

OHIO VALLEY ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

24th Annual OVAC Banquet of Champions

Monday, May 18, 2009
WesBanco Arena - 6:30 p.m.
Donation \$18.00

Our Opinion

Night of Champs

THE OHIO Valley Athletic Conference is putting on the ritz tonight.

The nation's largest functioning athletic conference drops the curtain on another successful year of operation when it stages the annual OVAC Banquet of Champions at Wheeling's WesBanco Arena. Tonight's affair is the Cadillac of prep fetes.

Teams claiming conference titles this past academic year will be recognized, receiving championship pennants to be showcased in their respective schools. More than 50 teams will be honored tonight for capturing coveted conference crowns.

Along those athletic lines, five coaches have been singled out as finalists for the prestigious Bill Van Horne/Wheeling News-Register Coach of The Year Award. The winner will be announced as one of tonight's highlights, an award of major significance as the conference boasts some 500 head coaches.

But the OVAC Banquet of

Champions is more than just athletic recognition. Far from it.

More than \$28,000 in scholarships, encompassing some 39 awards, will be handed out tonight.

That is a most noteworthy and generous statement from individuals and companies who believe in the conference. It's a refreshing investment in the future of our student-athletes.

While tonight's banquet plays out seamlessly in a few hours, it is a happening which takes countless amounts of time to put together. That is the thankless task of Ron White, one that he does with great expertise.

Athletes and coaches will gain much of tonight's limelight, but what should not be overlooked is the selfless actions of scholarship donors, OVAC Executive Secretary-Treasurer Tom Rataiczak, the conference's executive board as well as White.

It all adds up to a championship night for a conference filled with champions.