 and Washington Court House's in 1923. D2 kicks off the Eightieth Boys State Basketball Tournament on Thursday. Games #2 and #9 will be the tournament's toughest tickets. Roger Bacon ends Washington's undefeated season in the Thursday morning game. Akron SVSM eliminates Poland Seminary in the Thursday afternoon game. In the final, Akron St. Vincent-St. Mary wins a third consecutive state championship as the Irish edge Cincinnati Roger Bacon. An entire Trail Trash with no mention of LeBron James\$\$\$\$\$.

DIVISION III

Seven of the thirteen teams ranked in the final Associated Press poll have advanced to the regional. #1 Waynesville was destroyed by Cincinnati Madeira in a district semi-final. There will be a new state champ in D3 in '02 with Akron St. Vincent-St. Mary advancing to D2. Only two teams (state runner-up Miami East and state qualifier Wayne Trace) return to the regional for 2002.

REGIONAL

Bowling Green State University: #6 Elyria Catholic is the only ranked team at Bowling Green. No D3 team from NW Ohio was state-ranked in the final AP poll. Unranked Clear Fork quietly put together an 18-2 record during the regular season. The Colts tied Canton regional qualifier Loudonville for the Mohican Area Conference championship. Wayne Trace suffered heavy graduation losses from their 2002 state qualifier that was edged by SVSM. Take Clear Fork over Wayne Trace. Elyria Catholic battled #4 Bedford Chanel and #5 Cleveland Central Catholic for the North Coast Conference crown. Bob Walsh coaches the Panthers. He led Lorain Clearview to the 1974 "A" state championship and Oberlin to

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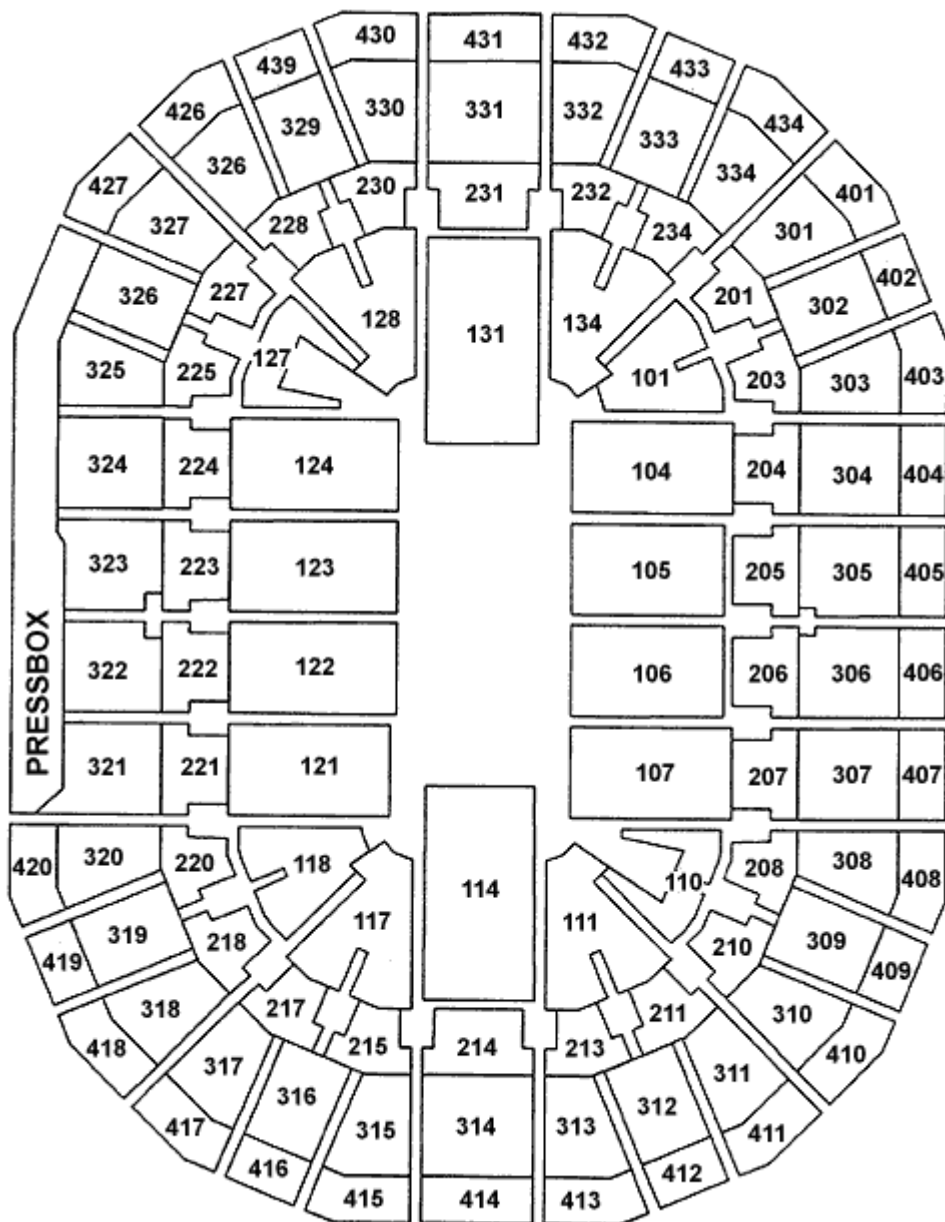
the 1986 "AA" state crown. 1997 D3 Patrick Henry trailed league rival Liberty Center by eleven late in their district final. The Patriots won in overtime. EC eliminates PH. In the final, Clear Fork pulls a minor upset by eliminating Elyria Catholic.

Canton Fieldhouse: #5 Cleveland Central Catholic is the only ranked team at Canton. Cleveland Central Catholic eliminated #4 Bedford Chanel in a district final. This is the regional that would normally be dominated by SVSM. Had the Irish remained in D3, this year would be no exception. Cleveland Central Catholic has an outstanding player in Michael Melton (headed to the University of Akron). The Ironmen defeat Louisville Aquinas in a semi-final. Kinsman Badger has rarely been heard from since the early eighties when Dave and Dale Blaney led them. Badger and Loudonville are two more teams that put together excellent seasons but were not state-ranked. Go with Loudonville in overtime. Cleveland Central Catholic advances to the state tournament with a win over Loudonville.

Ohio University: #2 Wheelersburg, #12 Eastern Brown, and #13 Richmond Dale Southeastern are joined by unranked 23-1 Sugarcreek Garaway at the Convo. An outstanding regional. The Burg has an excellent player in Andrew Burleson. Eastern Brown destroyed Portsmouth in a district final while the Burg edged Chesapeake. Take Wheelersburg over Sardinia Eastern Brown. Southeastern eliminated Seaman North Adams in their district final with Garaway holding on against Belmont Union Local. The Swami likes Southeastern over Sugarcreek Garaway. Wheelersburg advances to Columbus with a win over Richmond Dale Southeastern.

University of Dayton: #9 Miami East and #11 Columbus Ready are ranked teams at UD. Columbus Hartley eliminated #3 Marion Pleasant in a district semi-final. Miami East had heavy graduation losses from a team that was narrowly defeated by SVSM in the 2001 D3 state final. The Miami East/Ready semi-final game is too close to call. Columbus Ready eliminates Casstown Miami East. The Swami also looks for Reading to advance to the regional final with a win over Columbus Bishop Hartley. In the regional final, Reading advances to Columbus with a narrow win over Columbus Ready.

Clear Fork, Cleveland Central Catholic, Wheelersburg, and Reading make up the final four. This will be the first state tournament for three of these teams with only Wheelersburg qualifying in the past. This will be the fifth trip to the state tournament for the Burg. They were the D3 runner-up in 1995 and the "AA" runner-up in 1984. Kind of like the old days in D3. Not a lot of sizzle here although the Wheelersburg will bring some fans. In the first Thursday evening game, Cleveland CC is too quick for Clear Fork. In the late game, the Burg defeats Reading. Sanity returns to the Value City Arena for the championship game as fans climb over scalpers still exhausted from game #9. In that championship game, the Wheelersburg Pirates take their first



From osubuckeyes.com

Seating Chart for the Value City Arena in the Jerome Shottenstein Center. For those of you that will be attending the state championships in Columbus next week, we have included a seating chart to help you in locating your seats.

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state championship with a win over Cleveland Central Catholic.

DIVISION IV

Eight of the fifteen teams ranked in the final Associated Press poll are playing in the regional. Four teams (state runner-up Delphos St. John's, state qualifier Strasburg-Franklin, Old Fort, and Holgate) return to regional play for 2002. There will be a new state champion as defending champ Tipp City Bethel was eliminated by top ranked South Charleston Southeastern in a district semi-final game.

REGIONAL

Miami University: #1 South Charleston Southeastern and #8 Russia head up the regional at Oxford. Minster eliminated #7 Upper Scioto Valley and Southeastern eliminated #10 and defending state champ Tipp City Bethel in district semi-final games. As usual, this is a very solid regional. Southeastern held the top spot in the Associated Press poll for the last five weeks of the season. Southeastern advanced to the regional with an overtime win over New Miami. Southeastern edges past Minster in one semi-final game. Russia defeats defensive-minded Cedarville in the other semi-final. South Charleston Southeastern advances to the state tournament with a win over Russia in the regional final.

Columbus Fairgrounds: #2 Centerburg and #11 Sandusky St. Mary Central Catholic are ranked teams playing at the barn. Another excellent regional with the teams having only eight losses combined. Centerburg scored 120 points in a sectional final win over Fairbanks. Lancaster Fisher Catholic eliminated traditional power Worthington Christian in a district final. Centerburg eliminates Fisher Catholic in one semi-final. Sandusky St. Mary has an excellent player in Patrick Phillips. The Panthers were the 1980 "A" state champs. Mowrystown Whiteoak eliminated 2001 state qualifier Reedsville Eastern in a district final. Sandusky St. Mary defeats Whiteoak in the other semi-final. Centerburg moves to the final four with a win over Sandusky St. Mary in the regional championship game.

Canton Fieldhouse: #3 Bristol, #6 Dalton, and #13 Sebring McKinley are joined by defending regional champ Strasburg-Franklin at Canton. Bristol eliminated #11 Windham in a district final. Dalton eliminated Oberlin, Strasburg-Franklin eliminated Berlin Hiland, and Sebring eliminated Mineral Ridge in other district finals. Strasburg-Franklin defeats Dalton in one semi-final game. Sebring McKinley surprises Bristol in the other semi-final. Sebring McKinley advances to Columbus with a win over Strasburg-Franklin in the regional final.

University of Toledo: #14 Old Fort is the only ranked team at Toledo. Old Fort, Delphos St. John's, and Holgate all qualified for the regional in 2001. Continental is the newcomer to this group replacing McComb. Delphos dominated this regional last year. On paper, it appears that the semi-final game between St. John's and Old Fort is the

championship game. The Blue Jays are too physical for the Stockaders. Continental outlasted Pandora-Gilboa in four overtimes in a district. After scoring eighty points in regulation, the teams combined for an additional seventy-nine in the extra periods. A very deliberate Holgate team entered the tournament with a losing record. Charlie Kelly leads the Tigers. Continental defeats Holgate in a close, low-scoring game. In the final, Delphos St. John's advances to the state tournament with a win over Continental.

STATE

South Charleston Southeastern, Centerburg, Sebring McKinley, and Delphos St. John's make up the final four. This is the first trip to the state tournament for both Southeastern and Centerburg. This will be the third appearance for Sebring McKinley with the last trip coming in 1973. This will be the eleventh visit by Delphos St. John's. The Jays won state championships in 1983 and 1949 along with runner-up finishes on four occasions. In the Friday morning game, Southeastern advances with a win over Centerburg. DSJ also moves into the title game with a Friday afternoon win over Sebring. In the championship game, South Charleston Southeastern takes home the state title with a win over Delphos St. John's.

The opinions expressed in Trail Trash are those of the Swami. See you in Columbus. Rock on.

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