

2013 OHSAA Girls Basketball State Tournament Preview

The 38th annual OHSAA Girls Basketball State Tournaments return to Value City Arena at the Jerome Schottenstein Center for the 13th consecutive year beginning Thursday afternoon. The divisional rotation schedule for this year is III, II, IV and I, with the state championship games tipping off Saturday at 10:45 a.m., 2:00 p.m., 5:15 p.m. and 8:30 p.m., respectively. All four title games will be televised live by SportsTime Ohio. Of the 16 teams representing the four divisions, three are returning state champions, four are returning state runner-ups, 11 were ranked in the final Associated Press poll, three are undefeated, eight are returning to the final four after appearances last season and three are making their school's first appearance.

Division IV marks the only division to have all four teams ranked in the final Associated Press Poll. No. 10 **Reedsville Eastern** (23-4) is making its schools first state tournament appearance after upsetting No. 4 Newark Catholic in the regional final, 57-56. Head Coach John Burdette will rely on juniors Jenna Burdette (18.0 ppg) and Jordan Parker (12.0 ppg) to lead the Lady Eagles' offensive charge. They will square off against defending state runner-up and second-ranked **Berlin Hiland** (25-3). Hiland is making its 13th state appearance, the most of any school in the 2013 field. The Hawks had to defeat No. 8 North Ridgeville Lake Ridge Academy (38-28) and Cortland Maplewood (58-40) to advance through their regional tournament. The Lady Hawks will rely on their 22-year veteran head coach, Dave Schlabach, and junior Regina Hochstetler (17.7 ppg) to help try and bring home their school's fifth state title (2008, 06, 05, 00). The other side of the bracket pits No. 1-ranked and undefeated **Ottoville** (27-0) against No. 7 **Fort Loramie** (25-3). Ottoville, which is making its first state appearance since 2007, cruised through its regional tournament, beating teams by an average of 19 ppg. Twenty-one year veteran head coach Dave Kleman will look for the senior duo of Abby Siefker (17.0 ppg) and Rachel Beining (11.9 ppg) to provide the bulk of his offensive production. After losing in the regional finals in 2012, Fort Loramie is back in the state tournament for the third time in the last four years. It will be the Redskins' seventh state tournament appearance, but they are still searching for their school's first state title. Fort Loramie, which defeated No. 5 New Madison Tri-Village 69-46 in the regional final, is led by 14-year veteran head coach Carla Siegel and junior forward Darian Rose (18.0 ppg).

The Division III 'final four' features two match-ups between veteran squads against state tournament novices. In the first semifinal, No. 6-ranked and defending state champion **Columbus Africentric** (21-5), will square off against state tournament newcomer, **Beverly Fort Frye** (25-3). Africentric is making its fifth state tournament appearance and is led by head coach William McKinney. McKinney has a starting five who all average more than 10 points per game, led by senior Marley Hill (17.2 ppg), and average a tournament best 82.3 points per game. The Nubians defeated No. 3 Archbold 60-42 in the regional final. Though making its first state appearance, Fort Frye has certainly proven its worth after defeating Frankfort Adena (66-47) and Johnstown-Monroe (58-43) in its regional tournament. The Cadets, led by head coach Dan Liedtke, will rely on Taylor Buchanan (12.2 ppg), Deidra Combs (11.3 ppg) and Morgan Liedtke (10.0 ppg) to provide the majority of their offensive output. The other side of the bracket pits No. 4 **Orrville** (26-2) against unranked **Anna** (24-4), the 2012 state runner-up. This will be Orrville's third state tournament appearance but first since 1993. The Red Riders, coached by Mark Alberts Sr., routed No. 10 Beachwood 75-48 behind a stellar performance by Maggie Davault (12.0 ppg). Anna, which is making its third-consecutive state tournament appearance and fifth overall, is hoping to bring home its school's third state title, with the other two titles coming in 2011 and 1981. The Rockets upset No. 8 Casstown Miami East 62-52 in their regional semifinal bout and then disposed of Middletown Madison 61-42 in the regional final. Anna is led by head coach Jack Billing and senior Natalie Billing (17.0 ppg), sophomore Cayla Bensman (11.9 ppg) and senior Erica Huber (11.3 ppg).

Four-time defending state champion **Shaker Heights Hathaway Brown** (21-6) will look to make it five state titles in a row as the Blazers are returning to the Division II state tournament for the seventh consecutive year. Hathaway Brown, which has made it to the championship game every year with runner-up finishes in '07 and '08, defeated Canfield 49-34 in its regional final game. The Blazers are led by head coach Paul Barlow and the impressive senior duo of Vanessa Smith (16.5 ppg) and Nia Marshall (15.1 ppg). No. 1-ranked and undefeated **Clyde** (27-0) hopes to unseat the reigning state champions behind the effort of its junior standout Amanda Cahill (22.3 ppg). The Fliers,

led by 17-year head coach John Cahill, defeated No. 6 Toledo Rogers, 61-53, in their regional final and are putting up an average of 69.0 points per game, the most in the Division II field. The second Division II game features another intriguing matchup between the 2012 runner-up, No. 3 **Millersburg West Holmes** (27-1), and unranked **Dayton Chaminade Julianne** (19-9). West Holmes is led by head coach Lisa Patterson and its only loss of the season came to the hands of Division IV state finalist, Berlin Hiland. The Knights are led by junior Laina Snyder (16.0 ppg) and are back in the state tournament for the seventh time in school history, with state titles coming in 1984, 85 and 86. The Knights are coming off regional wins against Columbus Bishop Hartley (59-49) and Fairfield Union (59-44). The Knights' opponent, Dayton Chaminade Julianne, is making its seventh state tournament appearance but first since 2005. The Eagles are led by head coach Mandy Myers and feature a balanced starting five who all average between five and nine points per game. CJ defeated Columbus Eastmoor Academy (54-36) and Dayton Carroll (47-45) in overtime in its regional final tournament trail.

The Division I bracket is highlighted by two-time defending state champion and No. 1-ranked **Twinsburg** (28-0). Head Coach Julie Solis, who is 103-5 in five years at the school, is hoping to lead the Tigers to their third state title in as many appearances. Just as she did in their 44-41 regional final win over No. 7 Solon, Solis will rely heavily on seniors Ashley Morrisette (19.1 ppg), Brooke Smith (14.0 ppg) and junior Baleigh Reid (11.0 ppg) to provide the bulk of the Tigers' offense. First-time state qualifier **Lewis Center Olentangy Orange** (26-2), led by head coach Mary Ann Grimes, defeated Gahanna Lincoln (63-52) and North Canton Hoover (61-55) in its regional tournament run. The Pioneers are led by seniors Taylor Agler (15.6 ppg) and Mya Walker (15.1 ppg) and are hoping to bring home their school's first state title. The other side of the bracket is a rematch of the first 2012 state semifinal contest between No. 2 **Kettering Fairmont** (25-1) and unranked **Toledo Notre Dame Academy** (25-3). In the 2012 version of the contest Fairmont won 54-45. Fairmont went on to finish as the runner-up and is making its fourth-consecutive state tournament, with hopes to bring home its school's first state crown. Head coach Tim Cogan will rely on his imposing trio of Kathryn Westbeld (15.0 ppg), Makayla Waterman (15.0 ppg) and Chelsea Welch (14.0 ppg) to lead the Firebirds. Their opponent, Notre Dame Academy, is led by head coach Travis Galloway and comes into the state tournament with impressive wins over No. 8 Perrysburg (41-30) and No. 6 Wadsworth (43-39) in the regional tournament. The Eagles, who start three sophomores, will be led by junior Jayda Worthy (12.1 ppg) and sophomores Tierra Floyd (11.2 ppg) and Kaayla McIntyre (10.8 ppg).