

Boys' Basketball in Putnam County

INTRODUCTION

Some abbreviations will be used in this paper. As you are reading it, please refer to this list if necessary.

BVC	Blanchard Valley Conference
CG	Columbus Grove
CC	Crawfis College
CNR	Continental News Review
GAA	Girls Athletic Association
GIA	Girls Interscholastic Association
FJ	Fort Jennings
HS	High School
LFP	Leipsic Free Press
MC	Miller City
NWC	North West Conference
OP	Ottawa Public
OG	Ottawa-Glandorf
OHSAA	Ohio High School Athletic Association
PC	Putnam County
PCAA	Putnam County Athletic Association
PCG	Putnam County Gazette
PCL	Putnam County League
PCT	Putnam County Tournament
PCS	Putnam County Sentinel
PCV	Putnam County Vidette
PG	Pandora-Gilboa
SPPS	Sts. Peter and Paul School
WBL	Western Buckeye League
WCN	Western County News

The information for this document has come from many places such as newspapers, yearbooks, scorebooks, school news letters, personal memories, school board minutes, countless interviews, previously written booklets, old photographs, etc.

The year books, scorebooks, school newsletters, and photographs provided specific information on respective basketball teams. However, the bulk of the information on the previously uncollected data on the early days of Putnam County came from newspapers. Most newspapers in the early days did not have a sport's page as we see today. Short and limited articles were interspersed throughout the paper. They might be on the front page or the last. Schools that had a newspaper in their towns were better covered. Newspapers that have existed in Putnam County are as follows: Putnam County Vidette, Continental News Review, Leipsic Free Press, Putnam County Gazette, Putnam County Sentinel, Pandora Times, The Kalida Record, Gilboa Gazette and the Western County News.

The history of boys' basketball in Putnam County has many different and interesting facets. The following

areas will be addressed: Schools, the Putnam County League, the Teams, the Coaches, the Players, the Putnam County Tournaments, Putnam County Foul Shooting Contests, the Game results, the Gymnasiums and the Records.

THE SCHOOLS OF PUTNAM COUNTY

At one time or another there were nineteen different high schools playing boys' basketball in Putnam County. As schools consolidated through the years, the number of schools gradually declined to the present number of nine. The entire list is as follows: Belmore, Blanchard, Columbus Grove, Continental, Crawfis College, Fort Jennings, Glandorf, Kalida, Leipsic, Miller City, Ottawa, Ottawa-Glandorf, Ottawa Public, Ottawa SPPS, Ottoville, Palmer, Pandora, Pandora-Gilboa and Vaughnsville.

The current high schools in Putnam County are Columbus Grove, Continental, Fort Jennings, Kalida, Leipsic, Miller City, Ottawa-Glandorf, Ottoville and Pandora-Gilboa.

Belmore consolidated with Leipsic in the early 1930's. Its last entry in the PCT was in 1932. Belmore recorded basketball scores from 1922-1932. Leipsic has scores from 1916 to the present.

Crawfis College and the Gilboa district joined to form Blanchard High School in 1940. Its last entry in the PCT was in 1939. Crawfis College has scores from 1916-1939.

Blanchard and Pandora consolidated to form Pandora-Gilboa High School in 1952. Blanchard's last entry in the PCT was in 1951. It has basketball scores from 1940-1951. Pandora's last entry in the PCT was in 1951. It has scores from 1915-1951. Pandora-Gilboa has basketball scores from 1952 to the present.

Vaughnsville consolidated with Columbus Grove in 1963. Its last entry in the PCT was in 1962. Vaughnsville has recorded basketball scores from 1915-1962. Columbus Grove has scores from 1914 to the present.

In the summer of 1941, Palmer High School was dissolved and a new school district was formed. Some of the New Cleveland area was added to the original Palmer district. A portion of the old Palmer district was taken away and put into the Continental school district. Thus, the 'new school' was the 'old school' with a new name. It was renamed the Miller City-New Cleveland School District. Palmer's last entry in the PCT was in 1941. It has recorded basketball scores from 1924-1941. Miller City has scores from 1942 to the present.

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The consolidation of Ottawa Public, Ottawa SPPS and Glandorf took place over a three-year period. Ottawa Public and Ottawa SPPS joined together in 1962 to form Ottawa High School. Ottawa then joined with Glandorf in 1965 to form Ottawa-Glandorf. Ottawa Public's last entry in the PCT was in 1961. It has recorded basketball scores from 1908-1961. Ottawa SPPS's last entry in the PCT was in 1961. It has scores from 1928-1961. Ottawa's last entry in the PCT was in 1964. It has scores from 1962-1964. Glandorf's last entry in the PCT was in 1964. It has scores from 1915-1964. Ottawa-Glandorf has recorded basketball scores from 1965 to the present.

Three schools are basically the same since their beginning, Continental, Fort Jennings and Kalida. Continental has recorded basketball scores from 1910 to the present, Fort Jennings from 1940 to the present and Kalida from 1915 to the present.

All the schools in Putnam County participate in the PCL except for Ottawa-Glandorf. OG participated in the PCL in 1965-1967, but it is now a member of the WBL. Leipsic, Pandora-Gilboa and Columbus Grove also play in another league. Besides the PCL, Leipsic and Pandora-Gilboa are in the BVC and Columbus Grove plays in the NWC.

THE BEGINNING OF HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL IN PUTNAM COUNTY AND THE FORMATION OF THE PCL

The first recorded boys' basketball score was in 1908 when Ottawa lost to Defiance 27-25.

A. F. Ptak was the basketball coach at Continental in 1910, but no game results were found. The earliest picture of a team and its coach was Continental in 1912.

In 1915, Columbus Grove, Glandorf, Kalida, Pandora and Vaughnsville had teams with Columbus Grove posting a 6-2 record.

In 1916, Pandora, coached by Lester Harkness, claimed to be the Champions of Putnam County with a record of 9-2. The article stated that Pandora had played outside basketball before but that this was its first 'indoor team'.

The seasons from 1917 to 1919 were similar to the previous years with a sporadic reporting of games. Leipsic, coached by William E. Edwards, posted a 14-2 record in 1917 and Tom Kurtis is mentioned as Ottawa Public's coach in 1918. In 1919, the

legendary Louis W. Heckman from Ottoville was first mentioned. Only three games were reported with Delphos St. Johns. Ottoville won one and lost two.

In 1920, three complete schedules were reported for Continental, Leipsic and Pandora. All of Continental's game results were found, with Coach Bert Mull leading them to a 12-8 record.

In 1921, another new aspect to Putnam County basketball was that teams started to play in post season tournaments leading to a state championship. These tournaments were different than today because schools were separated by town size and only invited schools could participate. This tourney was broken into two classes, A and B. The Class A level was for towns with 2,500 or more people. The Class B level was for towns with less than 2,500 people. Columbus Grove, Leipsic, Pandora and Vaughnsville participated in the Defiance Tournament for Northwestern Ohio. Leipsic, with a 16-9 record and coached by Harry Kerns, played eight tournament games, six in one day. As a result of this feat of stamina, Leipsic placed 3rd in the Class B Tournament. Gomer won the Class B and Montpelier won the Class A.

In 1922, the first Putnam County Tournament was held at the Ottawa Armory. It was not an elimination tourney leading to the state tournament, but just a tournament to determine the best team in Putnam County. Some of the county schools played basketball that season, but chose not to participate in this tourney. Those not participating were Belmore, Columbus Grove, Crawfis College, Glandorf and Ottoville. Those that did participate were Continental, Kalida, Leipsic, Ottawa Public, Pandora and Vaughnsville. Ottawa Public placed 1st, Kalida 2nd and Continental 3rd.

Thus, this was not a Putnam County League championship, but it was the first organized method for determining the best boys' basketball team in PC.

In 1923, no mention of a PCT is recorded, but the majority of the teams were still participating in the post season invitational tournaments. These tournaments were having serious problems since so many teams wanted to play in them. Defiance had over 100 teams trying to playing in its two-level tourney. As a result, it was determined to break the post season tournaments into many county tournaments at the first level. The Class A level was for schools with 150 boys or more. The Class B level was for schools with less than 150 boys. The boys in the top four grades, 9-12, were counted. In 1970, this was changed to the top three grades, 10-12.

In 1924, basketball tournaments changed dramatically. All county teams had to play in the Putnam County Tournament in order to advance in the Ohio High School

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Athletic Association's state tournament. From 1924 to 1934, the PCT was the only documented way that the best team in boys' basketball was picked. During this time period, the superintendents, coaches and faculty advisors would administer to athletics in PC but no league schedule or league champion in basketball was organized.

During this time frame, however, a Putnam County Track Meet was organized and run each year by the administrators. In 1931, the first PC baseball league was organized. A schedule and rules governing the league were reported in the county newspapers. Glenn Hilty of Pandora was elected president, Homer G. Jones of Vaughnsville, vice president and Supt. Dale Rikard of Crawfis College was chosen secretary.

In 1932, an article in the Putnam County Gazette reports that Ottawa Public lost a boys' basketball game to Vaughnsville "by one point in their only league defeat". Another article mentioned that "Vaughnsville last year's County Champions, were decisively beaten by Gomer". It seems that even though there was no official PC basketball league, the other county schools were still recognized as 'league' games and that the winner of the PCT was recognized as the champion of Putnam County.

In the fall of 1933 the Putnam County Sentinel printed a detailed report on the formation of the PCAA.

ATHLETICS IN HIGH SCHOOL Association Formed in 1933 to Promote Policies

A Putnam County Athletic Association was formed recently, with the county superintendent an ex-officio member and the management vested in the board of control, consisting of a member from each school, said member to be either the superintendent, principal or faculty manager of athletics.

The object of the association is to promote a practical working basis for the mutual well-being of the schools of Putnam County, so that the policies of the state athletic association may be realized to the fullest extent.

Any school that is a member in good standing in the state association is eligible to membership, and is accepted as soon as the administrative head of the school has signed the prescribed membership blank. At the annual teachers' institute, the board of control organizes by selecting from its membership a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer for a term of one year.

The annual dues are one dollar for each member, payable January 1st. A school which has not paid before Feb. 1st is automatically dropped from membership.

The constitution and rules of the association may be amended by a majority vote of the member schools and the changes become effective at the time specified in the amendment. The board of control may make regulations to promote the aims and interest of the association.

PCL BASKETBALL'S 1st YEAR IN 1935

In the spring of 1934, the "Putnam County Athletic Association met in the county superintendent's office and formed a basketball league for the 1934-1935 season". Ten teams were entered to play. The league sites were to be reversed for the 1935-1936 season. This is the first documented year for the PCL in basketball. The boys' PCL champion in 1935 was Ottoville with a 10-0 record. Ottoville had a 20-1 record and an undefeated regular season that year. They also won the PCT.

In 1936, Vaughnsville, coached by Eldon C. Shook, won the boys' PCL with a 10-0 record. Vaughnsville had an undefeated regular season, finishing at 16-1 and placing first in the PCT.

THE 4-YEAR PLAN FROM 1937-1940

At the spring, Putnam County Athletic Association meeting in 1936, a basketball plan for the next four seasons 1937-1940, was submitted by Coach Willard Schaller of Columbus Grove that "was deemed most suitable for this county". "Under Mr. Schaller's plan each school in the county will play six Putnam County teams and may fill out the rest of their schedule as they see fit. Over a period of four years the plan equalizes every schedule so that each team plays the same number of teams and the same number of games at home as away from home." This particular league set up was designed to have the county schools play each other on a regular basis, but it was not meant to determine a yearly PCL basketball champion. Ottoville, the 1936 PCL champion, gives this plan for 1937 credibility since they did not play four other county schools, Continental, Glandorf, Ottawa Public or Palmer.

During the fall meeting of 1937, members of the PCAA discussed concerns about the "advisability of continuing the County Basketball League" for the 1937-1938 season. There was a major concern between the larger and smaller schools, with the small high schools in favor of continuing the present set-up, while the larger schools felt it was a great handicap to their teams. There was no explanation as to which schools were considered the small

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or larger schools of Putnam County. The schools did not play all the other schools in the county.

However, in February of the 1938 season there was a head line article in the Continental News Review which said "Pirates Still Undeclared in County". In the article, it stated that "along with this thrilling game the Pirates took the League Championship for the year of 1937-1938". Continental is still playing a partial schedule. They were undefeated against the Putnam County schools they played, but they didn't play Columbus Grove, Crawfis College, Kalida or Ottawa SPPS.

There is no mention of the Putnam County basketball league in 1939. Leipsic placed first in the PCT but did not play Crawfis College or Glandorf in regular season play. Glandorf placed 2nd in the PCT but did not play Columbus Grove, Leipsic or Vaughnsville.

There is no mention of the Putnam County basketball league in 1940. Vaughnsville placed first in the PCT but did not play Fort Jennings, Pandora or Palmer. Ottoville placed 2nd in the PCT but did not play Blanchard or Glandorf. This set up for 1939 and 1940 still fits the league parameters that were set up by the PCAA for basketball from 1937-1940.

PCL SET-UP FOR 1941 & 1942

The cancellation of girls' basketball following the 1940 season had no effect on the boys' league scheduling. However, the boys did go to a double-elimination PCT in 1941. In the 1939 fall meeting of the PCAA, "it was decided to choose a high school basketball champion every two years". A schedule would be set up where each school would play half the league schedule in 1941 and the other half in 1942. At the conclusion of the 1942 season, a PCL champion would be declared.

At the conclusion of the 1941 season, Vaughnsville, Continental and Columbus Grove finished the first half of the season with 5-1 record. Some problems with this two-year plan developed in the 1942 season and adjustments had to be made. In 1941, Glandorf lost to Continental. However, Glandorf did not play Vaughnsville in 1941 and did not have a team in 1942. As a result, Vaughnsville's defeat of Glandorf in the PCT was counted as a league game.

A second development was that Kalida started play in 1942, but didn't play in 1941. As a result, Kalida played an eleven-game league schedule in one year whereas the other teams played five or six league games each season. They were 0-11 in the PCL.

As a result of this two-year plan, Continental and Vaughnsville finished in a tie with an 11-1 record. Since Continental and Vaughnsville played each other in the last game of the season in a non-league game, this game was used as a tie breaker. Vaughnsville won. This gave the 1942 PCL championship to Vaughnsville.

PCL BASKETBALL DROPPED IN 1943

In the spring of 1942, a Putnam County Athletic Association meeting was held. It was mentioned that "basketball for the coming year, 1943, also had its place on the program". However, in 1943 the PCL for basketball was dropped due to the war effort. The Pandora Times reported on October 29, 1942, that "high school coaches and school officials met at Vaughnsville Tuesday night to consider the fate of basketball in Putnam County during the gasoline rationing, and it was voted to continue basketball, but abandon the Putnam County League". It was mentioned that squads should be limited in size and only the varsity teams would play. Schools of any distance would not be played.

This move was more symbolic than effective. In 1942, 188 regular season games were played and, in 1943, 175 were played. This was a difference of only one game per school since twelve schools participated in the PCT in 1943. There also didn't seem to be a noticeable effort made to limit the miles traveled. For example, Ottawa SPPS played Celina Immaculate Conception; Fort Jennings played two Lima schools; Kalida played Blanchard twice; Ottoville played Fremont St. Joseph and Pandora. In contrast, Columbus Grove's most distant game was with Ottoville.

PCL UP AND RUNNING AGAIN IN 1944

In the fall of 1943, the Putnam County Athletic Association stated that "a county high school basketball league will be in operation again this season after a lapse of one year". The PCL was set up so that all twelve schools would play all the other league schools. A champion would be declared at the conclusion of the season. This same format has now been used for boys' basketball for determining the PCL championship for 74 consecutive years 1944-2017.

PUTNAM COUNTY LEAGUE TRIVIA

Kalida has won the most titles with 25. All of the 19 Putnam County schools, past and current, have won at least one PCL championship except for Belmore, Crawfis College, Ottawa and Ottawa Public. Ottoville and Miller City share the best PCL record at 12-0 in 1947 and 1950 respectively. Miller City also has the fewest wins of an undefeated champion with a 6-0 record in 1990.

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The most consecutive league wins was accomplished by the OG Titans when they won 24 straight from 1965-1967. The most consecutive league titles record is claimed by the MC Wildcats when they won four consecutive titles from 1961-1964. There was a three-way tie for first place five different times. This happened in 1964, 1977, 1991, 1998 and 2022.

STATE CHAMPIONS
1950 1981 2000 2004 2008 2013

Miller City - 1950

The Miller City 'Mighty Mites' won the Class B State Championship in 1950 by defeating Eaton 44-36. The Wildcats finished 1st in the PCL with a 12-0 record, 1st in the PCLT and had an undefeated season record of 29-0. They were coached by Norris Simpson and led by All-PCLT players Ralph Meyer and Frank Schroeder.

Kalida - 1981

Kalida won the State Championship in 1981 by defeating C.A.P.E. 58-44. The Wildcats, with a 6-1 record, were Co-champs of the PCL with Fort Jennings and had an overall 27-1 record. They were coached by Dick Kortokrax and led by All-PCL players Dan Utendorf, Greg Verhoff and Rob Kortokrax.

Fort Jennings - 2000

Fort Jennings won the Division IV State Championship in 2000 by defeating St. Henry 64-58. The Musketeers finished 2nd in the PCL with a 6-1 record and had an overall 24-3 record. They were coached by John VonSossan and led by All-PCL players Kevin Grothouse, Matt Metzger and Kyle Liebrecht.

Ottawa-Glandorf - 2004

Ottawa-Glandorf won the Division II State Championship in 2004 by defeating Canal Fulton 75-42. The Titans finished 1st in the WBL with an 8-1 record and had an overall 27-1 record. They were coached by Dave Sweet and led by All-WBL players Eric and Tim Pollitz.

Ottawa-Glandorf - 2008

Ottawa-Glandorf won the Division III State Championship in 2008 by defeating Sugar creek Garaway 62-44. The Titans lost 3 WBL games early in the season, but finished strong with a 23-5 record. They were coached by Josh Leslie and led by All-WBL players Justin Schomaeker, Jake Meyer and Taylor Pothast.

Ottawa-Glandorf - 2013

Ottawa-Glandorf won the Division III State Championship in 2013 by defeating Versailles 67-46. The 26-3 Titans lost two WBL games late in the season, but finished strong by winning the last 11 games in a row. They were coached by Tyson McGlaughlin and led by All-WBL players T.J. Metzger, Mike Rosebrock and Noah Bramlage.

REGIONAL CHAMPIONS

***1925 *1937 1967 1972 1977 1977 1978 1978 1980**
1988 1996 2005 2006 2009 2011 2012 2013 2018
2021 2021 2022 2023 2024

*In 1925 and 1937, Leipsic and Ottoville respectively, went directly to the state tournament from the District Championship. There were no regional tournaments at that time.

Leipsic - 1925

In 1925, Leipsic placed 2nd in the PCT, losing to Ottawa Public 26-27. However, the two schools met again in the District Tournament and Leipsic won 26-16. The Vikings later defeated Delphos St. Johns in the District Finals 25-13 to advance to the State Tournament. Leipsic lost in the State-Quarter Finals in 1925 to Oberlin 16-33. Their overall record was 13-7. The Vikings were coached by Al J. Sacksteder. They were led by All-PCL players Bob Hutton, Bill Wagner and Oscar Robinson.

Ottoville - 1937

In 1937 Ottoville won the PCT by defeating Columbus Grove 35-23. The Big Green won the District Finals by edging Haviland 26-24 to advance to the State Tournament. Ottoville lost in the State Quarter-Finals to Lockland 14-40. Their overall record was 19-5. Ottoville was coached by Louis W. Heckman and led by All-PCT players Cyril Becker, Leis and Wannemacher.

Kalida - 1967

Kalida won its 1st Regional Championship in 1967 by defeating Fayette 67-65. They lost in the State Semi-Finals to Arcanum 48-55. The Wildcats were 5-3 in the PCL and had an overall record of 17-9. Kalida was coached by Allan Clase and led by All-PCL player Bill Trenkamp.

Continental - 1972

Continental won its 1st Regional Championship in 1972 by defeating Hardin Northern 89-87. They lost in the State Semi-Finals to Ridgedale 68-73. The Pirates were 4-3 in the PCL and had an overall record of 19-6. Continental was coached by Don Huber and led by All-PCL players Greg Spitalne and Don Brown.

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Continental - 1977

Continental won its 2nd Regional Championship in 1977 by defeating New Bremen 65-62. They lost in the State Semi-Finals to Fort Loramie 50-70. The Pirates, Co-champions of the PCL with Fort Jennings and Kalida with a 5-2 record, had an overall record of 20-7. Continental was coached by Don Huber and led by All-PCL players Ron Harter and Kevin Homier.

Ottawa-Glandorf - 1977

Ottawa-Glandorf won its 1st Regional Championship in 1977 by defeating Lexington 75-69. They lost in the State Semi-Finals to Cathedral Latin 67-85. The Titans won the WBL with a 7-2 record and had an overall record of 22-3. Ottawa-Glandorf was coached by Ron Niekamp and led by All-Ohio Ken Pothast, Joe Maas and Al Laubenthal.

Ottawa-Glandorf - 1978

Ottawa-Glandorf won its 2nd Regional Championship in a row in 1978 by defeating Elyria 63-57. They lost in the State Semi-Finals to Portsmouth 46-59. The Titans had a 5-4 WBL record and had an overall record of 18-7. Ottawa-Glandorf was coached by Ron Niekamp and led by All-WBL players Joe Maas and Al Kaufman.

Ottoville - 1978

Ottoville won its 1st Regional Championship in 1978 by defeating Marion Local 57-48. However, in their 2nd trip to State, they lost in the State Semi-Finals to Tipp City Bethel 49-53. The Big Green had a 5-2 PCL record and an overall record of 23-4. Ottoville was coached by Phil Muehlfeld and led by All-PCL players Joe Kemper and Keith Miller.

Kalida - 1980

Kalida won its 2nd Regional Championship in 1980 by defeating the Upper Scioto Valley Rams 71-69. They lost in the State Semi-Finals to Cincinnati Country Day 66-72. The Wildcats were 6-1 in the PCL but Ottoville was first with a 7-0 record. Kalida's overall record was 25-2. The Wildcats were coached by Dick Kortokrax and led by All-PCL players Barry VonderEmbse and Jeff Nartker.

Kalida - 1988

Kalida won its 4th Regional Championship in 1988 by defeating East Canton 59-57. They lost in the State Finals to Columbus Wehrle 54-71. Kalida won the PCL with a 7-0 record and had an overall record of 25-2. The Wildcats were coached by Dick Kortokrax and led by All-PCL players Brian Vorst and Dave Hovest.

Ottawa-Glandorf - 1996

Ottawa-Glandorf won its 3rd Regional Championship in 1996 by defeating Columbus East 75-57. They lost in the State Finals to Orrville 63-64. The Titans won the WBL with a 9-0 record and had an overall record of 25-2. Ottawa-Glandorf was coached by David Sweet and led by All-WBL players Ryan Maag and Brad Schumaker.

Continental - 2005

Continental won its 3rd Regional Championship in 2005 by defeating Tiffin Calvert 64-58. They lost in the State Semi-Finals to Columbus Africentric 61-45. They were later awarded a win due to a forfeit. The Pirates won the PCL with a 6-1 record and had an overall record of 23-3. Continental was coached by Kevin Homier and led by All-PCL players Kurtis Brown and Nick Wilson.

Columbus Grove - 2006

Columbus Grove won its 1st Regional Championship in 2006 by defeating Wynford 68-63. They lost in the State Finals to South Webster 83-65. The Bulldogs had a 21-6 record. Columbus Grove was coached by Troy Schwemley and led by All-PCL players Kyle Meyer and Eric Maag.

Kalida - 2009

Kalida won its 5th Regional Championship in 2009 by defeating Toledo Christian 46-41. They lost in the State Finals to Oak Hills 48-43. Kalida was the Co-Champion of the PCL with a 6-1 record and had an overall record of 23-5. The Wildcats were coached by Dick Kortokrax and led by All-PCL players Jordan Basinger, Scott Schnipke and Justin Kahle.

Continental - 2011

Continental won its 4th Regional Championship in 2011 by defeating McComb 37-34. They lost in the State Semi-Finals to Berlin Highland 70-56. The Pirates had a 5-2 PCL record and an overall record of 21-4. Continental was coached by Kevin Homier and led by All-PCL players Brock Homier and John Spitnale.

Ottawa-Glandorf - 2012

Ottawa-Glandorf won its 6th Regional Championship in 2012 by defeating LCC 44-38. They lost in the State Semi-Finals to Portsmouth 74-66. The Titans had a 7-2 WBL record and an overall record of 19-7. Ottawa-Glandorf was coached by Tyson McGlaughlin and led by All-WBL players Michael Rosebrock and T.J. Metzger.

Leipsic - 2013

Leipsic won its 1st Regional Championship in 2013 by defeating Ottawa Hills 63-54. The Vikings defeated Fairfield Christian 61-58 in the State Semi-Finals and lost to Cleveland Villa Angela-St. Joseph 87-63 in the State Finals. Leipsic had a 7-0 PCL record, a 7-2 BVC record and an overall record of 25-5. Leipsic was coached by

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Scott Maag and led by All-PCL players Devin Mangas, Austin Brown and Zach Kuhlman.

Pandora-Gilboa – 2018

Pandora-Gilboa won its 1st Regional Championship in 2018 by defeating Crestview 70-58. The Rockets lost to Marion Local 56-54 in the State Semi-Finals. Pandora-Gilboa had a perfect 7-0 PCL record, a perfect 11-0 BVC record and an overall record of 26-2. Pandora-Gilboa was coached by Joe Braidic and led by All-PCL players Drew Johnson and Jared Breece.

Columbus Grove – 2021

Columbus Grove won its 2nd Regional Championship in 2021 by defeating New Bremen 50-48. They lost in the State Finals to Botkins 60-44. The Bulldogs had a 6-1 PCL record, an 8-0 NWC record and an overall record of 25-3. Columbus Grove was coached by Chris Sautter and led by All-PCL Players Blake Reynolds and Tayt Birnesser.

Ottawa-Glandorf – 2021

Ottawa-Glandorf won its 8th Regional Championship in 2021 by defeating Johnstown 64-56. They lost in the State Semi-Finals to Lutheran East 58-52. The Titans had a 7-2 WBL record and an overall record of 20-5. Ottawa-Glandorf was coached by Tyson McGlaughlin and led by All-WBL players Owen Nichols and Brennen Blevins.

Ottawa-Glandorf – 2022

Ottawa-Glandorf won its 9th Regional Championship in 2022 by defeating Colonel Crawford 51-44. They lost in the State Finals to Cincinnati Taft 48-45. The Titans had a 9-0 WBL record and an overall record of 25-3. Ottawa-Glandorf was coached by Tyson McGlaughlin and led by All-WBL players Colin White, Eli Schmenk, Theo Maag and Carter Schimmoeller.

Ottawa-Glandorf – 2023

Ottawa-Glandorf won its 10th Regional Championship in 2023 by defeating Wayne Trace 62-55. They lost in the State Finals to Lutheran East 67-61. The Titans had a 9-0 WBL record and an overall record of 25-4. Ottawa-Glandorf was coached by Tyson McGlaughlin and led by All-WBL players Colin White, Theo Maag, Caden Erford and Hunter Stechschulte.

Ottawa-Glandorf – 2024

Ottawa-Glandorf won its 11th Regional Championship in 2024 by defeating Margaretta 57-43. They lost in the State Semi-Finals to Harvest Prep 61-59. The Titans had a 9-0 WBL record and

an overall record of 24-4. Ottawa-Glandorf was coached by Tyson McGlaughlin and led by All-WBL players Colin White, Caden Erford and Grady Toumazos.

OTHER MEMORABLE TEAMS

Miller City and Columbus Grove - 1952

In 1952, Miller City and Columbus Grove tied for the PCL with a 10-1 record. Miller City had defeated Columbus Grove in league play 44-42 and 32-30 in the PCT. However, in the District Finals, Columbus Grove defeated Miller City 26-25. These two, evenly matched, PCL championship teams played three games and only five points separated them. Columbus Grove finished with a 22-4 record and MC was 25-2.

Ottawa SPPS - 1957

One underdog team that got 'hot' in tournament play and advanced to the Regional Tournament was Ottawa SPPS in 1957. SPPS finished 2nd in the PCL and 3rd in the PCT. Following the PCT, SPPS then proceeded to beat North Baltimore, Liberty Benton, Elmore and Vanlue. The Trojans eventually lost 58-63 to Ayersville at the Lima Regional. Ayersville then went on to win the State Championship. The only loss that Ayersville had that season was to Miller City.

MC, Glandorf, Kalida, Ottoville - 1964

Some remember that the 1964 season was the last year for the PCT. It is also thought by many to be one of the strongest years for the PCL. Kalida (18-6), Miller City (17-6) and Ottoville (18-5) tied for the PCL with an 8-1 record. Kalida lost to Miller City, Miller City lost to Ottoville and Ottoville lost to Kalida. In addition to these three strong teams, Glandorf (23-5) finished 6-3 in league play, losing to all three.

However, when the 1964 PCT was over, Glandorf had placed 1st, Miller City 2nd and Kalida 3rd. Ottoville was edged out of the tournament by Kalida in the consolation game. As the tournament progressed, the strength of the PCL was witnessed first hand by Celina ICHS, the number one ranked team in the state of Ohio. Celina eliminated Miller City in the District Semi-Finals 46-44 after trailing the entire game until the last minute of the game. Kalida lost to Celina ICHS 72-63 in an overtime game in the District Finals. The third PCL team eliminated by Celina ICHS was Glandorf in the Regional Finals 60-55. Celina ICHS went on to the State Tournament and lost the championship game. Any one of these four PCL teams seemed to be equal to any teams in the state of Ohio.

Boys' Basketball in Putnam County

Columbus Grove and Ottawa-Glandorf – 2020 Corona Virus Pandemic of 2020

Columbus Grove finished the regular season with a 22-0 record and the State Poll Champions of Ohio in Division IV. The Bulldogs, 25-0, easily rolled through Sectional and District play to get to the Regionals at Bowling Green where they hooked up with the Number 2 team in the state – the 25-0 Antwerp Archers. Columbus Grove defeated Antwerp 55-50 to set up a Regional Final game with Parkway. All tournament play in Ohio was then postponed. It was then cancelled by the OHSAA due to the Pandemic. Columbus Grove finished 26-0.

Ottawa-Glandorf finished the regular season with a 21-1 record. The Titans had no problems in Sectional and District play while advancing to Regional play at Bowling Green. However, due to the Pandemic, each school was limited to team family members and playing personnel, approximately 150 people. O-G destroyed Colonel Crawford 66-34 to set up a Regional Final against Evergreen, 25-1. And then all tournament play in Ohio was postponed. It was then cancelled by the OHSAA due to the Pandemic. Ottawa-Glandorf finished 25-1.

THREE BASKETBALL DYNASTIES

Vaughnsville 1924 – 1942

For 19 years, from 1924 to 1942, Vaughnsville DOMINATED basketball in Putnam County by winning nine PCT and two PCL Championships. At the end of this era, from 1940-1942, legendary Stretch Goedde lead Vaughnsville to three PCT and one PCL Championship with an overall record of 54-11.

Kalida 1977 - 1983

From 1977 to 1983, Kalida had arguably the strongest small school boys' basketball teams in Ohio and represented the PCL very well. Kalida's record for these seven years was 146-21.

In 1977, a 17-4 Kalida team lost in the Sectionals to Continental, a state semi-finalist.

In 1978 Kalida, while going 20-3, lost in the District Finals to Ottoville, a state semi-finalist.

In 1980 Kalida, while going 25-2, lost to Cincinnati Country Day in the state semi-finals.

In 1981, a 27-1 Kalida team won the State Championship.

In 1982 and 1983, Kalida lost to Delphos St. Johns in the District Tournament. Each year, Kalida had a 20-3 record. Delphos was the State Runner-up in 82 and the State Champion in 83.

Ottawa-Glandorf 1995 - 2024

From 1995 - 2024, Ottawa-Glandorf has won 16 WBL, 27 Sectional, 19 District, 9 Regional and three State Championships with an overall record of 614 - 146.

From 1995 – 2005, the Titans, coached by Dave Sweet with a record of 219 – 51, won eight WBL, eight Sectional, seven District, two Regional and one State Championship.

From 2001-2004, Ottawa-Glandorf put together four of the best years in Putnam County history. The Titans went 96-9, winning four consecutive WBL, Sectional and District titles. At the Regional level, they were in the finals all four years, but only won one Regional title. If not for Mr. LeBron James and Akron St. Vincent St. Mary's, Ottawa-Glandorf may have gone to state for four consecutive years. The Titans won the State Championship in 2004.

Coach Josh Leslie, 2006 – 2011, kept the tradition going with one WBL, six Sectional, two District, one Regional and one State Championship in 2008. His record was 109 – 35.

Tyson McGlaughlin stepped in and has coached from 2012 - 2024 with a record of 286 - 60. His teams have won 7 WBL, 13 Sectional, 11 District, 6 Regional and one State Championship in 2013.