Huntingdon (13-8)

# PLAYOFF PARADE

Michael Boytim presents the Mirror's annual District 6 basketball tournament preview and analysis



## **Coming Monday:** The District 5 playoff preview

**4A GIRLS** 

## **6A BOYS 6-1** State College (12-9)

## Lions need at least a pair of victories

THE SCOOP: The District 6 boys champion may not be headed

Even if Altoona upsets a State College team that defeated it twice in the regular season, the Mountain Lions will have to defeat a team from District 8 or District 10 in a four-team subregional tournament to make the PIAA tournament

On the bright side, Altoona has been playing its best basketball recently, and its zone defense forces teams to make outside

#### **DEFENDING CHAMPION:** State College

PLAYERS TO WATCH: State College sr. G-F Tommy Friberg; State College jr. G Johnny Friberg; State College sr. PG Cam Villarouel; Altoona sr. G Nate Cherry; Altoona jr. F P.J. Charles; Kennedy Catholic sr. C Oscar Tshebwe: Kennedy Catholic sr. G Maceo Austin; Allderdice sr. G Bobby Clifford; McDowell so. F William

MOST INTRIGUING POSSIBLE MATCHUP: Altoona vs. Kennedy Catholic in subregional

#### **SLEEPER:** Altoona

6-2 Altoona (8-13)

MIRROR'S TEAM TO BEAT: State College in District 6

NUMBER OF TEAMS ADVANCING: Two from subregional

WHO THEY'LL PLAY IN INTERDISTRICTS: 6-8-10 No. 1 vs. 7-5; 6-8-10 No. 2 vs. 7-3.

ANALYSIS: State College beat Altoona by 17 in the Mountain Lions' first game of 2019, but the game at the Fieldhouse was much closer and came down to the final possessions.

The Mountain Lions have also beaten rival Hollidaysburg and Cumberland Valley on the road since that second State College

There are times where Charles has completely taken over games this season, and if Altoona gets hot with its outside shooting, it can be dangerous to State College

The bigger issue, as if beating State College isn't a tall enough task already, will be getting through the subregional.

Kennedy Catholic will almost assuredly be the top District 10 team in the field and has 6-foot-10 West Virginia commit Tshebwe, who may be a



champion automatically advanced to the state playoffs and the losing team played the winner of District 8 and District 10 for the right to move on.

**NATE CHERRY** ALTOONA



Richland (17-6) **8** Mount Union (10-11) Cambria Heights (12-10) 7

9 Central Cambria (8-13) 4 West Shamokin (16-7)

5 Bellwood-Antis (15-7)

Forest Hills (14-8)

Penns Valley (12-9) 6

ALTOONA

#### Area teams facing long odds THE SCOOP: Cambria Heights and Bellwood-Antis will have to

win a road game, and Central Cambria would have to win two away from home, to make the state playoffs. The challenge grows when you consider their opponents. The Highlanders have to topple Richland, which made it all the way to the PIAA championship game last year, and the Blue Devils

must endure a long trip to Rural Valley before playing a West Shamokin team that did well in a good Heritage Conference.

## **DEFENDING CHAMPION:** Ligonier Valley

PLAYERS TO WATCH: Central Cambria sr. G-F Tanner Melnyk; West Shamokin sr. F Ethan Libengood; Bellwood-Antis sr. G Mason Yingling; Bellwood-Antis sr. F Nathan Wolfe; Ligonier Valley sr. C Marrek Paola; Richland sr. F Collin Instone; Cambria Heights sr. G Liam Wholaver: Forest Hills sr. F Adam Cecere: Forest Hills sr. F Quinn Spangler; Penns Valley sr. F Cameron

MOST INTRIGUING POSSIBLE MATCHUP: Richland vs.

**SLEEPER:** Forest Hills

MIRROR'S TEAM TO BEAT: Ligonier Valley NUMBER OF TEAMS ADVANCING: Four

WHO THEY'LL PLAY IN INTERDISTRICTS: 6-1 vs. 4-3; 6-2 vs.

7-5; 6-3 vs. 7-2; 6-4 vs. 7-1 ANALYSIS: Bellwood-Antis certainly has a chance against West Shamokin. The Blue Devils actually eliminated the Wolves in the District 6 football playoffs. B-A has been playing its best ball at

the end of the season with a pair of wins over Juniata Valley to clinch the Inter-County Conference's North Division. That said, Wolfe will have to come up big against some of the Wolves' size inside for Bellwood to earn a trip to the state play-

offs, something that seemed extremely unlikely when it opened the season with a 63-18 loss at Tyrone.

Forest Hills also went through a hot streak toward the end of the season before losing an overtime game to Bishop Guilfoyle and falling at Cambria Heights.

near the end of January right after beating Bishop McCort.

against Richland by six and lost to Ligonier Valley, 78-70. Both of those games were earlier in the season, and Cecere and Spangler have shown they can match up inside against any-

graduated star Tyler Zimmerman.



## **5A BOYS**

2 Bellefonte (14-7) 3 Hollidaysburg (11-10) **1 Johnstown** (18-2)

#### **Golden Tigers face tough road**

and will have to hit its stride once the playoffs begin in order to have a chance to defend its district championship

Central Mountain chose not to enter the playoffs, thus giving top-seeded Johnstown a bye into the championship game. The Trojans played for the Class 4A title last year but have moved up

Hollidaysburg finished just below Bellefonte in the race for the No. 2 seed, so the Golden Tigers will need to win a true road game in order to get a shot at the Trojans.

#### **DEFENDING CHAMPION: Hollidaysburg**

PLAYERS TO WATCH: Johnstown sr. F DWayne Jones; Johnstown sr. G Keyon Gause; Johnstown jr. G Anderson Franklin; Hollidaysburg sr. G Sam Servello; Hollidaysburg jr. G Jaden Delerme; Bellefonte jr. G-F Ben McCartney

MOST INTRIGUING POSSIBLE MATCHUP: Hollidaysburg vs.

**SLEEPER:** Hollidaysburg

MIRROR'S TEAM TO BEAT: Johnstown

#### **NUMBER OF TEAMS ADVANCING: One**

WHO THEY'LL PLAY IN INTERDISTRICTS: 6-1 vs. 3-6 ANALYSIS: Winning at Bellefonte is no easy task for Hollidays-

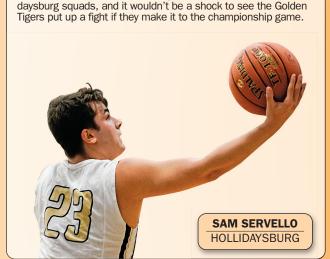
burg in the semifinals. The Red Raiders beat Tyrone at home earlier this season and lost to undefeated Huntingdon by just 10 at home. Bellefonte also beat Clearfield by 22 at home.

Servello has had some outstanding games this year after returning from a pair of fractured vertebrae that cost him last season. When he gets hot from the outside, the Golden Tigers can be a

Johnstown has lost just two games this year, to Forest Hills and Richland. The Rangers and Rams are teams that have the size inside to match the Trojans' plethora of athletes. Whichever team wins the Hollidaysburg-Bellefonte game will have a very hard time following that formula.

imagine a scenario in which that team is not Johnstown. The Trojans ripped through the Laurel Highlands Athletic Conference's best teams and have plenty of experience returning from last year's state playoff team. That said, Brad Lear has always gotten the most out of his Holli-

Just one team will advance out of this bracket, and it's hard to



**2A BOYS** 

Marauders, then everybody else

THE SCOOP: Bishop Guilfoyle Catholic was expected to struggle

a bit out of the gate this year with just one returning starter, though that one starter was Saint Francis commit Luke Ruggery.

When Ruggery suffered an injury that forced him to miss the

The Marauders came together during Ruggery's absence and

can shoot any team out of the gym in the span of a few minutes with their combination of shooting skills and defense. Now that

Ruggery is back to 100 percent, it's hard to see anyone in this

PLAYERS TO WATCH: Bishop Guilfoyle sr. PG Luke Ruggery;

Northern Cambria so. PG Tyler Bearer; Penns Manor sr. C

sr. G Ben Seidel; Purchase Line sr. G Dominique Campbell;

MIRROR'S TEAM TO BEAT: Bishop Guilfoyle Catholic

**NUMBER OF TEAMS ADVANCING: Four** 

Bishop Guilfoyle jr. G-F Michael Montecalvo; Bishop Guilfoyle jr. G

Kyle Ruggery, Bishop Guilfoyle jr. G Jessiah Witherspoon, Glendale sr. G Josh Potutschnig, Claysburg-Kimmel sr. G Alex Kulick;

Brandon Baird; West Branch sr. F Larry Cowder; Bishop McCort

MOST INTRIGUING POSSIBLE MATCHUP: Bishop Guilfoyle vs.

WHO THEY'LL PLAY IN INTERDISTRICTS: 6-1 vs. 7-6; 6-2 vs.

**ANALYSIS:** Bishop Guilfoyle's path to the district championship

game includes games against either Northern Cambria or Claysburg-Kimmel and either Glendale or Penns Manor. Nothing

against those teams, and the Vikings have a great shot at mak-

0

ing the state playoffs with a home game against a mediocre

Comets team, but none of them is in the Marauders' league.

**DEFENDING CHAMPION:** Bishop Guilfoyle Catholic

start of the season, this bracket looked like it could be wide

West Branch (16-6)

Homer-Center (8-13) 10

Purchase Line (14-8) 3

Bishop McCort (10-11) 6

United (10-10)

1 Bishop Guilfoyle (20-2)

8 Northern Cambria (9-13)

9 Claysburg-Kimmel (10-12)

field knocking off the Marauders.

Purchase Line

4 Glendale (14-8)

5 Penns Manor (13-9)

### **4A BOYS**

**Central** (17-5) 1 Huntingdon (22-0) 4 Juniata (10-12) **Tyrone** (14-8) 3

#### Rivals set sights on unbeaten Bearcats

THE SCOOP: One thing undefeated Huntingdon has going for it is that Johnstown, which has lost only two games, has moved up in classification to 5A, and there will be no rematch of last year's heated district title game that the Bearcats won surpris ingly easily, 65-48.

The bad news? That 22-0 regular season could mean next to nothing if the Bearcats slip up in the championship game, where they will play one of their biggest rivals, thanks to the fact that iust one team will advance out of this bracket to the state playoffs this season — a change from a year ago

Of course, those two rivals are Tyrone and Central, two of the teams that have given Huntingdon its biggest challenges of the

Mark your calendar for this district final at Penn State Altoona on

**DEFENDING CHAMPION:** Huntingdon

PLAYERS TO WATCH: Huntingdon sr. G-F Nick Rigby; Huntingdon sr. F Will Sulesky; Huntingdon jr. F Jackson Ritchey; Central sr. G Noah Muthler; Central jr. F Braden Kitt; Tyrone so. G Damon

MOST INTRIGUING POSSIBLE MATCHUP: Huntingdon vs.

**SLEEPER:** Tyrone

MIRROR'S TEAM TO BEAT: Huntingdon

**NUMBER OF TEAMS ADVANCING: One** 

ANALYSIS: Before we delve too deep into Huntingdon, which should have absolutely no problem with semifinal opponent

WHO THEY'LL PLAY IN INTERDISTRICTS: 6-1 vs. 7-3

Juniata, let's dedicate some space to the two teams playing in Tyrone and Central have split a pair of meetings, with each one

winning on the other's home court. Both games have had extremely low scoring first halves, but no one has put up many points in the Scarlet Dragons' remodeled gym. Both teams' best players are probably underclassmen, and both

teams can play any pace. It's a shame that if the seeds hold, neither of these teams will get a chance to play in the state playoffs. It's also tough to imagine either of these teams will be at 100 percent after playing this likely highly-contested semifinal game on Wednesday and then turning around and playing in the district final just two days later.

With Rigby, who needs just seven points to become Huntingdon's all-time leading scorer, leading the way, Huntingdon is a well-oiled machine that won a pair of state playoff games last year and has its eyes on more this year. This wellcoached and senior-led team should take care of business, even if it won't

**NICK RIGBY** HUNTINGDON

## 1A BOYS

Saint Joseph's (17-4)

**1** Bishop Carroll (18-4) 4 Blacklick Valley (14-7)

**5 Saltsburg** (8-13)

Juniata Valley (15-5) 3 Williamsburg (3-18) 6

### **Carroll must avenge loss**

THE SCOOP: Bishop Carroll Catholic lost its season opener at Saint Joseph's Catholic by 10 in overtime. The Huskies haven't lost much since, and unless Juniata Valley has something to do with it, they'll need to avenge that loss in the district finals.

Bishop Carroll is trying to win its seventh district title since 2004 and beat the Wolves in last year's final.

Juniata Valley has a great senior class with plenty of playoff experience and certainly could give Saint Joes a challenge in the

**DEFENDING CHAMPION:** Bishop Carroll

PLAYERS TO WATCH: Bishop Carroll sr. G Carson Ertter; Bishop Carroll jr. G Tristan McDannell; Bishop Carroll sr. G Alex Karlheim: Saint Joseph's sr. F Jack Mangene; Blacklick Valley sr. G Jude Gdula; Blacklick Valley sr. F Corey Simmons; Williamsburg so. G Josiah Dowey; Juniata Valley sr. PG Cameron Collins; Juniata Valley sr. F Quinn Zinobile; Juniata Valley sr. G-F Jaxson Rand

MOST INTRIGUING POSSIBLE MATCHUP: Bishop Carroll vs. Ju-

**SLEEPER:** Juniata Valley

MIRROR'S TEAM TO BEAT: Bishop Carroll **NUMBER OF TEAMS ADVANCING: Three** 

WHO THEY'LL PLAY IN INTERDISTRICTS: 6-1 vs. 9-3;

ANALYSIS: The Huskies will likely play Blacklick Valley in the semifinals, a team that has two players (Gdula, Simmons) that average more than 15 points per game. Those averages will be put to the test against a stingy Huskies defense.

Juniata Valley should ease past Williamsburg, but the Blue Pirates actually led the Green Hornets after one quarter the last

That will set up a rematch for JV from last year's semifinal when Saint Joseph's surprised the top-seeded Hornets. Juniata Valley never recovered from the loss and dropped the consolation game to Blacklick Valley and saw its season end Mangene, who is also an excellent golfer, will be a tough

matchup inside for whomever the Wolves play, but BC's Nolan Burk can help offset that. Ertter missed some time with

returned late in the season and scored 19 points for the Huskies in a victory over Somerset. That's good news for Bishop Carroll and bad news for the rest of this bracket. McDannell, who already has scored more than 1,000 points as a junior, can score against anybody and gained even more confidence while Ertter was

**CARSON ERTTER** 

**BISHOP CARROLL** 

a shoulder injury this year but



## **6A GIRLS**

**6-1** State College (16-5) 6-2 Altoona (15-7)

#### Rubber match will decide district title

THE SCOOP: The Altoona girls have been one of the area's most intriguing teams this season. When the Lady Lions are at their best, they can beat anyone, but they haven't always played at their peak as they've battled injuries and playing in a new

Altoona split a pair of meetings with State College this season, winning by nine at home and losing by 17 on the road.

State College shocked Altoona in the finals last season, and the

Lady Lions have stated several times that the loss is still on their minds. **DEFENDING CHAMPION: State College** 

PLAYERS TO WATCH: State College jr. G-F Maya Bokunewicz; State College jr. G Isabelle Leazier; Altoona sr. F Bridgid Fox; Altoona sr. PG Olivia Hudson; Altoona jr. G Caranda Perea; Mc-Dowell jr. F Julia Miller; Allderdice jr. G Sophia North

MOST INTRIGUING POSSIBLE MATCHUP: Altoona vs State College

**SLEEPER:** State College

MIRROR'S TEAM TO BEAT: Altoona

**NUMBER OF TEAMS ADVANCING:** Two from subregional WHO THEY'LL PLAY IN INTERDISTRICTS: 6-1 vs. 7-4; 6-2, 8-1

ANALYSIS: When Altoona is at its best, Hudson is playing like she did as a junior before she suffered a torn ACL last summer Hudson has shown flashes of that ability lately, especially when the Lady Lions handed Cumberland Valley its first conference

Another key matchup will be Bokunewicz against Perea. The State College junior, who has an offer from Division I DePaul. has neutralized Perea for the most part in the first two games. State College has also used a double-team collapse on Fox, something Altoona will have to adjust to better than it did in the teams' matchup in State College.

State College has a deeper roster, but Altoona may have more top-tier talent if Hudson is playing like her normal self.

the bench for State College, scored 16 points in last vear's District 6 title victory, including a key 3pointer in the final min-

Mifflin County opted not to enter the playoffs, thus allowing Altoona to advance directly into the championship game.

The loser of the game will

play a team from District 8 or 10 and have a chance to advance to the state playoffs by winning that game. Both State College and Altoona seem to have more talent than any of the other teams in that subregional.

> **BRIDGID FOX ALTOONA**

# **3A GIRLS**

**Tvrone** (17-5)

**United** (13-8)

Westmont Hilltop (9-11) 10

Penn Cambria (17-6) 3

1 Penns Valley (17-5) 8 Central (11-11) 9 Philipsburg-Osceola (10-11)

4 Central Cambria (15-6)

#### Marion Center (14-8) 6 5 Cambria Heights (13-8) Field wide open with top contenders

Mountain League and Laurel Highlands Athletic Conference. Both leagues are well respected but don't play each other often, Then again, it's hard enough predicting what teams that have already played twice and are from the same conference in this

THE SCOOP: The strongest teams in his field come from the

Central Cambria might have the best team in the tournament, but the Lady Devils just lost to first-round opponent Cambria

**DEFENDING CHAMPION: Penns Valley** 

PLAYERS TO WATCH: Penns Valley sr. PG Paige Kubalak: Penns Valley sr. F Isabella Culver; Central sr. F Maddi Metzler; Philipsburg-Osceola sr. PG Halle Herrington; Central Cambria sr. G McKenna Hayward; Central Cambria sr. F Jenna Bauer; Cambria Heights jr. G Chloe Weakland; Cambria Heights so. G Kirsten Weakland; Tyrone sr. G Sydney Shaw; Tyrone fr. PG Stephanie Ramsey: Tyrone fr. G Jaida Parker: United so. F Maizee Fry

MOST INTRIGUING POSSIBLE MATCHUP: Tyrone vs. Penn

Westmont Hilltop sr. F Riley Shriver; Penn Cambria sr. G Makalyn

Clapper; Penn Cambria sr. G Emmy Harvey; Marion Center sr. F

**SLEEPER:** Central Cambria

MIRROR'S TEAM TO BEAT: Central Cambria **NUMBER OF TEAMS ADVANCING: Four** 

WHO THEY'LL PLAY IN INTERDISTRICTS: 6-1 vs. 7-5; 6-2 vs.

McKENNA HAYWARD

CENTRAL CAMBRIA

ANALYSIS: Top-seeded Penns Valley is the defending champion, but other than splitting a regular-season series with secondseeded Tyrone and a win over Class 2A No. 2 seed Blairsville, the Lady Rams don't really have many impressive wins or glaring

Penns Valley, which has dominated both of its potential quarterfinal opponents in Central and Philipsburg-Osceola, beat Central Cambria at home on its way to a title last year, but the Lady Dev ils seemed poised to avenge that loss — if they get that far. Central Cambria handed Penns Manor its only loss this season and has played a very tough schedule and handled it well, but it beat Cambria Heights by just two in the teams' first game and lost by 10 on Feb. 1. On the other side of the bracket, Penn Cambria and Tyrone will

should win to lock up state playoff appearances. The Lady Panthers' best players are seniors, but they haven't been in this position before, while Tvrone's star freshmen haven't allowed the pressure to bother them

have to guard against letdowns in the quarterfinals, but both

## **5A GIRLS**

1 Hollidaysburg (11-10) Obama Academy (14-7) 2 4 DuBois (10-12) **Portage** (15-7) 5 Bellefonte (9-13)

#### Lady Tigers now the team to beat

THE SCOOP: Hollidaysburg has a chance to win back-to-back District 6 titles for the first time since 2012-13 after winning the title last year as the No. 3 seed.

The Lady Tigers have an easier road this year, as they'll host the winner of DuBois and Bellefonte. They beat both of those teams by 27 during the regular season.

A rematch of last year's district final with Obama Academy or against Class 5A newcomer Portage will follow, and the Ladv Tigers have also already beaten both of those teams.

**DEFENDING CHAMPION: Hollidaysburg** 

PLAYERS TO WATCH: Obama Academy's Samaree Perkins; Hollidaysburg sr. G Hannah Snyder; Hollidaysburg sr. G Sierra Mc-Clain; Hollidaysburg jr. G Allison Hileman; Hollidaysburg so. G-F Alyssa Bell; Portage jr. G-F Kara Dividock; Bellefonte jr. G Mallo-

MOST INTRIGUING POSSIBLE MATCHUP: Hollidaysburg vs.

MIRROR'S TEAM TO BEAT: Hollidaysburg

**NUMBER OF TEAMS ADVANCING:** Two

**SLEEPER:** Portage

WHO THEY'LL PLAY IN INTERDISTRICTS: 6-8-9 No. 1 vs. 7-3;

ANALYSIS: Hollidayshurg enters the playoffs a loser of four straight, but as it was last year when it came into the postseason a loser of eight of its last 10, that stat is deceiving. The Lady Tigers lost by only two to Taylor Allderdice and defend

ing PIAA Class 5A champion Mars and played very competitively with Class 6A second seed Altoona and Class 3A second seed Hollidaysburg won't blow teams away with its star power, but as

Obama found out in last year's title game, the Lady Tigers can

play smothering defense It's hard to pick a winner between DuBois and Bellefonte, considering Hollidaysburg won both games by the same score, but neither should give the Lady Tigers a problem.

The team that played Hollidaysburg the closest in this bracket is

Portage, but the Lady Mustangs have suffered a rash of injuries since that six-point loss, including 1,000-point scorer Taylor Glass to a torn ACL. Dividock will be leaned on more heavily than usual to help offensively, but no matter who has been on the court in Lance

Hudak's tenure, Portage has played stout de-

fense, which could frustrate an Obama team that let Hollidaysburg's pressure get to it a year ago. With all that said, this tournament is Hollidaysburg's to lose since the Lady Tigers have already beaten everyone in the bracket and have plenty of senior

SIERRA McCLAIN HOLLIDAYSBURG

**2A GIRLS 1** Penns Manor (20-1)

4 Bellwood-Antis (19-3)

5 Bishop McCort (15-6)

Blairsville (19-4) 8 Moshannon Valley (14-8) Bishop Guilfoyle (12-9) 9 Homer-Center (8-13)

## The tournament to watch

Juniata Valley (19-2)

Claysburg-Kimmel (17-5)

THE SCOOP: Defending PIAA Class 2A state champion Bellwood-Antis enters this year's District 6 tournament the same way it entered last year's — as the No. 4 seed. Unfortunately for the Lady Blue Devils, their first-round opponent this year is much

more dangerous in defending champion Bishop McCort.

On the other side of the bracket, Claysburg-Kimmel travels to Juniata Valley. Both teams are very talented, but it's hard to forget the Lady Hornets' 55-8 decimation of the Lady Bulldogs earlier on the

The top five seeds really could win a district title if the chips fall the right way.

### **DEFENDING CHAMPION: Bishop McCort**

PLAYERS TO WATCH: Penns Manor sr. G Autumn Fennell; Penns Manor sr. F Abby Tomayko; Moshannon Valley sr. PG Emma Kitko; Homer-Center fr. G Marlee Kochman; Bellwood-Antis jr. G-F Alli Campbell; Bellwood-Antis sr. G Riley D'Angelo; Bellwood-Antis jr. G Emilie Leidig; Bellwood-Antis jr. F Sakeria Haralson; Bishop McCort sr. G-F Sierra Widmar; Bishop McCort jr. F Isabella Hunt; Blairsville sr. G Sidney McCully; Bishop Guilfoyle so. F Teresa Haigh; Juniata Valley jr. F Halee Smith; Juniata Valley jr. G Hayden Taylor; Juniata Valley fr. G Avery Taylor; Claysburg-Kimmel sr. G Emily Claar; Claysburg-Kimmel jr. G Megan Hartman

MOST INTRIGUING POSSIBLE MATCHUP: Bellwood-Antis vs.

SI EEPER: Bellwood-Antis MIRROR'S TEAM TO BEAT: Bellwood-Antis

7-4; 6-3 vs. 7-2; 6-4 vs. 7-1

NUMBER OF TEAMS ADVANCING: Four WHO THEY'LL PLAY IN INTERDISTRICTS: 6-1 vs. 5-2; 6-2 vs.

ANALYSIS: Bellwood-Antis has the talent to repeat as state champion, but if it doesn't come out with its A game in the quarterfinals, Bishop McCort has the talent to see that the Lady Blue Devils never even make the state playoffs.

If Bellwood survives that first game, it will likely get top-seeded Penns Manor in the semifinals. The Lady Blue Devils crushed the Lady Comets in the consolation game last year, but Penns Manor really came on during its state playoff run and is a much stronger team than it was. That said, it could be argued B-A has also im-Bishop Guilfoyle Catholic presents a challenge

rauders lost by 13 in the regular-season meeting, but that was before Kristi Kaack got things going and freshman Leah Homan emerged as a scoring threat. Locally, most people are likely hoping for a Juniata Valley vs. Bellwood-Antis rubber match in the district final. The teams

for second-seeded Blairsville. The Lady Ma-

three seasons. RILEY D'ANGELO **BELLWOOD-ANTIS** 

have split their regular-sea

son matchups the past

## HUNTINGDON

1 Bishop Carroll (15-7) Saint Joseph's (14-7)

THE SCOOP: With defending champion Juniata Valley now in Class 2A. Bishop Carroll Catholic is the class of this bracket. Senior leadership from Dani Gittings, Sam Rosenberger, Kate

**DEFENDING CHAMPION:** Juniata Valley

MOST INTRIGUING POSSIBLE MATCHUP: Bishop Carroll vs.

**NUMBER OF TEAMS ADVANCING: Three** WHO THEY'LL PLAY IN INTERDISTRICTS: 6-1 vs. 3-4;

If Blacklick Valley, which has been better in the second half of the

Whether it's Purchase Line or Saint Joseph's in the final, Bishop Carroll should win rather

be up to the task. A district championship would put the Lady Huskies in the

No longer the lone Rangers THE SCOOP: This classification has come down to Bedford against Forest Hills in the finals the past three years, but that won't be the case this year as those teams will meet in the The other semifinal will feature Huntingdon hosting Juniata. Unlike the three previous years, both teams that make the Class 4A girls final will move on to the state playoffs. The Lady Bisons have had a disappointing season compared to

what they've accomplished the past three years as they've struggled to transition from a long run to the PIAA state title during soccer season. The Lady Bearcats have held their own in the Mountain League but don't really have a marquee win.

don jr. G Kynnedy Miller; Huntingdon jr. F Corinne Reamer; Juni-MOST INTRIGUING POSSIBLE MATCHUP: Forest Hills vs.

PLAYERS TO WATCH: Forest Hills sr. G-F Victoria Koeck; Forest

Hills sr. G Carly Stigers; Bedford sr. G Lindsay Shuke; Hunting-

Huntingdon **SLEEPER:** None

Forest Hills as a roadblock.

1 Forest Hills (18-3)

4 Bedford (9-13)

MIRROR'S TEAM TO BEAT: Forest Hills **NUMBER OF TEAMS ADVANCING: Two** 

**DEFENDING CHAMPION:** Forest Hills

WHO THEY'LL PLAY IN INTERDISTRICTS: 5-6 No. 1 vs. 7-5: 5-6 No. 2 vs. 7-2 ANALYSIS: Bedford, this season, has really missed Jaden Fuller, who provided a great inside presence for the Lady Bisons. With-

out her, Bedford got off to a slow start, losing its first four

games, and never really recovered. Bedford doesn't have an impressive LHAC victory this season and lost to Forest Hills at For many years, the Lady Bisons could have made some major noise in the state tournament had they gotten in, and now that they could finally advance just by making the final, they still face

Huntingdon will likely be the team that benefits from the extra spot in states. The Lady Bearcats and Juniata have just one common opponent, Bellefonte. Huntingdon defeated the Red Raiders twice in close games, and Juniata lost, Furthermore, Juniata, though coached by Kevin Kodish, has tended to struggle in District 6 play as it doesn't play many District 6 opponents throughout the season.

Huntingdon defeated Tussey Mountain in its season opener, and the Lady Titans will probably be a state playoff team in Class 1A. Other than that. there's no real evidence that the Lady Bearcats can pull off an upset over Forest Hills. They lost their only game against LHAC competition by six at home against Bishop Guilfovle Catholic, which lost to the Lady Rangers by 24 and 18 points **KYNNEDY MILLER** 

## **1A GIRLS**

4 Saltsburg (10-12) Purchase Line (12-10) 3 Williamsburg (7-14) 5 Blacklick Valley (11-11)

**Bishop Carroll should claim title** 

Yahner and Anna Haigh should guard against any potential slipups from the Lady Huskies. With head coach Bob Gongloff back on the sideline and Carroll back to playing the type of defense he desires, it will soon be time to be putting medals around the necks of some players who have

had a challenging season on and off the court.

PLAYERS TO WATCH: Bishop Carroll sr. G Kate Yahner; Bishop Carroll sr. F Anna Haigh; Blacklick Valley so. F Maria McConnell; Saltsburg sr. G Jenna Beitel; Saint Joseph's sr. G Denaya Poston-Cooper; Saint Joseph's sr. F Selena Mann; Williamsburg sr. G Alexi McMonagle; Williamsburg sr. G Kassidy McChessney; Purchase Line jr. G Emileigh Syster

**SLEEPER:** Purchase Line MIRROR'S TEAM TO BEAT: Bishop Carroll

ANALYSIS: Bishop Carroll's first game could be against a familiar

season, upsets Saltsburg to earn a shot at Bishop Carroll, it will bring Maria McConnell back into the gym in which she began the McConnell, who has flourished both offensively and defensively at Blacklick Valley, was one of four Bishop Carroll sophomores who transferred from the school when Gongloff was put on a leave of

Purchase Line should beat Williamsburg and could give Saint Joseph's a good game considering the Lady Dragons have competed against a tough Heritage Conference schedule all year.

The only real concern for BC is whether it will score enough points in big games. Its defense will likely always

easier side of the state bracket and possibly set up another long state playoff run for a team hat has made the PIAA semifinals the last two years.

**ANNA HAIGH** BISHOP CARROLL

#### BG will likely play the winner of the quarterfinal game between Purchase Line and Bishop McCort in the final. Both of those teams are likely to get the best of No. 2 seed West Branch. The Rangers handed Johnstown its only regular-season loss Purchase Line made it to the finals last year and actually led Bishop Guilfoyle for parts of that championship game, but this isn't the same Red Dragons team. Forest Hills did lose its only game If Glendale gets past Penns Manor and plays West

Ligonier beat Richland by four in last year's final, but if those teams meet again this year, Richland will be sorely missing

