

Legendary Coaches

There are many legendary coaches in the history of Putnam County basketball. The most successful ones coached exclusively in Putnam County. A few of them were successful at multiple schools. The following are those that have accumulated a minimum of 200 wins.

Dick Kortokrax

1960 - 2016 890 - 372

Dick Kortokrax who is well known in Putnam County and Ohio as the coach with the most wins in the State of Ohio. Mr. Kortokrax coached for 56 years in Putnam County at three schools, two at Fort Jennings, 13 at Ottoville and 41 at Kalida. His record through 2016 is 890 - 372. At Ottoville, Coach Kortokrax was named the PCL Coach of the Year five times. His teams won four PCL and four Sectional Championships. At Kalida, he has been named the PCL Coach of the Year 13 times. His teams have won 20 PCL, 20 Sectional, 10 District, four Regional and one State Championship. His overall record of 890-372 ranks 1st in Putnam County and the State of Ohio.

Dave Sweet

1980 - 2005 449 - 162

Dave Sweet coached at Ottawa-Glandorf for 26 years from 1980-2005 with a record of 449-162. Coach Sweet was named WBL Coach of the Year 13 times. He won 13 WBL, 20 Sectional, eight District, two Regional and one State Championship. His overall record of 449-162 ranks 2nd in Putnam County.

Louis W. Heckman

1919 - 1951 448 - 169

Louis W. Heckman coached at Ottoville for 30 seasons from 1919-1951 with a record of 448-169. Coach Heckman won the PCL two times and the PCT seven times. His 1937, 19-5 team went to state and lost their first game. His overall record of 448-169 ranks 3rd in Putnam County.

He was the only coach in Putnam County to coach at the same school for 30 years until one of his former players, Dick Kortokrax, passed him by completing his 41st season at Kalida.

Two other teammates of Mr. Kortokrax and Ottoville graduates of 1951 were Tom Weber and Don Altenberger. Mr. Weber won 172 games at Glandorf and Ottawa-Glandorf. Mr. Altenberger won 83 boys' games and 174 girls' games at Fort Jennings for a total of 257 wins. Do you think that Mr. Heckman would have ever imagined that three of his former players would later coach in Putnam County and win nearly 1,300 games?

Mike Lee

1994 - 2016 and 2020 - 2023 368 - 244

Mike Lee coached at Minster for 23 years from 1994-2016 with a record of 314-206. He won 12 Sectional, 6 District and 1 Regional Championship. After sitting out for three seasons, he took the varsity coaching position at Pandora-Gilboa in 2020 where he currently has a record of 54-38. At Pandora-Gilboa, he was named PCL Coach of the Year once. Mike has won one PCL and one Sectional Championship. His overall record of 368-244 ranks 4th in Putnam County.

Roger Renz

1968 - 1991 334 - 165

Roger Renz started out in Continental where he coached for four years, 1968-1971, with a record of 58-21. He then coached Defiance for seven years, 1972-1978, with a record of 111-34. Coach Renz then coached at Findlay for thirteen years, 1979-1991, with a record of 165-110. Roger was named the PCL Coach of the Year twice. He won one PCL and one Sectional Championship. His overall record of 334-165 ranks 5th in Putnam County.

John VonSossan

1987 - 2013 309 - 300

John VonSossan coached at Fort Jennings for 27 years from 1987-2013 with a record of 309-300. Coach VonSossan was named PCL Coach of the Year three times. He won five PCL, 12 Sectional, four District, one Regional and one State Championship. Mr. VonSossan also coached the Fort Jennings' 7th, 8th and 9th boys' teams for nearly 30 years with over 400 wins. His overall record of 309-300 ranks 6th in Putnam County.

Tyson McGlaughlin

2010 - 2023 292 - 73

Tyson McGlaughlin started out coaching at Miller City in 2010 where he coached for two years, 2010-2011, with a record of 30-17. In his first year at MC, he won a Sectional and District Championship.

He has coached at Ottawa-Glandorf for 12 years, 2012-2023, with a record of 262 - 56. At O-G, he has won six WBL, 12 Sectional, 10 District, five Regional and one State Championship. His overall record of 292 - 73 ranks 7th in Putnam County.

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Chris Sautter

2003 – 2023 289 - 204

Chris Sautter started out in Ada where he coached for 14 years, 2003-2016, with a record of 174-144. He has coached at Columbus Grove for seven years, 2017-2023, with a record of 115-60. At Columbus Grove he has been named Coach of the Year once. Chris has won two PCL, four Sectional, three District and one Regional Championship. His overall record of 289-204 ranks 8th in Putnam County.

Don Huber

1972 - 1991 285 - 170

Don Huber coached at Continental for twenty years from 1972-1991 with a record of 285-170. Coach Huber was named the PCL Coach of the Year four times. He won five PCL, ten Sectional, three District and two Regional Championships. His overall record of 285-170 ranks 9th in Putnam County.

Kevin McGlaughlin

1978 - 1996 274 - 154

Kevin McGlaughlin coached at Miller City for nineteen years from 1978-1996 with a record of 274-154. Coach McGlaughlin was named the PCL Coach of the Year four times. He won four PCL, nine Sectional and four District Championships. When his son, Tyson, started coaching at Miller City in 2010 and Ottawa-Glandorf in 2012, Kevin became his assistant. His overall record of 274-154 ranks 10th in Putnam County.

Troy Schwemley

2002 - 2019 247 - 165

Troy Schwemley started out in Columbus Grove where he coached for five years 2002-2006, with a record of 63-53. He then coached at Shelby High School from 2007-2019 with a record of 184-112. At Columbus Grove, Coach Schwemley won four Sectional, one District and one Regional Championship. His overall record of 247-165 ranks 11th in Putnam County.

Joe Braidic

1988 – 1993 1999 – 2010 2017 – 2019
241 - 225

Joe Braidic started out in Evergreen where he coached for three years, 1988-1990, with a record of 9-54. He coached at Pandora-Gilboa for 18 years in three separate stints, 1991-1993, 1999-2010 and 2017-2019 with a record of 232-171. Coach Braidic was named PCL Coach of the Year three times. He won four PCL, two BVC, seven Sectional,

two District and one Regional Championship. His overall record of 241-225 ranks 12th in Putnam County.

Steve Penhorwood

1980 - 1996 232 - 143

Steve Penhorwood started out in Ottoville where he coached for five years, 1980-1984, with a record of 90-27. He then coached at Celina for twelve years, 1985-1996, with a record of 142-116. At Ottoville, he was named the PCL Coach of the Year once and won one PCL and one Sectional Championship. His overall record of 232-143 ranks 13th in Putnam County.

Ron Nienkamp

1973 - 1985 208 – 86

Ron Nienkamp started out in Parkway where he coached for two years, 1973-1974, with a record of 26-14. He then coached at Ottawa-Glandorf for five years, 1975-1979, with a record of 74-35. He took two O-G teams to state in 1976 and 1977. Coach Nienkamp then coached at Lima Senior for six years, 1980-1985, with a record of 108-37. He also took the 1982 Spartan team to state. His overall high school record of 208-86 ranks 14th in Putnam County.

From Lima Senior, he moved to the college ranks and finished his coaching career at Findlay University. At Findlay, Ron coached for twenty-six years, 1986-2011 with a record of 598-185. The Oilers won the 2009 Divisional II National Title with a record of 36-0.

Current Coaches Trying to Catch Up to Coach Kortokrax's 890 Wins

There are three men currently coaching in Putnam County who have over 200 wins. Mike Lee at Pandora-Gilboa has 368 wins, Tyson McGlaughlin at Ottawa-Glandorf has 292 wins and Chris Sautter at Columbus Grove has 289 wins

Unique Situations

There are two father/son coaching combinations in Putnam County, John and Tom VonSossan and Kevin and Tyson McGlaughlin.

John VonSossan coached at Fort Jennings for 27 years with 309 wins and his son Tom, coached at Ottoville for 14 years with 185 wins for a total 41 years and 494 wins.

Kevin McGlaughlin coached at Miller City for 19 years with 274 wins and his son Tyson has coached at Miller City for two years and Ottawa-Glandorf for 12 years with a total of 292 wins. Together, they have coached for 31 years with 566 wins.

Legendary Coaches

One final note as to boys' basketball coaches over the past 100 years in Putnam County, Crawfis College had a unique coaching situation in 1917 and 1922.

The 1917 boys' coach was Miss Della Luginvilla, the first and only female boys' varsity basketball coach in Putnam County.

In 1922, the Crawfis College boys' team didn't have a coach. The boys coached themselves.