

Trail Trash

for the 2006 OHSAA Boys High School Basketball Tournament

Published exclusively by Dave Spengler

Featuring Commentary & Predictions by ...

The Swami

The Swami got off to a quick start but finished slowly in our first edition for 2006. The 105-44 (70%) win/loss record was an improvement over 2005, but the Swami picked only five district champions out of the thirteen districts in Northwest Ohio. There were another four districts where the Swami predicted the correct district final match-ups, but was unable to pick the winner. Hopefully the Swami will be a little more accurate in this edition.

Three of the four teams crowned champions in the Associated Press' final poll (Canton McKinley, Akron St. Vincent-St. Mary, and Cincinnati North College Hill) were able to advance to the regional with only D4 poll winner Ottoville eliminated. Three of the 2005 state champions (McKinley, North College Hill, and Cleveland Heights Lutheran East) remain alive with D2 Upper Sandusky eliminated in a district final game. Columbus Africentric which defeated Lutheran East in the 2005 D4 state championship game before being forced to forfeit their title moved up to D3 this season, but was eliminated by Johnstown-Monroe in a district final.

We could probably editorialize about Cincinnati North College Hill at this point, but that isn't what this publication

Issue 2006-2

is about. Let's go to the predictions. It's Swami time.

DIVISION IV

Eight of the thirteen teams ranked by the Associated Press in their final poll are playing in the regional. Top-ranked Ottoville was eliminated by Columbus Grove in a district semi-final. Six teams (Lockland, South Webster, Windham, Cleveland Heights Lutheran East, Continental, and Holgate) were regional qualifiers in 2005.

REGIONAL

Miami University: #4 Russia, #8 New Bremen, and #10 Lockland are ranked teams at Millett Hall. New Bremen eliminated #2 Ada in a district final. 6'8" Brent Pleiman and Lucas Cordonnier are the top players for Russia while Dajuan Harris leads Lockland. Lockland was the regional runner-up last season. Matt Mullen is the top player for Houston while Scott Brackman and Scott Steineman lead New Bremen.

Former Miami player John Willoughby coaches Houston. Look for Russia to edge Lockland in one semi-final and New Bremen over Houston in the other semi-final. Take New Bremen over Russia for the regional championship.

Columbus Fairgrounds: #5 South Webster and #9 Worthington Christian are ranked teams at the Barn. Morral Ridgedale eliminated #3 Lancaster Fisher



Catholic in a district final. South Webster got a huge boost when Brigham Wager transferred from Ironton. Wager was the second leading scorer on last year's D3 state runner-up Ironton team. Wager and 6'8" Nick Aldridge, a Western Carolina recruit, lead the Jeeps. Chris Beals and Julian Dawson lead Worthington Christian while sophomore J.R. Weston tops Ridgedale. Mile Lacroix is the top player for unheralded Plymouth. Take Worthington Christian over Ridgedale and South Webster over Plymouth in semi-final games. South Webster advances to the state tournament by defeating Worthington Christian in the championship game.

Canton Fieldhouse: #6 Mineral Ridge, #7 Cleveland Heights Lutheran East, and #12 Berlin Hiland are ranked teams at Canton. Lutheran East lost to Columbus Africentric 74-66 in last year's D4 state championship game. Lutheran East was later awarded the state championship when it was found that Africentric had used an ineligible player. Lutheran's Jon Liggins set a single game D4 scoring record against Africentric. Vance Kerisey is the top player for Mineral Ridge while Ian McGuire and Brent Apthorpe are the big guns for Windham. Liggins leads Lutheran East while Joel Gause and Dustin Kaufman are the top players for Hiland. Take Windham over Mineral Ridge and Berlin Hiland over Lutheran East in semi-final games. Hiland wins the regional championship with a win over Windham in the regional final.

Bowling Green State University: There are no ranked teams at Anderson Arena. Columbus Grove defeated top ranked and previously unbeaten Ottoville in a district semi-final. Kyle Meyer and Eric Maag are the top players for Grove which last won a district title in 1952. Continental has three starters back from last year's regional championship team. Nathan Schmidt and Scott Keck are top players for the Pirates. Lee Brubaker, a starter on the 2004 D4 state championship team, leads Holgate. The Tigers have won six consecutive district titles. Wynford dropped down to D4 this season. The Royals have an outstanding big man in 6'6" Joe Kalb. Take Columbus Grove over Continental and Holgate over Wynford in the semi-finals. Holgate advances to Columbus with a win over Grove in the final.

STATE

New Bremen, South Webster, Berlin Hiland, and Holgate make up the final four as D4 kicks off the eighty-fourth annual boys state basketball tournament. This will be the seventh trip to the state tournament for Hiland, the 1992 D4 state champ. Holgate makes its fourth appearance and won the 2004 championship. South Webster was a state qualifier in 2004 while New Bremen will be making a second appearance. Take South Webster over New Bremen and Berlin Hiland over Holgate in semi-final games. South Webster will be the 2006 D4 state champion with a win over Berlin Hiland.

The Swami

DIVISION III

Seven of the twelve teams ranked by the Associated Press have reached the regional. Six teams (Archbold, Bloom-Carroll, Cincinnati North College Hill, Cleveland Villa-Angela/St. Joe's, Ironton, and Chesapeake) qualified for the regional in 2005. Johnstown-Monroe is the lone unbeaten team in D3.

REGIONAL

Bowling Green State University: #3 Johnstown-Monroe and #6 St. Henry are ranked teams at BG. Archbold returns three starters from last year's regional championship team. Sophomore Gene Goering and Josh Johnson are top players for Archbold. Brent Ernsthansen and Nathan Kirwen are the leading scorers for Gibsonburg. 6'9" Kurt Huelsman, a Dayton signee, and 6'7" Toby Boeckman lead St. Henry. Dan Kessler and 6'10" Joe Guiler, a Colgate signee, are key players for Johnstown-Monroe. Look for St. Henry to slip past Johnstown-Monroe and Archbold to defeat Gibsonburg in the semi-finals. Take St. Henry in the championship game with a close win over Archbold.

Wright State University: #1 Cincinnati North College Hill and #9 Versailles are ranked teams at the Nutter Center. North College Hill's only loss is to Oak Hill Academy. Juniors O.J. Mayo and Bill Walker are two of the top juniors in the country. 6'11" Keenan Ellis was dismissed from the team earlier in the season. In their three tournament victories, NCH has outscored their opponents by an average score of 85-33. Damon Butler and Andre Evans are other top players for NCH playing in the giant shadows cast by Mayo and Walker. Adam Barga and Jeremy Shardo lead Versailles while Jeff Moore is the top player for Cincinnati Madeira. Kale Richardson is the top player for Bloom-Carroll. Take Versailles over Madeira in a close game and NCH big over Bloom-Carroll in the semi-finals. Take North College Hill big over Versailles in the final.

Canton Fieldhouse: #8 Cleveland Villa-Angela/St. Joe's and #11 Youngstown Ursuline are ranked teams at Canton. Ursuline defeated #12 Campbell Memorial in a district final. OSU recruit David Lighty with help from Darryl Rushton leads VASJ. Steve Martin, Jahmil Rippy, John White, and 6'11" Joe Latas lead a balanced Bedford St. Peter Chanel attack. Dustin Geitguy is the top player for West Salem Northwestern while 6'8" Jerome Jones and D'Aundray Brown are key players for Ursuline. Take Chanel over Northwestern and VASJ over Ursuline in the semi-finals. Chanel advances to Columbus with a close win over VASJ in the championship game.

Ohio University: #5 Chesapeake is the only ranked team at the Convo. Beverly Fort Frye eliminated #2 Bellaire in a district final. Ironton lost four starters from last year's D3 state

runner-up including Brigham Wagering via transfer to South Webster. Dennis Gagai, the leading scorer on that team and Brandon Walker are the top players for Ironton. Tyler Engle and Tyler Ferguson lead Fort Frye. 6'7" Camden Miller Drew Spradlin are key players for Wheelersburg while P.J. Rase and Justin Porter lead a veteran Chesapeake team. Take Ironton over Fort Frye and Wheelersburg over Chesapeake in the semi-finals. Wheelersburg advances to the state tournament with a win over Ironton in the championship game.

STATE

The D3 final four consists of St. Henry, Cincinnati North College Hill, Bedford St. Peter Chanel, and Wheelersburg. North College Hill was the 2005 state champ and makes their third trip to the state tournament. This will be the sixth trip for St. Henry. The Redskins have four state titles to their credit, the latest being the 2004 D3 state championship. Chanel will be making a fifth visit to the state tournament, and was the 1999 D3 state champ. Wheelersburg will also be making a fifth state appearance. Take NCH over St. Henry and Wheelersburg over Chanel in the semi-final games. The Swami is really going out on the limb, but North College Hill will be the 2006 D3 state champion with a win over Wheelersburg.

DIVISION II

Six of the eleven teams ranked by the Associated Press in their final poll are playing in the regional. Six teams (Wooster Triway, Painesville Harvey, Zanesville, Akron St. Vincent-St Mary, New Albany, and Dayton Dunbar) were regional qualifiers in 2005 with New Albany moving up from D3 to D2 this season. Willard, Triway, and Tipp City Tippecanoe are all undefeated entering the regional.

REGIONAL

Canton Civic Center: #4 Wooster Triway and #11 Salem are ranked teams at Canton. Triway was the 2005 D2 state runner-up. Jamie Breneman, Linc Rottman, and Jeff McCartney return as starters from that team. Cleveland Benedictine is the only team remaining in the tournament with a losing record. The Bengals finished the regular season at 5-15. Rudy Evans is the top player for Benedictine. Scott Aston, Julian Mangano, and Devonne Johnson lead Painesville Harvey while Tom Jesko and Ryan Benchwick are top players for Salem. Take Triway over Benedictine and Salem over Painesville Harvey in the semi-finals. Triway earns a return trip to Columbus with a win over Salem in the championship game.

Ohio University: There are no ranked teams at the Convo. Circleville Logan Elm defeated #6 Greenfield McClain and Zanesville eliminated #9 Dover in district semi-finals. Elijah Allen is the top player for Columbus DeSales while Dan Milleson and Ben Hodkinson lead Cadiz Harrison Central. Kodey Haddox and Logan Aronhalt are key

The Swami

players for Zanesville with Evan Blake and Kyle Reichelderfer the leading scorers for Logan Elm. Take DeSales over Harrison Central and Zanesville over Logan Elm. Zanesville takes the regional championship with a win over Columbus DeSales.

University of Toledo: #1 Akron St. Vincent-St. Mary and #2 Willard are ranked teams in the Toledo regional. SVSM defeated #5 Akron Buchtel in a district final. The win over previously unbeaten Buchtel gives SVSM an eighth consecutive district championship. Willard defeated defending D2 state champ Upper Sandusky 101-98 in a district final. Willard's Jimmy Langhurst and Upper's Jon Diebler each scored 55 points in the game. Langhurst averages over 30 a game and gets help from Kevin Johnson. Wapakoneta is making their first appearance in a regional tournament since 1946. B.J. Reed is a key player for Wapak while Joe Caruso is Rocky River's top player. The semi-final between SVSM and Rocky River is being played at the Canton Fieldhouse. Take SVSM over Rocky River. Willard and Wapakoneta will meet in a semi-final at Toledo. Take Willard over Wapak. The final will be played at UT. Take Akron SVSM over Willard for the regional crown.

Wright State University: #3 Dayton Dunbar and #7 Tipp City Tippecanoe are ranked teams at Wright State. Undefeated Tippecanoe defeated #8 Cincinnati Taft in a district final. Dunbar returns all five starters from their 2005 state qualifier. OSU recruit Daequan Cook is Dunbar's top player and gets plenty of help from 6'9" wide body Aaron Pogue and 6'8" Mark Anderson. Troy Long and Chris Grimes are top players for Cincinnati Woodward. Kellen Zawadzki and Robert Goldsberry are key players for Tippecanoe while Jake Worley leads New Albany. Take Tippecanoe over New Albany and Dunbar over Woodward in semi-final games. Dayton Dunbar takes the regional championship with a win over Tipp City Tippecanoe.

STATE

Wooster Triway, Zanesville, Akron St. Vincent-St. Mary and Dayton Dunbar make up the final four in D2. This will be the eighth appearance for SVSM. The Irish won state crowns in 1984, 2000, 2001, and 2003. Zanesville will be making a twelfth trip to the state tournament. Zanesville has three state championships including the 1995 D1 title. This will be the fifth appearance for Dunbar. The Wolverines won the 1987 Class AAA title. Triway will be making a fourth trip to the state tournament. Take Triway over Zanesville and Dunbar over SVSM in the semi-finals. Dayton Dunbar takes home the D2 state championship with a win over Wooster Triway in the finals.



DIVISION I

Seven of the eleven ranked teams in the final Associated Press poll are playing in the regional. Seven teams (Canton McKinley, Solon, Mansfield Senior, Lakewood St. Edward, Cincinnati St. Xavier, Trotwood-Madison, and Columbus Brookhaven) were regional qualifiers in 2005.

REGIONAL

University of Akron: #1 Canton McKinley and #4 Solon are ranked teams at the JAR. McKinley eliminated #9 Massillon Washington and Solon defeated #10 Bedford in district finals. McKinley's losses are to North College Hill and Oak Hill Academy. The Bulldogs return four starters from the 2005 state championship team. Michigan State recruit Raymar Morgan is the top player for McKinley. Ricky Jackson and Todd Brown, a Wright State signee, are other key players for the Pups. Solon's only loss this season is to a team from New Jersey. 6'9" Dallas Lauderdale leads Solon with help from Billy Grant and Pat Hewitt. Adam May, a Holy Cross signee, and Brent Cortelezzi are the top players for Mentor while Nick Sales and Adam Moore are key players for Barberton. Take McKinley over Barberton and Solon over Mentor in the semi-finals. Canton McKinley advances to Columbus with a win over Solon in the final.

University of Toledo: #2 Mansfield Senior is the only ranked team in the Toledo regional. Toledo St. John's defeated #6 Toledo St. Francis and #5 Toledo Scott in the district. Jonathan Dunn and 6'7" Andrew Taylor are the top players for St. John's. Mansfield Senior opened the season with nineteen straight wins before losing at Massillon. Shabby Reed and Javario Byrd are key players for the Tygers. 6'8" sophomore Delvon Roe and Reid Anderson are big guns for Lakewood St. Edward. Kyle Brown is the top player for Strongsville. The semi-final between St. Edward and Strongsville will be played at the Canton Civic Center. Take St. Ed's over Strongsville. Toledo St. John's and Mansfield will meet in the semi-final at Toledo. This will be St. John's eighth game of the season at Savage Hall. Take St. John's over Mansfield. The final will be played at Toledo. Lakewood St. Edward defeats Toledo St. John's for the regional championship.

Xavier University: #8 Lakota West and #11 Cincinnati St. Xavier are ranked teams at the Cintas Center. 6'8" Josh Chichester is the top player for Lakota West while David Gideon leads St. Xavier, the 2005 D1 state runner-up. Ben McGrath is a key player for Cincinnati Princeton and 6'7" junior Chris Wright is the top player for Trotwood-Madison. Take Lakota West over St. X and Princeton over Trotwood-Madison in the semi-finals. Lakota West advances to Columbus with a win over Cincinnati Princeton in the championship game.

Columbus Fairgrounds: #3 Lancaster and #7 Cincinnati Elder are ranked teams at Columbus. 6'7" Chris McKnight, an Akron signee, and 6'10 Brant Leitnaker lead Lancaster.

The Swami

6'6" Jeff Cumberland is the key player for Columbus Brookhaven. Javonte Clanton leads Reynoldsburg while 6'6" sophomore Kyle Rudolph is the top player for Elder. Take Lancaster over Brookhaven and Elder over Reynoldsburg in the semi-finals. Lancaster defeats Cincinnati Elder in the regional final to advance to the state tournament.

STATE

Canton McKinley, Lakewood St. Edward, Lakota West, and Lancaster comprise the final four in D1. This will be the twenty-eighth trip to the state tournament for McKinley. In addition to their 2005 state championship, McKinley won the 1984 Class AAA title. St. Edward, the 1998 D1 state champion, will be making a fifth trip to the state tournament. Lancaster will be making their third appearance in the state tournament. Lakota made two trips to the state tournament and won the 1992 D1 championship before splitting into two high schools. Take McKinley over St. Ed's and Lancaster over Lakota West in the semi-finals. Canton McKinley wins their second consecutive state championship with a win over Lancaster in the title game.

This closes the book on Trail Trash for another year. We appreciate your support and value your feedback. The opinions expressed are those of the Swami. If you have any comments or suggestions, contact davey1@davey1.com. See you in Columbus.