

## **The One Constant...**

**By Sonny Fulks – for SWDAB.com**

Say what you want about Carl Kremer, the ultra-successful head basketball coach of the Moeller Crusaders...but Kremer, even after all his success and a pair of Division I state championships, still takes things a game at a time, and a title at a time.

Saturday, Kremer and the Crusaders celebrated another Division I district title with a 51-47 win over favored Trotwood (19-5) and the Rams' athleticism and explosive offense. Junior Charlie Byers and senior Griffin McKenzie scored 16 and 15 points respectively to lead the Crusaders, and afterwards Kremer was typical in putting his latest district conquest into perspective. Asked how many titles he had won, he confessed...he really wasn't sure.

"I really don't know," he said with a smile. "I think we've been here 9 out of the last 10 years, and maybe we've won four or five times. But really, today's the one that matters. Our kids came out and played a great game against a team that we knew would be tough. We knew that Trotwood was capable of playing us defensively the way they did. It was a great win for us, given the kind of season we've had."

Which hasn't been so bad, Carl, given that Saturday's win advances the Crusaders into next week's regional round with a 19-4 record. But if Moeller's success in the districts has become a constant, the one bigger constant is the recent success of all the schools from Hamilton and Butler counties in the districts. And Saturday...the beat rolled on.

Princeton (19-4), a state finalist from a year ago, moved on to the regional round with a 59-44 win over Fairmont (15-9), and Vikings' senior and Ohio State recruit Jordan Sibert was the talk of the day. Sibert scored 26 points and looked every bit the part of a future Buckeye in the tradition of Evan Turner, David Lighty, John Diebler, et. al.

Top-seed LaSalle had little trouble with Woodward, running away from the Bulldogs in the second half to a 61-42 decision. Josh Lemons, Matt Woeste and Brandon Neal each scored 12 points to extend the Lancers record to 21-2.

And talk about your constants...St. Xavier, with a 12-10 record coming in, made its eighth appearance in the district finals under head coach Scott Martin, and eight became great as the Bombers held on to defeat a stubborn Wayne Warriors team (20-3), 46-40.

"Today makes the eighth time we've been to the districts, and we've won seven times now," said Martin, and not without a tone of pride and appreciation for that accomplishment. "They (Wayne) are very talented, and I give a lot of credit for this win to our entire community."

To emphasize his point, Martin took the time to thank and congratulate the entire student cheering section from St. X, which showed up, as is their custom, en masse and in loud vocal support adjacent to the Bombers' bench.

Finally, in the 9 PM nightcap, Colerain (18-4) knocked off Northmont (13-9), 69-63, to complete the Cincinnati area's sweep of the districts, and, to bring to conclusion the remarkable career coaching contribution of Northmont assistant Jim Ehlers, who announced previously that Saturday would be his last game. With more than 50 years devoted to basketball, Ehlers has been with T-Bolts head coach Jim Brown since Brown's days coaching at Wright State, so understandably, Saturday's loss came as an especially hard one for the Northmont program.

Always the consummate gentleman, Ehlers was tearful as the clock wound down on the Thunderbolts season and his coaching career. He was noticeably affected as he accepted congratulations and tributes from well-wishers after the game.

"This has meant so much," he said. "And please excuse me...right now I'm having a little trouble."

As a footnote to the day, at halftime of the St. Xavier-Wayne game, the Southwest District Athletic Board honored local media personalities Chick Ludwig and Jack Pohl for their career service and coverage of high school sports in the Miami Valley.

“This has been perfect,” said the popular Ludwig, who spent the last eleven seasons as the Bengals’ beat writer for the Dayton Daily News. “I came into the business covering high school sports, and I finished with the Dayton Daily News last fall writing about something I’ve loved all my life...high school sports.”