

Welcome to the State Championships

The final week of the 2014 OHSAA football season has arrived and 14 teams have earned the right to play for a state championship in Ohio Stadium. After 723 teams began the season in August and 224 earned playoff berths, these 14 teams have advanced through four weeks of the playoffs and will now end their season in Ohio Stadium, which is hosting the championships for the first time since 1989.

Championship Games Return to Ohio Stadium

Ohio Stadium hosted 47 OHSAA playoff games from 1972-1989, with 37 of those being state championship games. When natural grass was installed in Ohio Stadium in 1990, the OHSAA was asked to move its football state championship games to another location. The OHSAA found a home in Stark County, with Canton Fawcett Stadium and Massillon Paul Brown Tiger Stadium sharing the state championship games for the last 24 years. When FieldTurf was installed in Ohio Stadium in 2008, the conversation began to have the games return to the famous “Horseshoe” stadium. The state championship games in 2014 and 2015 will be hosted in Ohio Stadium. The location of the finals after 2015 has not yet been determined. Please see pages 2, 3 and 5 for more information and record attendance information.

Noting the State Finalists

Three of the 2014 state finalists previously played state championship games in Ohio Stadium, including Lakewood St. Edward, Canton Central Catholic and Minster.

Three defending state champions are back to defend their title, including Coldwater (Div. V), Kirtland (Div. VI) and Maria Stein Marion Local (Div. VII). Coldwater is playing in the state championship game for the sixth straight season (titles in 2012 and 2013). Kirtland (two titles in a three-year span) and Marion Local (three-time defending state champ) are playing in the state championship game for the fourth straight season. Marion Local has won 19 straight playoff games (record is 23 by Cle. St. Ignatius from 1991-96).

In Div. II, Cincinnati LaSalle hadn't won a playoff game before this season. LaSalle joins Athens in Div. III as schools that won their first regional championship this season and are in the state championship games for the first time.

All 14 finalists were ranked in the Top 10 of the final Associated Press regular-season poll. Four poll champs will now try to win a state title on the field, including Kettering Archbishop Alter (Div. IV), Canton Central Catholic (Div. V), Kirtland (Div. VI) and Marion Local (Div. VII). There is one match-up of No. 1 vs. No. 2 ranked teams, that coming in Div. V (Canton Central Catholic vs. Coldwater).

The 14 state finalists had the following seeds when the playoffs began: No. 1 (7), No. 2 (2), No. 3 (2), No. 4 (2) and No. 5 (1, Huber Heights Wayne).

The Div. I state final is a rematch of the 2010 championship game, won by Lakewood St. Edward 35-28.

MAC Builds on Success

The highly successful Midwest Athletic Conference has three league members in the state championships, including Coldwater in Div. V, Minster in Div. VI and Maria Stein Marion Local in Div. VII. (The MAC has won two state championships in the same season five times, but never three titles.) Marion Local, Coldwater and Delphos St. John's are among Ohio's all-time best playoff teams (see page 5). The MAC is now 31-7 in state semifinal games against non-MAC schools. The MAC is now 47-13 against non-MAC schools in OHSAA regional championship games. The MAC went 5-1 in the first round of the playoffs and is now 56-2 in first round playoff games against non-MAC schools since the playoffs expanded to eight qualifiers per region in 1999. (The two losses include a Versailles loss to Lima Central Catholic in 2005 and a Delphos St. John's loss to Arlington in 2014.) The MAC currently owns 107 various OHSAA state championships.

Division I Championship Game

Lakewood St. Edward (12-2, AP #6, Region 2 Seed # 2)

- 5th State final appearance, 1 title (2010)
- 20th year in playoffs (30-18)
- Total school State Championships: 47 (28 WR, 11 IH, 3 BB, 2 BTF, 2 BBK, 1 FB)

Huber Heights Wayne (13-1, AP #7, Region 1 Seed #5)

- 3rd State final appearance, 0 titles
- 17th year in playoffs (18-16)
- Total school State Championships: 2 (2 BTF)

Huber Height Wayne vs. Lakewood St. Edward – have met once in the playoffs, the 2010 state final (St. Edward won 35-28). Ohio State QB Braxton Miller led Wayne to a 28-27 lead with 2:34 to go, but St. Edward responded with a late TD to win the program's only state title. Wayne is 0-2 in state finals.

Lakewood St. Edward scored 28 points in the second quarter of its 42-14 state semifinal victory over Hudson. Over an eight quarter span between trailing Lewis Center Olentangy 12-7 in the third quarter of its regional quarterfinal game to the fourth quarter against Hudson in the state semifinal, St. Edward scored 117 unanswered points. (Cleveland.com)

Huber Heights Wayne quarterback D'Mitrik Trice threw for 293 yards passing in its 29-22 state semifinal victory over Cincinnati Archbishop Moeller. The game-winning touchdown pass to Ahmad Wagner was Trice's 39th touchdown pass of the season. (Cincinnati Enquirer). Wagner will play collegiate basketball at Iowa (Dayton Daily News)

St. Edward is attempting to become the third school in OHSAA history to win the boys basketball and football state championships in the same calendar year.

Division II Championship Game

Macedonia Nordonia (14-0, AP #5, Region 4 Seed #2)

- 2nd State final appearance, 0 titles
- 12th year in playoffs (15-11)
- Total school State Championships: 1 (1 WR)

Cincinnati LaSalle (13-1, AP #3, Region 6 Seed #1)

- 1st state final appearance, 0 titles
- 5th year in playoffs (4-4)
- Total school State Championships: 6 (2 BCC, 2 BBK, 2 BTF)

This is the only 2014 state championship matchup between two schools that no previous football state titles. This is their first meeting in the playoffs.

Nordonia had 578 yards of offense compared to Mayfield's 150 in its 52-14 victory in the state semifinals. Nordonia has scored at least 52 points in each of its playoff games this year. (Cleveland.com)

Cincinnati La Salle running back Jeremy Larkin had six touchdowns in its 48-13 victory over Lewis Center Olentangy in the state semifinals. Larkin was named AP Southwest District offensive player of the year. (Cincinnati Enquirer)

Larkin has scored 40 touchdowns this season and LaSalle is averaging 40.7 point per game this season. LaSalle quarterback Nick Watson has 42 passing touchdowns in his career.

LaSalle head coach Nate Moore took Minster to three straight playoff appearances (2010, 2011, 2012) before going to LaSalle. It was the first time Minster made the playoffs since 2001. (by Gary Raspberry)

Division III Championship Game

The Plains Athens (14-0, AP #2, Region 9 Seed #4)

- 1st State final appearance, 0 titles
- 5th year in playoffs (8-4)
- Total school State Championships: 0

Toledo Central Catholic (12-2, AP #8, Region 8 Seed #1)

- 3rd State final appearance, 2 titles (2012, 05)
- 16th year in playoffs (20-13)
- Total school State Championships: 4 (2 FB, 1 VB, 1 BTF)

This is their first meeting in the playoffs.

Athens is 14 points away from breaking state record for points scored in a season. The current record held by Clarksville Clinton-Massie at 802 points from 2012 (15 games).

Athens quarterback Joe Burrow was 32 of 44 for 322 yards and threw his fourth touchdown pass of the game with 1:51 left in the fourth quarter to defeat Akron St. Vincent-St. Mary 34-31 in the state semifinals. Athens trailed SVSM 17-7 at halftime. (New Philadelphia Times Reporter)

Tol. Central Catholic quarterback Marcus Winters rushed 14 times for 114 yards including a 90-yard touchdown run in its 17-14 victory over Trotwood-Madison in the state semifinals. Winters now has 1,065 rushing yards on the year, joining Central Catholic's other two 1,000-yard rushers. Michael Warren has 2,049 yards and Tre'Von Wade has 1,667. (Toledo Blade)

Division IV Championship Game

Cleveland Benedictine (13-1, AP #4, Region 11 Seed #1)

- 8th State final appearance, 6 titles (2004, 03, 96, 81, 80, 73)
- 19th year in playoffs (40-12)
- Total school State Championships: 11 (6 FB, 3 BTF, 2 BBK)

Kettering Archbishop Alter (14-0, AP #1, Region 14 Seed #1)

- 4th State final appearance, 2 titles (2009, 08)
- 20th year in playoffs (36-17)
- Total school State Championships: 19 (4 BGO, 4 BSO, 3 BBK, 3 VB, 2 FB, 1 BCC, 1 GCC, 1 GBK)

This is their first meeting in the playoffs.

Cle. Benedictine running back DeCavilon Reese had four touchdowns in the first half and finished with 165 yards on 17 rushes in its 40-12 state semifinal victory over Steubenville. (Cleveland.com)

Kettering Archbishop Alter trailed 14-10 to Kenton at the end of the third quarter in the state semifinal game, but scored two touchdowns in the last seven minutes of the fourth quarter to complete a 25-22 victory. (Lima News)

Alter QB Dusty Hayes & RB Nick Coleman have combined for 70 career rushing TDs (TriStateFootball)

Since a four-point win in the first round over Perry, Benedictine has coasted the past three weeks, topping Youngstown Cardinal Mooney, 56-16, and Bay by 28 points for the regional championship. (Cleveland.com)

Division V Championship Game

Canton Central Catholic (14-0, AP #1, Region 15 Seed #1)

- 3rd State final appearance, 2 titles (2000, 88)
- 12th year in playoffs (20-9)
- Total school State Championships: 6 (2 BGO, 2 FB, 2 BB)

Coldwater (13-1, AP #2, Region 16 Seed #4)

- 10th State final appearance, 4 titles (2013, 12, 07, 05)
- 20th year in playoffs (59-15)
- Total school State Championships: 19 (6 BB, 4 FB, 3 GTF, 2 BBW, 2 GBW, 2 GBK)

Coldwater's six-straight regional titles is the longest active streak in Ohio. The state record for consecutive regional titles is nine set by Newark Catholic (1980-88) and Cleveland St. Ignatius (1991-99).

Canton Central Catholic converted all six fourth-down conversion attempts in its 34-24 state semifinal win over Columbus Bishop Hartley.

After sustaining an injury playing defense in the second quarter, Canton Central Catholic quarterback/safety Jake Boccuti returned to the field after halftime and threw two touchdown passes in the third quarter in Central Catholic's 34-24 state semifinal victory over Hartley. (Canton Repository)

Coldwater quarterback Brady Hoying accounted for 297 yards of total offense (156 passing, 141 rushing) and four total touchdowns (two passing, two rushing) in the state semifinal. (WCPO Cincinnati). In last year's state final game against Hartley, Hoying rushed for 145 yards and three touchdowns and threw for 83 yards.

Division VI Championship Game

Kirtland (14-0, AP #1, Region 19 #3)

- 4th State final appearance, 2 titles (2013, 11)
- 10th year in playoffs (22-7)
- Total school State Championships: 3 (2 FB, 1 BTF)

Minster (11-3, AP #9, Region 22 #3)

- 2nd State final appearance, 1 title (1989)
- 13th year in playoffs (18-11)
- Total school State Championships: 27 (12 GTF, 9 GCC, 2 BB, 2 GBK, 1 BGO, 1 FB)

This is their first meeting in the playoffs.

Minster coach Geron Stokes leads Minster back to state title game for first time since 1989 when he was in his second season at the school.

Kirtland has won 29 straight games and is 58-1 in its last 59 games, with four straight state finals appearances. The Hornets' only loss is a 10-9 setback to MAC member Coldwater in the 2012 Div. V state final.

Special teams proved to be the key point of Minster's 14-13 victory over Defiance Tinora in the state semifinals. After a third quarter Tinora touchdown, Minster's Hayden Schindler blocked the extra point to keep Tinora's lead to 13-7. Up 14-13 in the final seconds of the game, Minster used a timeout and its special teams as Tinora missed a game-winning field. (Northwest Signal)

A first-time state finalist, LaSalle head coach Nate Moore took Minster to three straight playoff appearances (2010, 2011, 2012) before going to LaSalle. It was the first time Minster made the playoffs since 2001. (by Gary Rasberry)

Division VII Championship Game

Norwalk St. Paul (13-1, AP #5, Region 23 Seed #1)

- 5th State final appearance, 1 title (2009)
- 16th year in playoffs (34-14)
- Total school state championships: 3 (2 VB, 1 FB)

Maria Stein Marion Local (14-0, AP #1, Region 26 Seed #1)

- 9th State final appearance, 7 titles (2013, 12, 11, 07, 06, 01, 00)
- 17th year in playoffs (57-9)
- Total school State Championships: 15 (7 FB, 5 FB, 2 BBK, 1 GBK)

Norwalk St. Paul vs. Maria Stein Marion Local – have met once in the playoffs, the 2006 state semifinal (Marion Local won 47-6).

Two of the four schools in Ohio that have the “Flyers” as their mascot are represented in this game. That doesn’t include the Clyde “Fliers.”

St. Paul’s Grant Dilger is a thief: In a good way. The St. Paul senior DB had three INTs in the Flyers 41-13 win over Trimble in D-VII. That gives him 15 INTs for the season. (from JHuddle)

St. Paul’s John Livengood is now 225-63, with five trips to a state championship game in past 18 years and beat MAC-member Delphos St. John’s in 2009 for the Div. VI state championship. It was the first time St. Paul had won a state championship game in four tries. It was the first time St. John’s had lost a state championship game in seven title appearances.
(@sanduskyregistr)

Marion Local has won 36 games and owns Ohio’s best all-time playoff winning percentage at .864 (57-9).

Head coach Tim Goodwin is also the principal at ML and assistant coach Dan Koenig is the athletic director. Jacey Goettemoller is a three-time first team All-MAC RB and is this year’s MAC Player of the Year (JHuddle).

Norwalk St. Paul’s defense recorded six interceptions in its 41-13 state semifinal victory over Glouster Trimble. (Sandusky Register)

Marion Local has outscored its opponents 179-14 in this year’s playoffs. The 14 points given up to opponents is the least among the 2014 state finalists.