

# BOYS' BASKETBALL SECTIONAL PREVIEW

**Rob Lafary**  
SPORTS WRITER

## Bulldogs primed for sectional run

Class 3A Sectional 29 at Greensburg is loaded with talented teams but a favorable draw gives Batesville a chance at its first championship since 2019.

Five teams in the field boast 14 wins or better but of the five, four are packed together in the bottom half of the bracket while Batesville (15-6) sits alone in the top half as the only squad with a winning mark. Class 3A No. 7 Connersville, who is currently 17-4, is considered the slight favorite but will have to go through defending champion Lawrenceburg (17-6) in round one and then meet either Greensburg (16-5) or South Dearborn (14-8) in the semifinal round.

Batesville enters the final week of the regular season having won six games in a row and the ball club is firing on all cylinders with a variety of players producing. 6-foot-8 senior center Cole Pride continues to dominate at 16.4 points, 7.2

rebounds and 3.2 blocks per game but he has not been alone. Sophomore Cade Kaiser is averaging 12.8 points and 6.2 rebounds while junior Sam Johnson is hitting for 10.9 points per night. Jack Grunkemeyer is another underclassman who is capable of big numbers and has given plenty of aid in the rebounding and passing departments.

The Bulldogs have scored 60 points or better in their last four games and such offense will be needed when sectional play commences. Defensively, Batesville is giving up just about 47.5 points per game and has not allowed a fellow sectional opponent to score more than 54 points in a game during the regular season.

Batesville not only gets a favorable draw but also receives the bye to the semifinals on Friday night. The Bulldogs will face either Rushville (5-17) or Franklin County (9-12) in the first semifinal on Friday.



PHOTO BY RICH FOWLER  
Batesville senior Cole Pride brings his post game ability to the Class 3A Sectional 29 field where the Bulldogs aim for a championship.



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# BOYS' BASKETBALL SECTIONAL PREVIEW

## Eagles prepare for repeat

**Rob Lafary**  
SPORTS WRITER

Jac-Cen-Del is riding momentum at the right time of the season and perhaps that alone can carry the Eagles back to another deep post-season run beginning next week.

The Eagles provided the coverage area with quite the journey a year ago, marching all the way to the Class A Final Four before falling to eventual state champion North Daviess but now Jac-Cen-Del enters Class A Sectional 60 in 2023 as a team that has some competition but very well may be considered the favorite by some. Head coach Clint

Bohman and company are in search of a 15th sectional crown in program history as they head to Edinburgh for the tournament.

There's no question that the key to Jac-Cen-Del's success is the production of three senior starters. Devin Grieshop continues to be a high-point scorer at about 14.9 points per game while Matt Dickman is picking up steam underneath, averaging around 11 points per night alongside seven rebounds per contest. While that duo provides stability inside and outside, classmate Seth Drockelman is a capable third option at just under nine points per game. He is shooting 33 percent from the three-point line

which leads the Eagles and could be crucial should the Osgood crew be in contention for a big run.

Edinburgh, ranked No. 16 in Class A with a 12-9 overall record will be the biggest threat to Jac-Cen-Del's chances at back-to-back crowns but the good news is that the Lancers sit on the opposite side of the bracket and have to face a South Decatur squad that may just be 10-11 but can threaten as a dark-horse in the field. Jac-Cen-Del is 3-0 against Sectional 60 foes in the regular season which includes wins over South, Waldron and Oldenburg Academy.

Jac-Cen-Del is entering the regular season with a 13-9 overall record, averaging 53.1 points per game while allowing 50 points per night, a number that may be crucial in sectional play. The Eagles play Southwestern (Shelby) in the opening round on Wednesday night with the winner going on to the second semifinal on Friday to face either Waldron (10-11) or Morristown (1-20).



PHOTO BY RICH FOWLER

Devin Grieshop's athleticism and scoring prowess looks to lift Jac-Cen-Del to a second-straight Class A Sectional 60 championship.

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# BOYS' BASKETBALL SECTIONAL PREVIEW

## Milan boys set for similar role

**Rob Lafary**  
SPORTS WRITER

With a 6-15 record heading into the final week of regular season play, Milan is certainly not jumping off the page as a contender in Class 2A Sectional 45 next week at South Ripley. But please note, the Indians can make some noise.

After all, stranger things tend to happen when it comes to that sectional over the years and favorites tend to have trouble surviving long enough to get to regional play. Plus throw in the fact that Milan's path to the championship game would be against fellow teams with records under .500 and that has to give the Indians some hope inside a season of struggle.

While Milan is giving up 60 points per game on the defensive end, consistent scoring from a number of players perhaps is even more crucial. All five Indian starters are capable double-digit scorers but it has been an issue getting that crew to sync together

in big games. Freshman Micah Norman has drilled 50 3-pointers while the brother tandem of Gabe Riehle and Ben Riehle is shooting 50 percent and 47 percent respectively from the field. Kohen Rinear has shown double-digit scoring capabilities and Brayden Rohrig can also step up and has provided at times.

The Indians are hoping it all comes together given the fact that the program is suffering through the longest drought without a sectional crown among teams in Sectional 45. Milan has not won a title since they were in Class A, having won in 2003 over Jac-Cen-Del before being defeated by Bloomfield in a one-game regional championship.

Milan owns a 56-48 win over Switzerland County (9-13) on January 28 and plays the Pacers in the opening round on Tuesday night. The winner of that game advances to face Hauser (10-11) on Friday in the second semifinal. Hauser defeated the Indians 46-41 on February 17.



PHOTO BY RICH FOWLER  
Milan's Gabe Riehle is shooting 50 percent from the field and will be key for the Indians in sectional play.

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## Raiders hope to play spoiler

South Ripley has not won a Class 2A Sectional 45 title since 2019. Should they score an upset on Friday night, the possibility of a championship is not far-fetched by any means.

All eyes are on a big semifinal collision between the Raiders and Sectional 45 favorite North Decatur (18-4). South Ripley may only be 11-11 but they present quite the challenge given their ability to complete plus throw in the fact that the tournament is on Ripley's home court in the friendly confines of Versailles. Any basketball fan will tell you that such a combination is deadly, especially during the postseason.

But of course there has to be some things that happen in order for such a scenario to unfold. At the forefront of that is South Ripley's dynamic sophomore duo of Cole Henry and Blaine Ward that has to lead the production. Henry continues to dazzle at 20.1 points and 9.6 rebounds per game with 40 made 3-pointers while Ward has matched that total from beyond-the-arc and is equally impressive at 15.5 points per game with about four assists per night. However, the season shows that the Raiders are a well-oiled machine when some extra production comes up big. Gavin Binion, Chanice Volz, Logan Bradley and Ethan Johnson fill out the leftover scoring load and even adding just one or two of those players into the fold makes the green and white quite the threat.

When three or more players have produced big numbers in the score column, South Ripley is at its best, having scored 70-plus points on three occasions and 60 points or more seven times.

Defensively for the most part the Raiders have held up, allowing 52.3 points per game with three of the last four contests seeing head coach Seve Beach's group allow less than 50 points.

South Ripley fell 58-46 to North Decatur in a regular season game back on December 3 when the Chargers pulled away late for a victory. Aside from the Chargers, the Raiders are 4-2 against the sectional field with their only other loss being to Milan who sits on the opposite side of the bracket.

PHOTO BY RICH FOWLER  
South Ripley sophomore Cole Henry is averaging 20 points and leads the ORVC in scoring and rebounding. Henry looks to lead the Raiders in Sectional 45.





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**Rob Lafary**  
SPORTS WRITER

Oldenburg Academy received a bye in Class A Sectional 60 but who they potentially face presents quite the challenge for a rebuilding Twister program.

The Twisters were 6-13 heading into the last week before sectional play with still two regular season games to go which included a potential semifinal opponent on Tuesday night in South Decatur. Class A ranked Edinburg faced off with Oldenburg all the way back

on December 2 and won 58-34, putting head coach Michael Higdon's crew up as a serious underdog no matter how you shake it on Friday night.

Lone senior Jacob Hoff would like to continue his career as a Twister but several teammates play a factor. Junior Connor Miles is a capable high-point scorer and produced a career-high 27 points back on January 18 while others such as Jacob Cornelius, Jacob Stenger and Isaiah Waggoner combine

to play a variety of roles. But such roles haven't always amounted to scoring the basketball. Oldenburg is only averaging 40.8 points per game against giving up 50 points per game. The Twisters have held their own defensively but scoring will be needed no matter if they play South Decatur or Edinburg on Friday night.

Oldenburg last won a sectional in 2020 as part of the COVID-19 year which shut down the state tournament after sectional action came to a close. The Twisters won

their opening round game a year ago but fell 61-28 in the semifinals to a Hauser team that is now playing in Class 2A.

The South Decatur/Edinburg showdown is a rematch of a regular season game won by South 75-58 on January 7. Oldenburg's only other loss to a sectional foe was to Jac-Cen-Del by a 40-34 score. The Twisters have defeated Southwestern (Shelby) and Morristown, both of which play in the bottom half of the bracket.



PHOTO BY RICH FOWLER  
Oldenburg junior Connor Miles put up 27 points earlier this year and can provide some scoring next Friday in the Sectional 60 semifinals.

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