

Girls' Basketball in Putnam County

INTRODUCTION

Some abbreviations will be used in this book. 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, year books, scorebooks, school newsletters, 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 girls' 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, 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 girls' 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.

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

Girls' Basketball in Putnam County

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 Putnam County schools have had girls' basketball at one time or another except for Ottawa SPPS which never had girl's basketball.

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 earliest picture of a team was the 1912 Continental Pirates and their coach.

The first recorded girls' basketball score was in 1914 when Columbus Grove, coached by F. W. Sexton, defeated an unknown opponent 10-4.

From 1912-1918, only a few schools have any results reported in the newspapers and even fewer scores. In 1917 Leipsic, coached by Earl Harmon, had a 3-2 record. In these five games, the Vikings outscored its opponents 21-12 with two shut outs!

In 1919, seven schools had 17 games reported to the press verses only two schools and no results in 1918.

In 1920, the popularity of girls' basketball became very evident with seven schools playing nearly 60 games

In 1921, another new aspect to Putnam County basketball was that the boys 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.

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 boys' team in Putnam County.

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 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 the boys' teams had to play in the Putnam County Tournament in order to advance in the Ohio High School Athletic Association's State Tournament.

The girls' teams also played in this elimination tournament, but could not advance to the OHSAA State Tournament.

From 1924 to 1934, the PCT was the only documented way that the best girls' team was determined. 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 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

Girls' Basketball in Putnam County

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". Seven 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 1935 girls' PCL champion was Leipsic with a 7-0 record. Leipsic also placed first in the PCT.

In 1936, Leipsic, coached by Earnest D. Radenbaugh, won the girls' basketball PCL again with a 6-1 record and 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 with and without girls' 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 or larger schools of Putnam County. The schools did not play all the other schools in the county.

There is no mention of the Putnam County basketball league in 1939. Ottawa Public placed first in the PCT and had an unofficial "league record of 6-0-1". However, as in previous years, not all the Putnam County schools played each other.

There is no mention of the Putnam County basketball league in 1940. Leipsic won the PCT, but did not play all of the other schools. This set up for 1939 and 1940 still fits the league parameters that were set up by the PCAA for basketball from 1937-1940.

GIRLS' BASKETBALL ENDED IN 1940!

Girls' basketball was terminated in Putnam County following the 1940 season. There were no specific reasons given, but girls' basketball was never completely endorsed by the OHSAA. Girls' teams were permitted to participate in the PCT at the end of the season, but there was no state tournament. At one time, the OHSAA would allow the girls to play only one game per week and boys were sometimes playing two per day.

The girls' game was different than the boys. An obvious difference was that there were six players on a team and they played half-court, three on three. The girls had many tie games since overtime games were not permitted most of the time. Girls' basketball was essentially ended for almost 35 years. However, the OHSAA started administering to the girls' game again and its first state sponsored tournament was in 1976.

Girls' Basketball in Putnam County

PCL SET-UP FOR 1941 & 1942

The cancellation of girls' basketball 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.

PCL 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.

PCL 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 77 consecutive years 1944-2020.

IN 1974 GIRLS ARE PARTICIPATING AGAIN IN THE PCL

Girls' basketball, under the umbrella of the GAA and GIA, started playing for PCL Championships again in 1974 after a 37-year absence. The girls have used this method for 47 consecutive years, 1974-2020.

In 1976, the girls' athletic programs were completely sponsored by the OHSAA.

PUTNAM COUNTY LEAGUE TRIVIA

Ottoville has won the most titles with 17. All the current Putnam County schools have won at least one title with the exception of O-G. Pandora, before the consolidation with Blanchard, tied with Leipsic to win the 1936 championship. This was the only title won by a school that is not currently in the PCL.

The most consecutive league wins by any school is 32. Ottoville accomplished this feat by winning the last two games in 2009, going undefeated in 2010 through 2013 and winning the first two games in 2014. Four consecutive league titles have been claimed by Miller City, 2002-2005, Kalida, 1986-1989 and Ottoville 2010-2013.

STATE CHAMPIONS 1988 1989 1997 2025

Kalida - 1988

Kalida won its 1st State Championship in 1988 by defeating Zanesville Rosecrans 52-46. The Wildcats won the PCL with a 7-0 record and had an overall record of 27-0. Kalida was coached by Frank Schroeder and led by All-PCL players Annette Trenkamp and Mary Peck.

Kalida - 1989

Kalida won its 2nd consecutive State Championship in 1989 by defeating Berlin Hiland 67-45. The Wildcats won the PCL with a 6-0 record and had an overall record of 27-0. Kalida was coached by Frank Schroeder and led by All-PCL players Annette Trenkamp, Sondra Ehrnsberger and Leslie Stechschulte.

Kalida - 1997

Kalida won its 3rd State Championship in 1997 by defeating Fort Loramie 42-38. The Wildcats won the PCL with a 7-0 record and had an overall record of 26-1. Kalida was coached by Deb Lammers and led by All-PCL players Francine Miller and Kerri Unverferth.

Columbus Grove – 2025

Columbus Grove won its 1st State Championship in 2025 by defeating Rootstown 65-46. The Bulldogs placed 2nd in the PCL with a 6-1 record, 1st in the Northwest Conference with a 7-0 record and had an overall record of 28-2. Columbus Grove was coached by Brian Schroeder and led by All-PCL players Lauryn Auchmuty and Nicole Nesby.

Girls' Basketball in Putnam County

REGIONAL CHAMPIONS
1993 1996 2004 2005 2007
2013 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019
2021 2024

Ottoville - 1993

Ottoville won its 1st Regional Championship in 1993 by defeating Hilltop 71-67. They lost in the State Semi-Finals to the Upper Scioto Valley Rams 51-74. The Big Green had a 5-2 PCL record and an overall record of 20-6. Ottoville was coached by Dave Kleman and led by All-PCL players Tracy Wenzlick, Karla Wenzlick and Amy Hilvers.

Ottoville - 1996

Ottoville won its 2nd Regional Championship in 1996 by defeating Minster 49-32. They lost in the State Semi-Finals to Southeastern S.C. 49-52. The Big Green won the PCL with a 7-0 record and an overall record of 24-2. Ottoville was coached by Dave Kleman and led by All-PCL players Karla Wenzlick, Jaime Knippen and Kris Youngpeter.

Miller City - 2004

Miller City won its 1st Regional Championship in 2004 by defeating Stryker 51-28. They lost in the State Semi-Finals to Mansfield St. Peter 45-54. The Wildcats won the PCL with a 7-0 record and an overall record of 25-1. Miller City was coached by Chris Rump and led by All-PCL players Brooke Hermiller, Megan Niese and Lynn Schroeder.

Ottoville - 2005

Ottoville won its 3rd Regional Championship in 2005 by defeating Hopewell-Loudon 48-29. They defeated Xenia Christian 48-41 in the State Semi-Finals but lost to Berlin Hiland 55-47 in the State Championship game. The Big Green placed 2nd in the PCL with a 6-1 record and an overall record of 23-4. Ottoville was coached by Dave Kleman and led by All-PCL players Stacey Wannemacher, Megan Kleman and Amy Honigford.

Ottoville - 2007

Ottoville won its 4th Regional in 2007 by defeating Stryker 53-37. They lost in the State Semi-Finals to Africentric 42-39. The Big Green was Co-Champs in the PCL at 6-1 and an overall record of 21-5. Ottoville was coached by Dave Kleman and led by All-PCL players Courtney Schimmoeller, Erica Vorst and Gina Beining.

Ottoville - 2013

Ottoville won its 5th Regional Championship in 2013 by defeating Arcadia 52-37. They lost in the State Semi-Finals to Fort Loramie 49-42. The Big Green

won the PCL with a 7-0 record and an overall record of 27-1. Ottoville was coached by Dave Kleman and led by All-PCL players Abby Siefker, Rachel Beining and Nicole Vorst.

Ottawa-Glandorf - 2015

Ottawa-Glandorf won its 1st Regional Championship in 2015 by defeating North Union 43-30. They defeated Fairland 55-27 in the State Semi-Finals, but lost to Versailles in the State Finals 49-46. The Titans finished 2nd in the WBL with an 8-1 record and had an overall record of 26-3. Ottawa-Glandorf was coached by Troy Yant and led by All-WBL players Elissa Ellerbrock, Kylie White and Dani Ellerbrock.

Ottawa-Glandorf - 2016

Ottawa-Glandorf won its 2nd Regional Championship in 2016 by defeating Toledo Rogers 46 - 44. They defeated Shaker Heights Hathaway Brown 51 - 40 in the State Semi-Finals, but lost to Kettering Archbishop Alter in the State Finals 74 - 48. The Titans finished 1st in the WBL with an 8 - 1 record and an overall record of 26 - 3. Ottawa-Glandorf was coached by Troy Yant and led by All-WBL players Kadie Hempfling, Kylie White and Dani Ellerbrock.

Ottawa-Glandorf - 2017

Ottawa-Glandorf won its 3rd Regional Championship in 2017 by defeating Norton 51-34. They lost in the State Semi-Finals to Kettering Alter 50-41. The Titans finished 1st in the WBL with a 9 - 0 record and an overall record of 27 - 1. Ottawa-Glandorf was coached by Troy Yant and led by All-WBL players Kadie Hempfling, Kylie White, Lexi Schroeder and Erin Kaufman.

Ottoville - 2017

Ottoville won its 6th Regional Championship in 2017 by defeating Old Fort 59-42. They lost in the State Semi-Finals to Berlin Hiland 44-41. The Big Green placed 2nd in the PCL with a 6-1 record and an overall record of 24-4. Ottoville was coached by Dave Kleman and led by All-PCL players Bridget Landin, Brooke Mangas and Cassandra Kemper.

Ottawa-Glandorf - 2018

Ottawa-Glandorf won its 4th Region Championship and 4th in a row in 2018 by defeating Western Reserve 62-40. They lost in the State Semi-Finals to Africentric 50-37. The Titans finished 1st in the WBL with a 9-0 record and an overall record of 25-3. Ottawa-Glandorf was coached by Troy Yant and led by All-WBL Players Kadie Hempfling, Erin Kaufman and Ashley Schroeder. Kadie was named the WBL Player of the Year for three consecutive years.

Girls' Basketball in Putnam County

Ottoville – 2018

Ottoville won its 7th Regional Championship and 2nd in a row in 2018 by defeating Leipsic 52-29. They defeated Buckeye Central in the State Semi-Finals 44 - 25, but lost to Minster in the State Finals 63-48. The Big Green won the PCL with a 7-0 record and an overall record of 27-3. Ottoville was coached by Dave Kleman and led by All-PCL players Bridget Landin, Casandra Kemper and Kasey Knippen.

Ottoville – 2019

Ottoville won its 8th Regional Championship and 3rd in a row in 2019 by defeating Arlington 62-28. They defeated Shadyside in the State Semi-Finals 50-43, but lost to Minster in the State Finals 53-37. The Big Green finished 2nd in the PCL with a 6-1 record and an overall record of 25-4. Ottoville was coached by Dave Kleman and led by All-PCL players Kasey Knippen and Haley Hoersten.

Ottawa-Glandorf – 2021

Ottawa-Glandorf won its 5th Region Championship in 2021 by defeating Africentric, 38-30. They lost in the State Finals to Berlin Hiland, 45-25. The Titans finished 2nd in the WBL with an 8-1 record and an overall record of 26-3. Ottawa-Glandorf was coached by Troy Yant and led by All-WBL Players Kelsey Erford, Erin Kaufman and Chole Glenn.

Ottawa-Glandorf – 2024

Ottawa-Glandorf won its 6th Regional Championship in 2024 by defeating Margareta 45-26. They lost in the State Finals to Africentric 58-47. The Titans won the WBL with a 9-0 record and had an overall record of 26-3. Ottawa-Glandorf was coached by Troy Yant and led by All-WBL Players Katie Kaufman, Karsyn Erford, Carrie Brinkman, Kaitlyn Kimmet and Myka Aldrich.

FIVE BASKETBALL DYNASTIES

Kalida Wildcats

The Kalida Wildcats and Coach Frank Schroeder had an impressive five year stretch from 1987-1991 when they had five consecutive 20-win seasons with an overall record of 116-11. The Wildcats won four PCL, five Sectional, four District, two Regional and two State Championships. In 1988 and 1989, they were undefeated with 27-0 records. Over four seasons, Kalida won 50 consecutive regular season games. The Wildcats also won 59 consecutive games when the regular season tournament games are combined.

Miller City Wildcats

The Miller City Wildcats and Coach Chris Rump had an impressive five-year stretch from 2002-2006 when they had three consecutive 20-win seasons with an overall record of 98-21. The Wildcats won four PCL, five Sectional, two District and one Regional Championship.

Ottoville Big Green

The Ottoville Big Green and Coach Dave Kleman had 27 years of unparalleled success from 1993-2019.

His first four years, 1993-1996, were amazing when the Big Green went 84-14 with two PCL, four Sectional, four District and two Regional Championships.

Dave and the Big Green had another four-year streak from 2010 - 2013 with a 92 - 6 record with three undefeated regular seasons at 20 - 0 in 2010, 2012 and 2013, four undefeated PCL Championships, four Sectional, three District and one Regional Championship.

Kleman's last three seasons were spectacular with 24 wins in 2017, 27 wins in 2018 and 25 wins in 2019. The Big Green won three Sectional, District and Regional Championships and finished State Runner-Ups in 2018 and 2019.

During Coach Kleman's era, Ottoville had a record of 532-128 with 15 20+ wins in a season, 12 PCL, 23 Sectional, 14 District and 8 Regional Championships.

Ottawa-Glandorf Titans

The Ottawa-Glandorf Titans and Coach Troy Yant are currently on a 13-year stretch from 2013-2025 in which they have had 12 consecutive 20-win seasons, with an overall record of 307-45. The Titans have won nine WBL, 13 Sectional, 10 District and six Regional Championships during this era.

Columbus Grove Bulldogs

The Columbus Grove Bulldogs and Brian Schroeder are currently on a 10-year stretch from 2016-2025 with a record of 205-56. The Bulldogs have won six PCL, six NWC, ten Sectional, six District, one Regional and one State Championship.