

Trail Trash

2026 OHSAA Boys High School Basketball Tournament

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Featuring Commentary & Predictions by ...

The Swami

Welcome to the second edition of Trail Trash and the Swami for 2026. Here is what has transpired over the past two weeks.

In the sectionals, Findlay was the only D1 team in action with the Trojans grabbing their 10th win of the season by defeating Strongsville. There were no D2 tournament games and several teams in D4 and D6 had byes directly into the districts. The higher seed hosted in the sectionals with the home team prevailing in almost 80% of the games. The average winning margin in the sectionals was just over twenty points per game with a number of running clocks. There were a few surprises including wins by Vermilion, Huron, Tinora, and Toledo Christian but no major upsets. We were fortunate to have several really good sectional final matchups with Lima Central Catholic hosting Spencerville at the top of the list. The game was a classic with the Bearcats edging LCC 52-51.

In the D1 districts, #5 Perrysburg defeated Canton GlenOak before losing to top seed Brunswick in the final at Copley. In D2, top seed Lima Senior won both games with a running clock while #2 Toledo St. John's also advanced with a win over Toledo St. Francis after splitting their regular season games.

In D3, #1 seed Toledo Central Catholic

won the Liberty-Benton district by eliminating Sylvania

Southview for a second straight year. At Ontario, #1 Lima Shawnee was denied a third straight district title losing to #3 Mansfield Senior in the championship game.

In the D4 Mansfield Senior district, #1 Sandusky Perkins eliminated #2 Shelby. The Whippets had advanced to the district final with a win over #1 Ontario. #1 Van Wert won the otherwise meh Paulding district. #3 Lima Bath joins Perkins and VW as district champions eliminating #2 Ottawa-Glandorf and #2 Lake in the Fremont Ross district.

Margaretta and undefeated Genoa won district titles in D5. At Lakota, #2 Margaretta won both games handily while #1 Genoa was pushed by #1 Paulding in the district final at Napoleon. Paulding had edged #2 Liberty Center to advance to the final.

In D6, #2 Convoy Crestview came from behind to eliminate #4 Spencerville in double overtime in the district final at Defiance. Spencerville had defeated #2

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Since 1994, Trail Trash has been published twice annually in conjunction with the boys state basketball tournament. Trail Trash is published to share the expert predictions of the Swami. For those of you familiar with the Swami, we say no more. For the small number of you not familiar with the Swami, he is the self-proclaimed guru on Northwest Ohio high school hoops.

Since the fall of 2004 Davey1.com has featured the most complete collection of Ohio Boys High School Basketball Schedules and results that can be found in one place anywhere on the internet. We have gathered all of the schedules from the schools in the OHSAA Northwest District. We wrote our own special software using a Microsoft Access database to compile and display our schedules. Nowhere else will you find the amount of information that we present on Davey1.com.

St. Henry in a district semi. At the Lake district, #1 Lincolnview pulled away late to knock off #2 Gibsonburg. Gibsonburg had advanced to the final after edging #1 Maumee Valley Country Day. #1 Colonel Crawford advances to Bowling Green with a win over #3 Patrick Henry in a marquee district final at Willard. In the Liberty-Benton district, #2 Seneca East edged #1 Van Buren for the championship on a pair of foul shots with a second left in the game. VB had avenged a late season loss to #2 Columbus Grove in a district semifinal. At Wapakoneta, #1 Marion Local moves on to the regional at Vandalia Butler by defeating #5 Ada in the title game after surviving a scare from #5 New Bremen in the semifinal. Montpelier, Kalida, Arlington, and Pettisville advance to the regional at Bowling Green in D7. #1 Montpelier continued their record-breaking season by knocking off #1 Miller City at Bryan. #2 Kalida scored late to edge #2 Minster in the district final at Van Wert. #1 Arlington won a second straight district crown with a dominant win over #4 South Central at the Lima Senior district. At Oregon Clay, #3 Pettisville knocked off #4 Cardinal Stritch in the final. Pettisville had beaten #2 Edon and Stritch edged #1 Monroeville in semifinal games. #1 Tiffin Calvert advances to the D7 regional at Barberton with a win over #3 Old Fort. Calvert had defeated #2 Plymouth and Old Fort eliminated #2 Sandusky St. Mary in semifinal games. Undefeated Delphos St. John's advances to the D7 regional at Vandalia Butler with a pair of dominating wins at Elida. The Blue Jays eliminated #2 Arcadia in the title game. In the twenty-three districts that we covered, the average margin of victory was over seventeen points per game. That compares to just over ten points per game in 2024, the last year for four divisions. You can draw your own conclusions, but we have said it before and we will say it again. SEVEN DIVISIONS ARE TOO MANY.

I have mixed feelings on the cross bracketing that the NWDAB implemented for 2026. There are teams in the regionals that would have run into each other at the district level under the old system. Did it result in more equity among the districts? There were still some weak districts, but is that more a product of having too many divisions? It was a bit odd and confusing for teams that played a district semifinal at one location and a district final at another. And there was some inequitable travel. Next steps? Give it another shot next year with the same format? Or rather than coaches choosing from one of two districts, having them draw into any district within their division?

As far as the Swami's picks were concerned, the overall record was decent (114-32) and predicting fifteen of the twenty-three district winners correctly was an improvement over last year. Time to spring forward.

DIVISION I

REGIONALS

XAVIER UNIVERSITY: Princeton was the runner-up to Lakota West in the Greater Miami Conference with Oak Hills tied for 3rd with Mason. St. Xavier finished behind Moeller in the Greater Catholic League losing both games to the Crusaders. Wayne eliminated Moeller in a district final. Semifinals (Wednesday) – Cincinnati Princeton over Huber Heights Wayne; Cincinnati Oak Hills over Cincinnati St. Xavier
Final (Saturday) – Cincinnati Princeton over Cincinnati Oak Hills

UNIVERSITY OF AKRON: No teams making the trip from Northwest Ohio this year. Brunswick lost leading scorer Trey Drexler to injury at the close of the regular season. Cleveland Heights upset #3 Cleveland Ignatius and Elyria knocked off #4 Canton McKinley in district finals. Semifinals (Wednesday) – Brunswick over Elyria; Lakewood St. Edward over Cleveland Heights
Final (Saturday) – Lakewood St. Edward over Brunswick

OHIO EXPO CENTER: AKA the Barn. There will be a new state champion in D1 as Olentangy knocked off Olentangy Orange in their district final. Olentangy's lone loss to an Ohio team was to Orange. Newark and Reynoldsburg split regular season games. Hilliard Bradley has lost to Cincinnati LaSalle and Olentangy Orange. Semifinals (Wednesday) – Newark over Reynoldsburg; Hilliard Bradley over Lewis Center Olentangy
Final (Saturday) – Hilliard Bradley over Newark

OHIO EXPO CENTER: The championship game will be at Xavier if both Centerville and Lakota West win in the semifinals. Otherwise, the final will be played in Columbus. Lakota West's only loss was 72-71 to LaLumiere IN. Olentangy Berlin won their first district title. Semifinals (Thursday) – Pickerington Central over Centerville; Lakota West over Olentangy Berlin

Final (Saturday) – Lakota West over Pickerington Central

STATE

The semifinals will be played at Wright State with the championship game at UD.

Semifinals (Saturday) – Cincinnati Princeton over Lakewood St. Edward; Lakota West over Hilliard Bradley

Final (Sunday) – Lakota West over Cincinnati Princeton

DIVISION II

REGIONALS

OHIO EXPO CENTER: Westerville North is the defending D2 state champion. North's lone loss was to D5 Cleveland Heights Lutheran East. Westerville South is the only team to reach the regionals with a losing record.

Semifinals (Tuesday) – Westerville North over Westerville South; Pataskala Licking Heights over New Albany

Final (Saturday) – Westerville North over Pataskala Licking Heights

KENT STATE UNIVERSITY: Brecksville's only loss was to Nardon. BBH has beaten North Royalton twice this season. NR won a D2 regional championship in 2025 before losing to Massillon Perry in the state semifinals. Painesville Riverside advanced to the regionals with a district final win over North Canton Hoover.

Semifinals (Wednesday) – Brecksville-Broadview Heights over Olmsted Falls; North Royalton over Painesville Riverside

Final (Saturday) – Brecksville-Broadview Heights over North Royalton

SPRINGFIELD HIGH SCHOOL: Shawn Foster has returned to the Lima Senior lineup after missing several games to injury late in the season. Lima's losses are to Lakota West, Westerville North, Princeton, and Grand Rapids MI Kenwood. Winton Woods lost in the 2025 regional final to Toledo St. Francis. Winton Woods added Isaiah Mack-Russel this season after spending the previous two seasons at Toledo Central Catholic. WW defeated Northmont 40-39 in late January. WW has lost to Centerville and Indianapolis Cathedral. Cincinnati Aiken, the D3 state runner-up in 2025, lost 109-82 at Lima early in the season.



Semifinals (Wednesday) – Lima Senior over Cincinnati Aiken; Cincinnati Winton Woods over Clayton Northmont

Final (Saturday) – Lima Senior over Cincinnati Winton Woods

COLLEGE OF WOOSTER: St. John's Jesuit's district championship is their seventh in the past twelve seasons. The Titans won the Detroit-based CHSL tournament after finishing third in the league standings. Massillon plays as an independent. Their only loss was in overtime to North Canton Hoover in December. Euclid advanced with their third win of the season over Shaker Heights. The best win on the season for the Panthers came against Reynoldsburg. Avon won a second straight district championship.

Semifinals (Wednesday) – Massillon Washington

over Avon; Toledo St. John's Jesuit over Euclid

Final (Saturday) – Toledo St. John's Jesuit over Massillon Washington

STATE

The semifinals will be played at Wright State with the championship game at UD.

Semifinals (Saturday) – Westerville North over Brecksville-Broadview Heights; Lima Senior over Toledo St. John's Jesuit

Final (Sunday) – Lima Senior over Westerville North

DIVISION III

REGIONALS

UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO: Toledo Central Catholic won a third straight district championship and their fifth in six years. The Irish defeated St. John's Jesuit in both meetings this season and finished in a tie for the top spot in the Detroit-based CHSL standings. CVCA avenged a regular season loss to Akron SVSM in their district final. Mansfield Senior's win over Lima Shawnee gave the Tygers their first district championship since 2014. Senior High finished in a four-way tie at the top of the Ohio Cardinal Conference standings.

Alliance's best win came against Canton McKinley in overtime. The Aviators lost to Massillon Washington in overtime and West Branch.

Semifinals (Wednesday) – Toledo Central Catholic over Cuyahoga Valley Christian Academy; Alliance over Mansfield Senior

Final (Saturday) – Toledo Central Catholic over Alliance

XAVIER UNIVERSITY: Trotwood-Madison edged Goshen 42-41 and Tipp City Tippecanoe upset Cincinnati LaSalle in district finals. Badin's two losses were to Kettering Archbishop Alter in overtime and Hamilton.
Semifinals (Tuesday) – Trotwood-Madison over Tipp City Tippecanoe; Hamilton Badin over Cincinnati Hughes
Final (Saturday) – Hamilton Badin over Trotwood-Madison

OHIO UNIVERSITY: Marietta is in the regional for the first time since 1977. Steubenville is undefeated against teams from Ohio with Big Red's only loss to Wheeling Central Catholic. Bishop Hartley defeated Bishop Watterson in both regular season meetings.
Semifinals (Tuesday) – Columbus Bishop Watterson over Marietta; Columbus Bishop Hartley over Steubenville
Final (Saturday) – Columbus Bishop Hartley over Columbus Bishop Watterson

MEDINA HIGH SCHOOL: Ohio's reigning Mr. Basketball Marcus Johnson of Garfield Heights has moved into the top thirty all-time for career scoring in Ohio. Gates Mills Hawken moved up to D3 after winning a D4 regional championship in 2025. Hawken eliminated Youngstown Ursuline in a district championship game for the second straight year. Archbishop Hoban handed Youngstown Chaney one of their three losses.
Semifinals (Tuesday & Wednesday) – Akron Archbishop Hoban over Garfield Heights; Youngstown Chaney over Gates Mills Hawken
Final (Friday) – Youngstown Chaney over Akron Archbishop Hoban

STATE

The semifinals and championship game will be played at UD.
Semifinals (Thursday) – Hamilton Badin over Toledo Central Catholic; Columbus Bishop Hartley over Youngstown Chaney
Final (Friday) – Hamilton Badin over Columbus Bishop Hartley

DIVISION IV

REGIONALS

BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY: Jonathan Alder lost to Gates Mills Hawken in the D4 regional final at BG in 2025. Van Wert was the WBL runner-up to Shawnee in the WBL. The

Cougars start four underclassmen and have only two seniors on the roster. Perkins won their first district title since 2013 while Lima Bath's most recent district championship came in 2014. Perkins tied with Sandusky at the top of the SBC-Lake. The Pirates have lost to Sandusky and Oregon Clay in overtime. Bath finished in 3rd place in the WBL. The Wildcats had not beaten Ottawa-Glandorf since 2014 until beating the Titans twice this season.
Semifinals (Wednesday) – Plain City Jonathan Alder over Van Wert; Sandusky Perkins over Lima Bath
Final (Saturday) – Plain City Jonathan Alder over Sandusky Perkins

CANTON MEMORIAL FIELD HOUSE: Glenville beat Warrensville Heights in the 2025 regional final. The Tarblooders finished as state runner-up losing to Maysville in the championship game. Cleveland Central Catholic is on an eleven-game winning streak.
Semifinals (Thursday) – Cleveland Glenville over Warrensville Heights; Cleveland Central Catholic over Canfield
Final (Saturday) – Cleveland Central Catholic over Cleveland Glenville

OHIO UNIVERSITY: The semifinal between defending D4 state champion Zanesville Maysville and New Concord John Glenn was originally scheduled for the ECO Center in St. Clairsville but was moved to the Convo due to the expected large crowd. Maysville's lone loss was to Cincinnati Taft in the season opener while John Glenn's was to Maysville in December. Circleville won in two overtimes at Unioto in February.
Semifinals (Wednesday) – Zanesville Maysville over New Concord John Glenn; Chillicothe Unioto over Circleville
Final (Saturday) – Zanesville Maysville over Chillicothe Unioto

XAVIER UNIVERSITY: Wyoming won the D4 regional last year before losing to Maysville in double overtime in the state semifinal at Wittenberg. The Cowboys lost back-to-back games to Cincinnati St. Xavier and Cincinnati Elder. Dayton Northridge rallied from twenty-three points down to defeat Cincinnati Taft followed by the obligatory post-game scuffle. Northridge's only defeat was to Westerville North. River Valley won a second straight district title.
Semifinals (Thursday) – Cincinnati Wyoming over Kettering Archbishop Alter; Dayton Northridge over

Caledonia River Valley
Final (Saturday) – Cincinnati Wyoming over Dayton Northridge

STATE

The semifinals will be played at Wright State with the championship game at UD.
Semifinals (Thursday) – Plain City Jonathan Alder over Cleveland Central Catholic; Zanesville Maysville over Cincinnati Wyoming
Final (Friday) – Zanesville Maysville over Cleveland Central Catholic

DIVISION V

REGIONALS

OHIO DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY: The semifinals will be played at ODU and at the Elida Fieldhouse with the championship game in Columbus. Margareta and undefeated Genoa will play at Elida while Columbus Academy and Columbus Africentric will play at ODU. You know the OHSAA wasn't going to send two Columbus area schools north. Margareta won the SBC-Bay while Genoa won the NBC. Margareta defeated Genoa in the district finals in both 2024 and 2025. Genoa won their first district championship since 1996. Columbus Academy lost in the 2025 D5 state final to Lutheran East and return their top player in Jason Singleton. Africentric won the Columbus City League championship and is the only City League school in the regionals.
Semifinals (Wednesday) – Columbus Academy over Columbus Africentric; Margareta over Genoa
Final (Saturday) – Columbus Academy over Margareta

OHIO UNIVERSITY: The semifinals will be played at OU and at Zanesville with the championship game in Athens. Ironton's losses were to Portsmouth and Wheelersburg, but the Tigers defeated both to win their district title. Eastern Brown knocked off Chesapeake in their district final. Two of West Muskingum's losses were to Maysville.
Semifinals (Wednesday) – Ironton over Winchester Eastern; West Muskingum over St. Clairsville
Final (Saturday) – Ironton over West Muskingum

XAVIER UNIVERSITY/FAIRBORN HIGH SCHOOL: The semifinals will be played at Fairborn with the championship game at the Cintas Center. Summit Country Day lost to Columbus Academy in a 2025 state semifinal. Waynesville's losses were to

Brookville and Bellbrook. Versailles finished in a 3rd place tie with St. Henry in the MAC behind Delphos St. John's and Marion Local.
Semifinals (Tuesday) – Cincinnati Summit Country Day over Cincinnati North College Hill; Versailles over Waynesville
Final (Saturday) – Versailles over Cincinnati Summit Country Day

CANTON MEMORIAL FIELD HOUSE: Lutheran East has won three consecutive state championships and four in the past five years. The Lue's two losses were to Maysville and Lakewood St. Edward. Chagrin Falls is on an eighteen-game winning streak.
Semifinals (Wednesday) – Cleveland Heights Lutheran East over Fairview Park Fairview; Canton Central Catholic over Chagrin Falls
Final (Saturday) – Cleveland Heights Lutheran East over Canton Central Catholic

STATE

The semifinals and championship game will be played at UD.
Semifinals (Friday) – Columbus Academy over Ironton; Cleveland Heights Lutheran East over Versailles
Final (Saturday) – Cleveland Heights Lutheran East over Columbus Academy

DIVISION VI

REGIONALS

OHIO UNIVERSITY: Berlin Hiland's losses were to New Concord John Glenn, Cleveland St. Ignatius, and Lutheran East. The Hawks have given up only sixty-one points in their three tournament games. Grandview finished behind Columbus Academy and Bishop Ready in the Central Buckeye Conference. Peebles was the top seed in the Southeast District.
Semifinals (Thursday) – Berlin Hiland over Columbus Grandview Heights; Portsmouth West over Peebles
Final (Saturday) – Berlin Hiland over Portsmouth West



CANTON MEMORIAL FIELD HOUSE: Kirtland

won the regional championship in 2025 before losing to eventual D6 state champion Monroe Central in a state semifinal. Richmond Heights and Andrews Osborne split their regular season games.
Semifinals (Tuesday) – Kirtland over Orwell Grand Valley; Richmond Heights over Willoughby Andrews Osborne
Final (Friday) – Kirtland over Richmond Heights

VANDALIA BUTLER HIGH SCHOOL: Marion Local was the 2025 state runner-up. The Flyers and Fort Recovery meet again after ML won the league game 53-39 back in December. Marion Local's only loss was to Delphos St. John's. Tri-Village is one of three undefeated teams remaining in the tournament. Tri-Village has a win over Troy Christian and defeated Fort Recovery 66-60 less than a month ago after trailing through three quarters.
Semifinals (Tuesday) – New Madison Tri-Village over Troy Christian; Marion Local over Fort Recovery
Final (Saturday) – Marion Local over New Madison Tri-Village

BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY: Two teams from the Northern 10 and two teams from the Northwest Conference at BGSU. Crawford won the D6 regional at Bowling Green in 2025 before losing in the state semifinal to Marion Local (also at BG). Crawford won the eight-team N10 while Seneca East finished in 3rd place with CC winning both games by double digits. Lincolnview won the NWC while Crestview finished in 5th place. The two teams met at Lincolnview in February with the Lancers prevailing 57-44. That was part of a three-game losing streak to end the regular season for Crestview.
Semifinals (Thursday) – Colonel Crawford over Seneca East; Convoy Crestview over Lincolnview
Final (Saturday) – Colonel Crawford over Convoy Crestview

STATE

The semifinals will be played at Wright State with the championship game at UD.
Semifinals (Friday) – Berlin Hiland over Kirtland; Marion Local over Colonel Crawford
Final (Saturday) – Berlin Hiland over Marion Local

DIVISION VII

REGIONALS

OHIO DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY: The Racine

Southern Tornadoes. That is a blast from the past for us old-timers. Fairfield eliminated 2025 regional champion South Webster in the district final. Shekinah Christian defeated Genoa Christian Academy in a district final after splitting their regular season games.
Semifinals (Thursday) – Racine Southern over Malvern; Leesburg Fairfield over Plain City Shekinah Christian
Final (Saturday) – Leesburg Fairfield over Racine Southern

VANDALIA BUTLER HIGH SCHOOL: Is there a D7 team that can stop Delphos St. John's? The Blue Jays have overtime wins over Lima Central Catholic and Spencerville with the remainder of their twenty-five wins by double digits. Cam Elwer recently passed LeBron on the career OHSAA scoring list and currently sits in 7th place behind Geno Ford. Botkins is the Shelby County Athletic league champion. The Trojans have lost to Marion Local, Minster, and Preble Shawnee. Sidney Lehman is one three teams from the Three Rivers Conference playing in the regional. Dayton Northridge and Troy Christian are the others.
Semifinals (Wednesday) – Delphos St. John's over Cincinnati College Preparatory; Botkins over Sidney Lehman Catholic
Final (Saturday) – Delphos St. John's over Botkins

BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY: Arlington defeated Delphos St. John's to win the D7 regional at Bowling Green in 2025 before losing to eventual state champion Russia in a state semifinal at BGSU. Arlington finished in 2nd place in the BVC behind Van Buren and is on an eighteen-game winning streak. Montpelier lost to Evergreen and Paulding. The Locos and Pettisville finished one-two in the BBC. Montpelier last won a district title in 1946 (lost to Toledo Woodward in a regional that also included Sandusky and Wapakoneta) while the last district championship for the Blackbirds was in 1998. Kalida defeated Arlington back in early December. Kalida has played a top-notch schedule including five regional teams. The Wildcats have wins in ten of their last twelve games.
Semifinals (Tuesday) – Kalida over Pettisville; Arlington over Montpelier
Final (Saturday) – Arlington over Kalida

BARBERTON HIGH SCHOOL: Tiffin Calvert finished in 4th place in the SBC-River. Calvert's win

in the district final came after two regular season losses to Old Fort. Hillsdale (closer to Hayesville than Jeromesville?) handed McDonald just their second loss of the season in the district final. The Falcons finished in 3rd place in the Wayne County Athletic League behind Norwayne and Smithville. Fairport Harbor's losses came to a pair of regional teams in Painesville Riverside (D2) and Cleveland Glenville (D4). Heartland Christian dominated Cornerstone Christian and Kidron Central Christian in the district semifinal and final.
Semifinals (Tuesday) – Fairport Harbor Harding over Columbiana Heartland Christian; Jeromesville Hillsdale over Tiffin Calvert
Final (Friday) – Fairport Harbor Harding over Jeromesville Hillsdale

STATE

The semifinals will be played at Wright State with the championship game at UD.
Semifinals (Friday) – Delphos St. John's over Leesburg Fairfield; Arlington over Fairport Harbor Harding
Final (Saturday) – Delphos St. John's over Arlington

Thank you for reading, and we hope to see you again next season. All facts, figures, errors, and opinions are those of the Swami. Please check out the brackets on the Davey1.com website. On to Bowling Green this week and Dayton next week.