

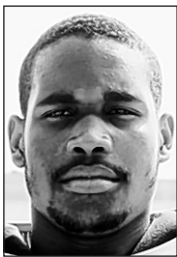
# PLAYOFFS PREVIEW

## Canton McKinley (6-4) at Whitmer (9-1)

Division I: Tomorrow, 7 p.m.

■ **Playoff appearances:** McKinley 18th; Whitmer 11th  
■ **Points scored/allowed:** McKinley 329/194; Whitmer 339/119

■ **Outlook:** City League champion Whitmer, enters as Ohio's eighth-ranked team and the No. 1 seed in Region 2. The only loss for fourth-year coach Joe Palka's Panthers (6-1 in CL) was to St. Francis, 21-17 on Oct. 2. Whitmer is led offensively by QB Joe Missler (138 rushes, 802 yards, 6 TDs; 62-of-118 passing, 856 yards, 5 TDs) and all-purpose Randall Kennedy (302 rushing yards, 350 passing yards). RBs Teryl Mershon (697 rushing yards, 5 TDs) and Micah Merritt (412 yards, 17 TDs), WR Mike Pfaff (23 catches, 392 yards, 4 TDs) and TE Tevin Boykin (16 catches, 375 yards, 4 TDs) provide additional options in Palka's keep-em-guessing, multiple-formation scheme. A sturdy defense is anchored by the vaunted DE duo of 65, 250-pound junior Kenny Hayes (42 tackles, 7 sacks), who has committed to Ohio State, and 6-5, 240-pound Chris Wormley (58 tackles, 6 sacks). Other top tacklers are LBs Corey Compton (63) and Shane Brown (55), and DB Jacson Noon (56). McKinley, which beat rival Massillon Washington in Week 10 to vault from No. 13 to No. 8 in Region 2, is led by offensively RBs Bryce Wilder (1,307 rushing yards, 13 TDs) and Elijah Farrakhan (705 rushing yards, 8 TDs) and QB Kyle Ohradzansky (70-of-150 passing, 1,041 yards, 15 TDs). Bulldog defense is led in tackles by Jewone Snow (46), Ronald Gillom (43) and Jamon McClain (38). McKinley hammered Whitmer 49-7 in last meeting, in the 2006 Region 2 final at Parma.



Hayes

## Rocky River (7-3) at Central Catholic (8-2)

Division II: Tonight, 7:30

■ **Playoff appearances:** Rocky River second; Central Catholic 11th  
■ **Points scored/allowed:** Rocky River 174/180; Central Catholic 272/102

■ **Outlook:** Central had its string of four straight City League championships snapped by Whitmer, but appear ready for solid playoff run. First, however, the 12th-ranked Irish must end streak of three straight first-round playoff losses after their state title run of 2005. Tenth-year coach Greg Dempsey's team is triggered offensively by senior QB Dave Walender (56-of-120 passing, 836 yards, 14 TDs; 232 rushing yards), who set a single-game school record last Friday with 5 TD passes in 40-21 win over St. John's. Central has been boosted by the emergence of junior RB Caleb Goings (184 carries, 849 yards, 10 TDs), and the Irish have perhaps have Ohio's top placekicker in Kyle Burkhardt, who has booted 13 field goals, including one from 57 yards and two more from 52. He also has pinned the opposition back with 27 touchbacks on kickoffs. The Irish defense is keyed up front by DEs Jamaal Tarrent (41 tackles, 8 sacks) and Mike Bonitati (28 tackles, 4 sacks). LBs Chris Hoover (68) Jake Hnederson (63) are the top tacklers, and DB Gerren Duhart has a team-high 4 interceptions. Rocky River's only other playoff berth came in 2007, when the Pirates lost in the second round. They are led offensively by QB Robbie Plagens (128-of-256 passing, 1,560 yards, 13 TDs, 11 INTs). The defense is paced by tackle leaders Tim MacLaughlin (110), Jake Hamilton (79) and Tyler Scott (75).



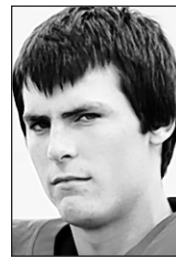
Tarrent

## North Ridgeville (8-2) vs. St. Francis (9-1)

Division II: Tonight, 7:30, at Whitmer

■ **Playoff appearances:** North Ridgeville first; St. Francis 13th  
■ **Points scored/allowed:** North Ridgeville 271/109; St. Francis 265/87

■ **Outlook:** Coach Dick Cromwell's fifth-ranked Knights are back in the postseason for the first time since 2004, and seek a third state title. Cromwell guided state champions in 1984 in D-I, and in 2001 in D-II. The Knights are paced by standout all-around player Scott Loy, a receiver, cornerback and return man who is a proven game-breaker. St. Francis doesn't throw often, but when it does Loy (21 catches, 471 yards, 8 total TDs) is dangerous. QB-SS Tyler Johnston (625 passing yards, 297 rushing yards) is also a key two-way player, and TB Lee Lukasik (136 carries, 772 yards, 11 TDs) is the bread-and-butter player in Knights' run game. Defense is paced by LBs R.J. Rios, Shaun Solly and Lukasik, and tall and agile DBs Danny Yodzis, Johnston and Loy (all 6-foot-2 or taller) highlight a formidable secondary. Knights beat eventual CL champion Whitmer 21-17, but lost chance at league crown with 10-0 loss at Central Catholic. The Rangers tied with Rocky River (Central's first-round opponent) for first place in the West Shore Conference in suburban Cleveland. The Rangers' run-oriented offense is paced by RBs Mohammed Jaber (148 carries, 783 yards, 9 TDs) and Taylor Abraham (95 carries, 465 yards, 4 TDs). QB Michael Mees is 64-of-142 passing for 829 yards and 13 TDs. Dallas Burt leads Rangers in INTs with three.



Loy

## Maple Heights (8-2) at Rogers (9-1)

Division II: Tonight, 7:30

■ **Playoff appearances:** Maple Heights seventh; Rogers third  
■ **Points scored/allowed:** Maple Heights 349/176; Rogers 409/140

■ **Outlook:** Rogers made hay in first two weeks with wins over Anthony Wayne and Southview (each 7-3) and, after Week 4 loss at Whitmer, have not had a true competitive test over the past six weeks in cruising to playoffs. The Rams outscored their last six City League foes 280-33. Thus, the test for 10th-year coach Rick Rios will be generating a playoff-ready intensity level as his speedy squad faces an equally fast Mustangs, who had their most challenging games in weeks 8 and 9 with four-point Lake Erie League losses to D-I foes Mentor and Euclid. Rogers is led by senior QB E.J. Johnson, who led the CL in scoring (168 points) and rushing (1,118 yards on 174 carries), and was among the league leaders in passing (81-of-143, 1,193 yards, 12 TDs). Rams get support from RBs Gary Johnson (457 rushing yards, 7 TDs) and DerJuan Gambrell (429 yards, 6 TDs), and Johnson's top targets are WR Damond Powell (21 catches, 352 yards, 5 TDs) and Johnson (20 catches, 265 yards). Rogers defense is led by LB Ray Bush (71 tackles, 13 for losses). Brandon Hunt (70), Donntae Franklin (53) and Victor Dominguez (49) are other top tacklers. DB Darrell James has 4 INTs. Mustangs are led by QB Shaq Washington (901 rushing yards, 13 TDs; 1,766 passing yards, 19 TDs), RB Devonte Ransom (1,334 rushing yards, 15 TDs), and WR Andre Stuubs (32 catches, 668 yards, 6 TDs).



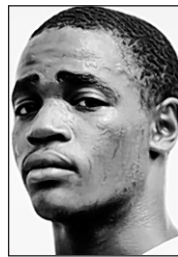
Bush

## Avon Lake (7-3) at Maumee (9-1)

Division II: Tonight, 7:30

■ **Playoff appearances:** Maumee 7th; Avon Lake 15th  
■ **Points scored/allowed:** Maumee 397/111; Avon Lake 291/124

■ **Outlook:** Maumee is making its first playoff appearance since 2004 after capturing its first Northern Lakes League title since 2001. The Panthers qualified four straight years (2001-04) and have a 2-6 all-time playoffs record. In 2003, Avon Lake defeated Maumee 41-7 in the second round en route to a state title. The Shoremen have a 20-13 playoff mark. Maumee is led by senior QB Jake Goatley (1,853 passing yards, 492 rushing, 28 TDs). His top targets are Damon Contat (663, 11 TDs), Jon Hall (389) and Eric Studyvin (309). Junior RB Eric Long (865 rushing) has scored 18 TDs. LB Evan Karchner leads the team with 68 tackles. DL Kevin King has 14 sacks, Studyvin has five interceptions and Contat has 15 tackles for loss. Avon Lake is led by senior RB Mike Mansnerus (1,487 rushing yards, 20 TDs) and senior RB Nick Marinkov (372, 5 TDs). QB Trent Toy (54 of 101 for 957) has seven TDs and seven INTs. WR Ronnie Willoughby (548 yards, 5 TDs) is 6-4. OL Christian Pace (6-3, 270) has committed to play at Michigan. Dan Schneider, standout on both sides, has committed to play at Pittsburgh. Maumee averages 354.5 yards per game and is giving up 202.4. Avon Lake has gained 348 per contest and yielded 211.



Long

## Columbus Eastmoor (8-2) at Napoleon (8-2)

Division III: Tonight, 7:30

■ **Playoff appearances:** Columbus Eastmoor 7th; Napoleon 9th  
■ **Points scored/allowed:** Columbus Eastmoor 266/113; Napoleon 256/89

■ **Outlook:** Eastmoor isn't just any eighth-seeded team that will invade Buckenmeyer Stadium. Last season the Warriors advanced to the state title game in Division III, losing to Aurora 21-10. This season Eastmoor had to replace 19 starters from a year ago. "After we lost the championship game last year, we said we wanted one more opportunity, and now we're in the playoffs for the first time in back-to-back years," coach Jim Miranda told the (Columbus) Dispatch. One player to watch for the Warriors is Ronald Tanner, who has completed 66 of 150 passes for 1,128 yards on offense while making seven interceptions on defense. For Napoleon, Brandon Hummer leads a ground-oriented offense by running for 968 yards and 11 TDs, while John Weaver has added 557 yards and eight scores. QB Nick Rettig has completed 41 of 82 passes for 381 yards and three TDs while running for six more scores. Clint Detmer has run for three scores, caught two more TD passes and also kicks field goals and extra points. Cody Bloom leads the defense with 83 tackles, while Weaver has 62. Expect a defensive struggle in this game: The Wildcats have allowed just 89 points this season, but Eastmoor has surrendered just 113 points and posted four shutouts.



Hummer

## Bryan (8-2) at Columbus DeSales (7-3)

Division III: Tonight, 7:30 p.m.

■ **Playoff appearances:** Bryan 1st; Columbus DeSales 20th  
■ **Points scored/allowed:** Bryan 329/133; Columbus DeSales 263/159

■ **Outlook:** When it comes to experience, this isn't a fair fight. DeSales, which was ranked fifth in the final state poll, is making its 20th playoff appearance, including the last 16 straight seasons. Only two schools have more playoff wins than the Stallions, who have 43. Meanwhile, Bryan will be playing in its first-ever playoff contest. But don't expect the Golden Bears to be intimidated. RB Levi Fisher leads the Bryan rushing attack with 1,322 yards and 19 TDs on 190 carries, while QB Cody Keil has completed 65 of 131 passes for 1,026 yards and 13 scores. Keil's favorite target is WR Alex Nossaman, who has caught 29 passes for 494 yards and seven TDs. Nossaman also leads an opportunistic defense with five interceptions; the Golden Bears have forced 22 turnovers this season. DeSales will counter with a triple-option offense led by QB Nick Gentile and RBs Adam Griffin and Robert Perrine. The Stallions' defense is led by LBs Malcolm Burrell (100 tackles) and Evan Killilea (83). It's interesting to note that DeSales earned the top seed despite its record; the team's three losses came to a pair of playoff-bound D-I schools and Youngstown Cardinal Mooney, the top-ranked team in the state.



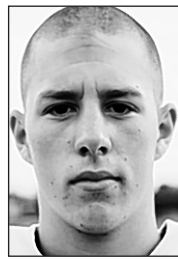
Nossaman

## Edison (8-2) at Genoa (10-0)

Division IV: Tomorrow, 7 p.m.

■ **Playoff appearances:** Genoa 3rd; Edison 2nd  
■ **Points scored/allowed:** Genoa 537/24; Edison 316/150

■ **Outlook:** Genoa is seeded second in Region 14 despite easily handling every opponent. The Comets, who have won 29 straight regular-season games and three straight Suburban Lakes League titles, have a 4-2 playoff record. Genoa was ranked fourth in the final state poll and went 13-0 last year before losing 42-34 in the state semifinals to eventual champion Kettering Alter. Senior QB Matt Bassitt, a three-year starter, has completed 76 of 116 passes for 1,243 yards and 22 touchdowns. RB Greg Hillbrand leads the team with 1,257 yards rushing (13.0 per carry) and 22 TDs. RB Connor Wendt has 613 yards (12.8) and 10 TDs. Wendt also leads the team in receiving (530 yards, 22.1 per catch) and scoring (150 points). Edison, which last appeared in the playoffs in 2003, has never won a playoff game and is seeded seventh. The Chargers dropped their regular-season finale 7-0 to Clyde, but have a perfect record on the road (5-0). RB Dylan Howard paces the ground attack (1,059 yards and 14 TDs). QB Zach Yovanov has completed 60 of 114 passes (52.6 percent) for 974 yards and nine TDs and has rushed for 11 scores. WRs Louie Arreche (201), Brady Gelvin (168) and Ryan Tiura (158) are his top targets. Kyle Matula leads the defense with 145 tackles.



Bassitt

## Eastwood (8-2) at Galion (10-0)

Division IV: Tomorrow, 7 p.m.

■ **Playoff appearances:** Eastwood 6th; Galion 4th  
■ **Points scored/allowed:** Eastwood 368/177; Galion 289/166

■ **Outlook:** Eastwood qualified as the sixth and last seed in Region 14. Galion is the top seed. RB Pernel Conner leads the Eagles with 942 yards rushing, just one more than Cody Seifert, a senior who has a team-high 17 touchdowns. Conner, a junior, has scored 15 TDs. Senior QB Clayton Ruch is 31 of 76 passing for 424 yards and four TDs. His leading targets have been Seifert (240 yards, 2 TDs) and Clay Rolf (211 and 3 TDs). Senior Jake Rogers leads the team with three interceptions. Eastwood is 4-5 all-time in the postseason. The seniors have made three straight playoff trips, reaching the regional semifinals in 2007 and quarterfinals last year. Galion won a state title in 1985 and is 4-2 in the playoffs. Senior RB Cartel Brooks led the Northern Ohio League with 1,282 yards rushing. He has 23 TDs and led the NOL with 146 points. Senior QB Jack Nicholls threw for 861 yards, 10 TDs and was intercepted six times. The Tigers average 230 yards per game rushing and 86 passing and have allowed 145 rushing and 125 passing. Eastwood averages 334 yards (268 rushing) and yields 277 (158 rushing) per contest. The Tigers went 1-9 in 2007 and 5-5 in 2008. They are undefeated under third-year coach Chris Hawkins. Last season Galion ended a 44-game NOL losing streak that covered seven seasons.



Seifert

## Northwood (7-3) at Patrick Henry (10-0)

Division V: Tonight, 7:30

■ **Playoff appearances:** Northwood 5th; Patrick Henry 12th  
■ **Points scored/allowed:** Northwood 369/241; Patrick Henry 419/102

■ **Outlook:** The Rangers' first playoff game since 2004 will be a challenge, as the Patriots are making their eighth consecutive playoff appearance. PH will have seniors Justin Buenger and Aaron George back after both missed last Friday's win over Wauseon because of "disciplinary action," according to coach Bill Inselmann. Buenger has run for 1,428 yards and 26 touchdowns while adding four TD receptions and a score on a kickoff return. QB Luke George has completed 63 of 95 passes for 928 yards and nine TDs with just one interception. LB Joe Imbrock leads the Patriot defense with 102 tackles, while NG Xavier Dye has made 58 stops. The Rangers' run-oriented attack, which has ground out 3,200 yards, is led by RB Zach Bermejo, who has run for 810 yards and scored 16 touchdowns. LB Mike Prothero leads the defense with 82 tackles, while sophomore FS Ricky Hartley has 57. Despite Northwood's youth and playoff inexperience, Inselmann said he won't allow Patrick Henry to overlook the Rangers under coach Ken James. "In 2005, when we won our state title, our toughest game was against Elmwood in the first round - it was a game we barely survived," Inselmann said.



George

## Fremont St. Joseph (9-1) at Leipsic (9-1)

Division VI: Tomorrow, 7 p.m.

■ **Playoff appearances:** Fremont St. Joseph 10th; Leipsic 2nd  
■ **Points scored/allowed:** Fremont St. Joseph 259/151; Leipsic 335/153

■ **Outlook:** While these two schools have never played against one another, they are not strangers. "We scrimmaged against them this year," St. Joseph coach Todd Drusback said. "After we were done, our coaches agreed that they would be one of the better teams we'd see all year." The Vikings won their first Blanchard Valley Conference title since 1994 behind the running of Sonny Hernandez, who has 729 yards and 15 TDs on 116 carries, and Derrick Schroeder, who added 679 yards and 8 TDs on 133 rushes. QB Liam Nadler has completed 99 of 177 passes for 1,345 yards and 15 scores. The Crimson Streaks are led by RB Zach Bowman, who leads the Midland Athletic League with 1,637 yards rushing and 15 TDs. QB Garrett Walker has completed 85 of 151 passes for 1,131 yards and 15 scores. His favorite target is WR Brant Reardon with 33 catches for 378 yards. The Crimson Streaks are making their 10th playoff appearance, but their first since 1997. The wait has been even longer for the Vikings, though, as Leipsic is in the playoffs for just the second time, with the first trip coming in 1994. "I think it's going to be neat for both of our schools, because we both haven't been here for a while," Drusback said.



Bowman

## Blissfield (8-2) at Monroe St. Mary Catholic Central (9-1)

Michigan Division 6: Tonight, 7 p.m.

■ **Playoff appearances:** Blissfield 6th; Monroe SMCC 16th  
■ **Points scored/allowed:** Blissfield 387/184; Monroe SMCC 324/158

■ **Outlook:** Monroe St. Mary has qualified for the postseason six straight seasons and has made the playoffs nine out of the last 10 years. This is the third consecutive year that Blissfield has reached the postseason and the Royals have been in six times since 2003. St. Mary made it to the state championship in 2005, but lost in the final. The Falcons won a championship in 1991 and the Huron League title this season. The Royals also reached the state title game in 2007 but fell. The teams are meeting in the playoffs for the fifth time since 2003 and the Falcons hold a 3-1 edge. SMCC has five running backs that have rushed for more than 400 yards: Chris LaBeau (953, 11 TDs), Michael Howey (703, 10 TDs), T.J. Lovell (619, 10 TDs), Andrew Lamour (482, 6 TDs) and Jack Cusumano (401, 4 TDs). Howey has passed for just 97 yards. Michael Pannone leads the Falcon defense with 105 tackles. Blissfield is led by RBs Dalton Goetz (610 yards, 13 TDs) and Kyle Westfall (450). QB Eric Schmidt has completed 45 of 77 passes (61.6 percent) for 731 yards. His main target is Dylan Esterline (22 catches for 403). The Royals' leading tackler is Eric Ford (66).



Schmidt