

Weather Puts Cheering Tourney on Hold

Snow pushes annual event to next weekend

By JIM ELLIOTT
Staff Writer

WHEELING — There will be no cheers for (and because of) the weather today at WesBanco Arena.

Fearing tumbling of cars and busses on snowy and icy roadways, rather than cheerleaders on wood floors, Ohio Valley

Athletic Conference officials agreed it was in everyone's best interest to postpone the league's cheering competition until Feb. 13, the same date as the OVAC's girls' basketball championships at Ohio University Eastern.

Tom Rataiczak, the OVAC's executive secretary, said it's a less-than-ideal situation, but alternatives were few and far between.

"There's nothing else you can do," he said. "With the cheering competition requiring 4-5,000 seats, the only place you can have it is WesBanco (Arena)."

With knowledge that the Wheeling Nailers have home games Friday and Saturday

nights, it seemed unreasonable to hold the championships at WesBanco Arena next weekend.

Officials first looked at Wheeling Park High School, which offered to open its doors for the cheerleaders despite playing host to a rather large event that night itself — its own Hall of Fame Night and Logan's boys' basketball team with WVU recruit Noah Cottrill paying a visit.

Still, they would've had to hold two sessions, clear the gym, and find parking spots for the overlapping spectators, perhaps a bigger logistical nightmare than a foot of snow.

So they took another look back at Wes-

Banco Arena where Denny Magruder, the arena's executive director, said he'd have everything ready to go if they needed.

They needed. As a result, the crew at the arena will greatly alter its routine in a 21-hour time frame in an effort to allow the cheerleaders to go through theirs without further interruption.

"You just can't say enough about those guys," Rataiczak said, adding they certainly appreciated the offer of Bernie Dolan and Dwaine Rodgers at WPHS, as well.

Please See WEATHER, Page 14

Weather

(Continued from Page 13)

Rataiczak and Co. thought they had more choices, such as waiting until March to hold the cheerleading championships because WesBanco Arena was booked through next month on Saturdays, until they stumbled upon this somewhat sobering reality for West Virginia high schools: Once the basketball season is done, so is cheerleading. That means if your team is eliminated, it's time to hand in the skirts.

That's not the case in Ohio.

So there they were — Rataiczak, OVAC President Dan Doyle, Past President Dianna Vargo, Cheerleading Director Libby Shepherd, Magruder and Mark George of the arena, and Dave Schafer, Belmont County manager for the Ohio Department of Transportation — looking at weather forecasts for the better part of two days, trying to make a fair, reasonable, and informed decision.

"We've never had something like this conflict," Rataiczak said, noting the basketball tournaments are only in

their third years.

Cheer Notes

Anyone who purchased tickets already, they will still be honored on the 13th ... Last year's defending champions are Toronto (Class A), River (AA), St. Clairsville (AAA) and Wheeling Park (AAAA). ... Judges for the competition make their decisions based on the teams' precision, formation, choreography, and degree of difficulty. Each team has 3 minutes to perform their cheer and combination dance routines.



presenting sponsor



Cheerleading CHAMPIONSHIP

Saturday, Feb. 6
at WesBanco Arena

OVAC Cheering Set

WHEELING — The 19th annual OVAC Cheering Competition will take place Saturday at WesBanco Arena.

Doors open at 8:30 a.m., with cheering beginning at 9:30 a.m. Admission is \$6 for adults and \$4 for students.

There will be 35 teams competing in four classes.

Competing in Class A will be Bishop Donahue, Bridgeport, Paden City, Valley, Toronto, Weirton Madonna and St. John Central.

Taking the floor in

Class AA will be Monroe Central, Fort Frye, Linsly, River, Shadyside, Shenandoah, Barnesville, Wheeling Central and Steub. Catholic.

Class AAA competitors will be Oak Glen, Meadowbrook, Weir, Magnolia, Union Local, Tyler Consolidated, Bel-laire, Harrison Central, Martins Ferry, Edison and St. Clairsville.

Class AAAA teams will be John Marshall, Indian Creek, Buckeye Local, Steubenville, East Liverpool, Wheeling Park and Parkersburg South.

Bring On The Cheers

OVAC titles on
line Saturday

By MICHAEL PALMER
For The Intelligencer

The 18th Annual OVAC Cheering Competition will be in full swing Saturday at WesBanco Arena in Wheeling, where 34 teams from schools throughout the Ohio Valley are competing for first-place honors.

Each year, the crowd pours into the arena excited to cheer on the cheerleaders. The doors open to the public at 8:30 a.m., while the event begins an hour later with a performance by one of the winners of this year's Junior OVAC Competition, Warwood.

The two other junior high squads are St. Clairsville and Parkersburg South.

The Red Devils will perform during the break between A and AA and the Patriots will take to the floor before the afternoon session at approximately 12:30.

The competition is fierce as teams go head-to-head to outdo the champions of previous years and win against old rivals. Last year's defending champions are Toronto (Class A), River (AA), St. Clairsville (AAA) and Wheeling Park (AAAA).

See CHEERS, Page 18

Cheers

(Continued from Page 17)

Toronto won its first Single-A crown in 2008 and was the first in its division to earn back-to-back crowns since Paden City in the 2001-02 seasons.

"My girls spoke briefly about another win, but as their coach I do what I can to keep them well grounded," Toronto coach Mary Beth Takacs said. "I reminded them that if each girl gives 100 percent in those 3 minutes we're performing, then we're winners already."

Seven schools are scheduled to compete in Class A — Bishop Donahue, Bridgeport, Madonna, Valley, Paden City, St. John and Toronto high schools.

Wheeling Central has 14 trophies and had won 10 straight titles before Monroe Central unseated it from atop AA in 2008, a feat that had not been accomplished since Barnesville's victory in 1996. Last season, the Maroon Knights again watched the title go to another school as River earned its first cheerleading title.

"We lost six talented seniors last year, but we are ready to give it another shot to stay as the Champions in AA," Pilots coach Angi McDonald said. "River High School will field a small squad, but the girls are very talented and prepared to win."

There are nine squads competing for the AA crown, including the Maroon Knights who dropped down from the AAA division this season, along with Barnesville, Steubenville Catholic Central, Shenandoah, River, Shadyside, Linsly, Fort Frye and Monroe Central.

St. Clairsville and Martins Ferry had traded off titles in AAA since 2003 when the Red Devils snapped a five-year streak by Paden City. The swap lasted until 2009 when St. Clairsville doubled up to win a fifth title.

"Yes, The St. Clairsville Red Devil Competition Squad is ready to defend its AAA Title at the OVAC Cheering Competition on Feb. 6 at the WesBanco Arena," St. Clairsville coach Joanne Verba said.

"Our 14-member squad began competing this summer, taking first place in our division and 'overall high-point winner for the day' at Champion Cheer Central's Cheering Competition at Kennywood Park in August.

"The Red Devils Competition Squad then took the first place trophy home at the Buckeye 8 Cheering Competition in late September.

"The entire squad has attended gymnastics classes together at Basics Gymnastics in Wellsburg. In addition, the girls have practiced on an average of 8 hours a week."

There is a crowded field in the AAA division with

OVAC Cheerleading

The tentative scheduled times are:

- 9:33 a.m. class A competition
- 10:20 a.m. class AA competition
- 11:15 a.m. awards presentation for classes A/AA
- Break
- 12:30 - 1 p.m. class AAA competition
- 2 p.m. class AAAA competition
- 3 p.m. awards presentation for classes AAA/AAAA

The event is open to the public. Admission is \$6 for adults and \$4 for children.

11 teams vying for the trophy including Edison, Meadowbrook, Weir, Magnolia, Union Local, Martins Ferry, Oak Glen, Tyler, St. Clairsville, Bellaire and Harrison Central.

Wheeling Park has 13 trophies in its trophy case. Brooke has unseated the divisional favorites three times in 2005, 2007 and 2008. The only other team to win in AAAA was Weir in 2003.

Last year, Park returned to the top of the class and again will be the team to beat.

Newcomers to the conference, Parkersburg South, will take to the floor at the competition for the first year, which has the AAAA division buzzing.

"The competition will be a little more interesting and different this year in our division," Wheeling Park coach Shawna Shepherd said, "as Parkersburg South joins the field. "Their coach and I are actually friends, we share a choreographer."

"We have never competed against them before but I think that being from a different area of the state they will bring a different style of cheering to the competition."

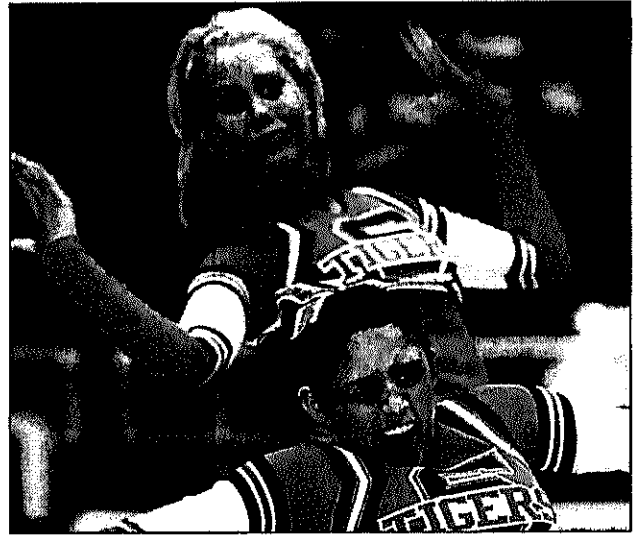
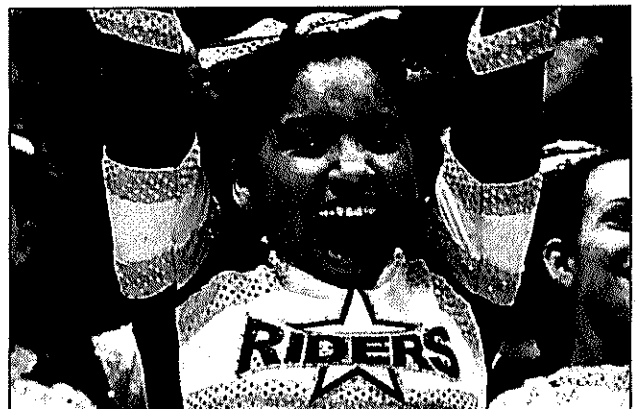
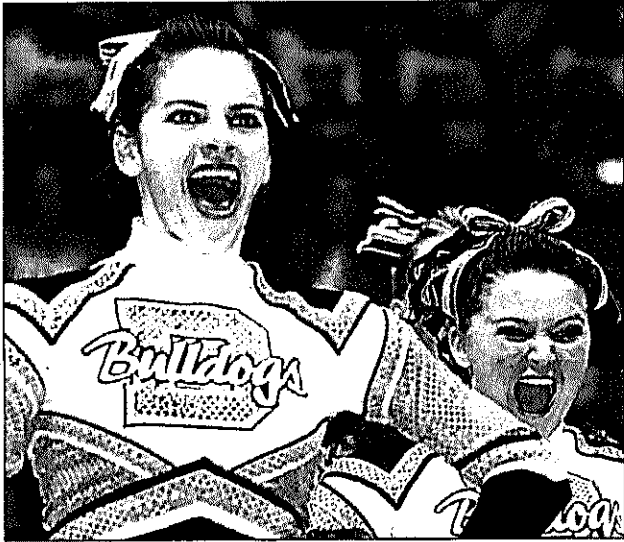
Seven cheering squads will take to the mats in the big school division, including Parkersburg South, Steubenville, Buckeye Local, John Marshall, East Liverpool, Indian Creek, and Wheeling Park high schools.

"This year's competition will feature a lot of good matchups," OVAC Cheering Director Libby Shepherd said, while also inviting fans that have never attended the competition to come to this year's event.

"We have a large crowd for the event, it is not only one of the biggest money makers for the OVAC, it is a great atmosphere for the cheerleaders competing on the floor when the crowd gets into their routine."

Judges for the competition make their decisions based on the teams' precision, formation, choreography, and degree of difficulty. Each team has three minutes to perform their cheer and combination dance routines.

2010 OVAC Cheerleading Championships



LEFT ROW: Barnesville's Morgan Pryor, Bridgeport's Cassie Grandstaff and Ashley Millard, Harrison Central's Kara Sliva, Kasey Bethel, Kaylee Rogers and Valerie Peterson, River's Morgan Meyer.

MIDDLE ROW: Left: St. John's Abby Krupkik. Right: St. Clairsville's devilish Claire Slavik, Monroe Central's Anissa Marmie, Union Local's Emily Calovini, McKenzie DiPerna and Abbey Latham. **RIGHT ROW:** Bellaire's Kelsey Gilbert, Buckeye Local's Kayla Bodnar, Martins Ferry's Auja Bass, Shadyside's Sommer Haus and Lexi Kinnemond.

CU

SEE YOU VIEW additional photos of this event at cu.timesleaderonline.com

T-L Photos/MIKE PALMER

St. Clairsville three-peats as AAA champs

By MIKE PALMER
Times Leader Staff Writer

THEY ARE the ones usually leading the cheers, however Saturday cheerleading squads from throughout the Ohio Valley were the recipients of the applause as the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference staged its annual cheerleading championships at WesBanco Arena.

The cheering extravaganza is produced under the meticulous scrutiny of directors Libby Shepherd and Mark Kay Zitzlesberger. The original date for the event was snowed out but the pair managed to pull off the rescheduling with few major problems.

"I am exhausted, but all of the teams are here," said Shepherd. "The one disappointment for the girls is that the tape delay will not be televised this year because of running the same day as the OVAC Girls Basketball

championships showcase the ability and preparation brought to the mat by squads in four classifications. Following the big and small school divisions, the squads take to the arena floor and gather into circles awaiting the judges' decision.

This year it would be Toronto repeating in single A, Linsly surprising the crowd with their AA victory, St. Clairsville three-peating in AAA and Park continuing their domination of the AAAA division.

Toronto won their first single A crown in 2008 and were the first in their division to earn back-to-back crowns since Paden City in the 2001-02 seasons. The Red Knights joined St. Clairsville in celebrating a three-peat victory.

The Lady Bishops of Donahue would celebrate a runner-up trophy this year. The Irish of St. Johns would finish third followed by Bridgeport in fourth

event. The Maroon Knights will have to wait for trophy number 15 as Linsly's first year coach Megan Stevens' Cadet squad took home the gold.

"I just knew we had two really talented squads coming after us in the competition," Stevens said of her emotional response to her team's routine. "I was extremely happy with our girls' performance, they cheered a very clean and perfect routine."

The Cadets were vibrating with anticipation after the announcer called on Wheeling Central for the second place trophy.

"It is a very good feeling to start with a win," said Stevens. "We are building the program, we had a lot of new girls out this year. Our last win was in '07 when our seniors were freshman and we relied on their leadership to help us this year."

Staubenville Catholic Central finished third,



ST. CLAIRSVILLE celebrates winning their third straight cheerleading crown.

title in their OVAC competition. Coach Joanne Verba was reluctant to say that her squad was fast becoming a dynasty in the division.

"I will say we have four very talented freshman and I would think we are the team to watch in years to come," Verba noted.

Cheerleading has evolved into a year-round

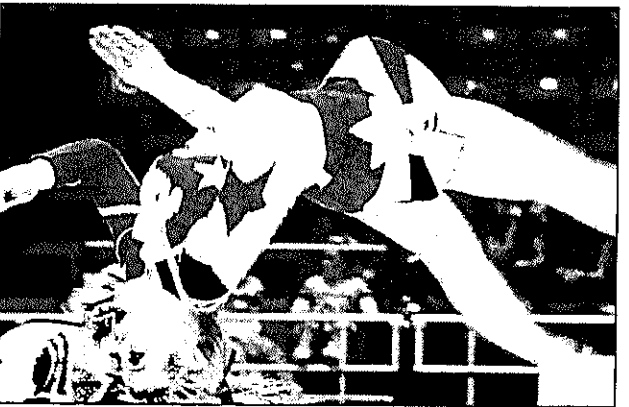
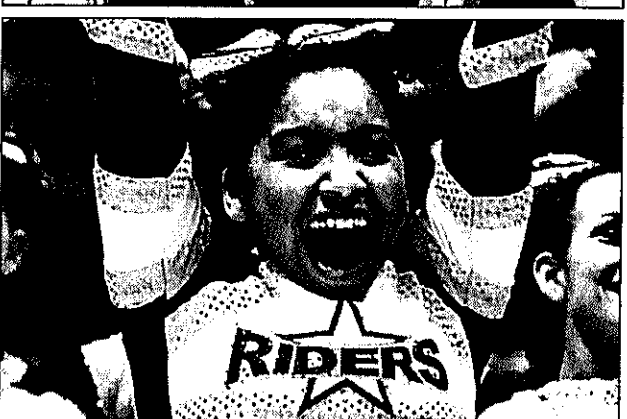
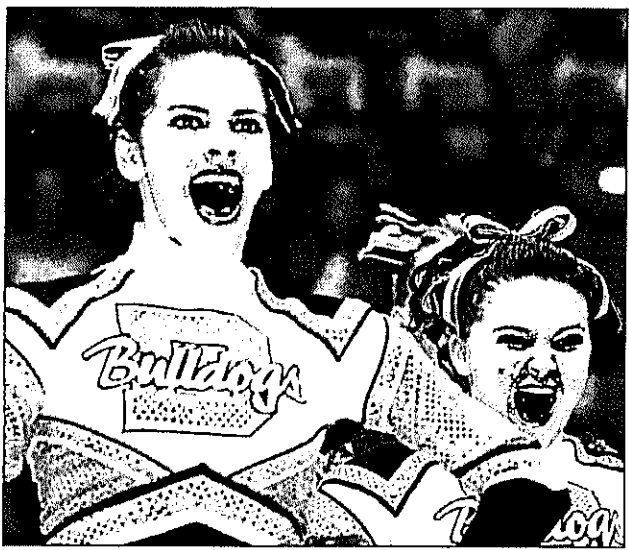
cheering title equation.

"Our girls work hard year round," said Verba, "but the success of our program has to be shared with the support we get from our community, school administration and our basketball coaches who are willing to share the gym with us."

The crowded AAA division featured 11 squads and

were followed by John Marshall as runner-up, Buckeye Local finished in third place and newcomer Parkersburg South was fourth.

We tip our caps to the four victorious schools as well as all the other teams who competed and all the individuals who volunteer to judge, keep score or do



LEFT ROW: Barnesville's Morgan Pryor. Bridgeport's Cassie Grandstaff and Ashley Millard. Harrison Central's Kara Sliva, Kasey Bethel, Kaylee Rogers and Valerie Peterson. River's Morgan Meyer.

MIDDLE ROW: Left: St. John's Abby Krupkik. Right: St. Clairsville's devilish Claire Slavik. Monroe Central's Anissa Marmie. Union Local's Emily Calovini, McKenzie DiPerna and Abbey Latham. **RIGHT ROW:** Bellaire's Kelsey Gilbert. Buckeye Local's Kayla Bodnar. Martins Ferry's Auja Bass. Shadyside's Sommer Haus and Lexi Kinnemond.

CU

SEE YOU VIEW additional photos of this event at cu.timesleaderonline.com

T-L Photos/MIKE PALMER

St. Clairsville three-peats as AAA champs

By **MIKE PALMER**
Times Leader Staff Writer

THEY ARE the ones usually leading the cheers, however Saturday cheerleading squads from throughout the Ohio Valley were the recipients of the applause as the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference staged its annual cheerleading championships at WesBanco Arena.

The cheering extravaganza is produced under the meticulous scrutiny of directors Libby Shepherd and Mark Kay Zitzlesberger. The original date for the event was snowed out but the pair managed to pull off the rescheduling with few major problems.

"I am exhausted, but all of the teams are here," said Shepherd. "The one disappointment for the girls is that the tape delay will not be televised this year because of running the same day as the OVAC Girls Basketball Championships."

The cheerleading event is competition as passionate and intense as prep basketball and the air is filled with excitement and anticipation. The OVAC champi-

onships showcase the ability and preparation brought to the mat by squads in four classifications. Following the big and small school divisions, the squads take to the arena floor and gather into circles awaiting the judges' decision.

This year it would be Toronto repeating in single A. Linsly surprising the crowd with their AA victory. St. Clairsville three-peating in AAA and Park continuing their domination of the AAAA division.

Toronto won their first single A crown in 2008 and were the first in their division to earn back-to-back crowns since Paden City in the 2001-02 seasons. The Red Knights joined St. Clairsville in celebrating a three-peat victory.

The Lady Bishops of Donahue would celebrate a runner-up trophy this year. The Irish of St. Johns would finish third followed by Bridgeport in fourth place.

The AA crown was expected to go to Wheeling Central as they had moved down into the smaller school division after winning AAA at last year's

event. The Maroon Knights will have to wait for trophy number 15 as Linsly's first year coach Megan Stevens' Cadet squad took home the gold.

"I just knew we had two really talented squads coming after us in the competition," Stevens said of her emotional response to her team's routine. "I was extremely happy with our girls' performance, they cheered a very clean and perfect routine."

The Cadets were vibrating with anticipation after the announcer called on Wheeling Central for the second place trophy.

"It is a very good feeling to start with a win," said Stevens. "We are building the program, we had a lot of new girls out this year. Our last win was in '07 when our seniors were freshman and we relied on their leadership to help us this year."

Steubenville Catholic Central finished third, Monroe Central fourth and defending AA champion River took fifth place.

The AAA title again went to the Red Devils of St. Clairsville, whose junior high squad captured the



ST. CLAIRSVILLE celebrates winning their third straight cheerleading crown.

title in their OVAC competition. Coach Joanne Verba was reluctant to say that her squad was fast becoming a dynasty in the division.

"I will say we have four very talented freshman and I would think we are the team to watch in years to come," Verba noted.

Cheerleading has evolved into a year-round activity. Participants train 12 months a year to help their teams in their respective quests for championships. Tumbling, dance and weightlifting have become major parts of the

cheering title equation.

"Our girls work hard year round," said Verba, "but the success of our program has to be shared with the support we get from our community, school administration and our basketball coaches who are willing to share the gym with us."

The crowded AAA division featured 11 squads and five trophies were awarded as Magnolia was second followed by Weir, third; Edison, fourth; and Martins Ferry, fifth.

The AAAA champion Wheeling Park Patriots

were followed by John Marshall as runner-up. Buckeye Local finished in third place and newcomer Parkersburg South was fourth.

We tip our caps to the four victorious schools as well as all the other teams who competed and all the individuals who volunteer to judge, keep score or do any of the other numerous tasks that make possible this ever-growing event.

Mike Palmer can be reached at mpalmer@timesleaderonline.com

Cheerleaders to bid for OVAC crowns

• Squads vie for titles as champions on Saturday

By MICHAEL PALMER
Times Leader Staff Writer

THE 18TH Annual OVAC Cheering Competition will be in full swing Saturday at the WesBanco Arena in Wheeling, where 34 teams from schools throughout the Ohio Valley are competing for first-place honors.

Each year, the crowd pours into the arena excited to cheer on the cheerleaders. The doors open to the public at 8:30 a.m.; the event begins at 9:30 a.m. with a performance by one of the winner of this year's Junior OVAC Competition, Warwood. The two other junior high squads are St. Clairsville and Parkersburg South. The Red Devils will perform during the break between A and AA and the Patriots will take to the floor before the afternoon session at approximately 12:30.

The competition is fierce as teams go head-to-head to outdo the champions of previous years and win against old rivals. Last year's defending champions are Toronto in class A division; River in the class AA division; St. Clairsville in the class AAA division; and Wheeling Park in the class AAAA division.

Toronto won their first single A crown in 2008 and was the first in their division to earn back-to-back crowns since Paden City in the 2001-02 seasons.

"My girls spoke briefly about another win but as their coach I do what I can to keep them well grounded," said cheering coach for the Red Knights Mary Beth Takacs. "I reminded them that if each girl gives 100 percent in those three minutes we're performing then we're winners already"

Seven teams are scheduled to compete in the single A division. The teams competing this year in the class A division include Bishop Donahue, Bridgeport, Madonna, Valley, Paden City, St. John and Toronto high schools.

Wheeling Central has 14 trophies from the cheerleading competition and had won 10 straight titles before Monroe Central unseated them from atop AA in 2008, a feat that had not been accomplished since Barnesville's win in 1996. Last year the Maroon Knights again watched the title go to another school as River earned their first cheerleading title in 2009.

"We lost six talented seniors last year, but we are ready to give it another shot to stay as the Champions in AA," Pilots coach Angi McDonald commented. "River High School will field a small squad, but the girls are very talented and prepared to win."

There are nine squads competing for the AA crown this year including the Maroon Knights who dropped down from the AAA division this season along with the Shamrocks cheering squad. The class AA competitors include Barnesville, Wheeling Central, Steubenville Catholic Central, Shenandoah, River, Shadyside, Linsly, Fort Frye and Monroe Central high schools.

St. Clairsville and Martins Ferry had traded off titles in AAA since 2003 when the Red Devils snapped a five-year streak by Paden City. The swap lasted until 2009 when St. Clairsville doubled up to win a



THE PILOTS pose with the trophy for AA after last year's competition. River's squad will be among the top teams returning to defend their titles at the OVAC Cheering Competition, set for this Saturday at WesBanco Arena in Wheeling.

T-L Photo/MIKE PALMER

2010 OVAC Cheerleading Competition

Tentative schedule of times at WesBanco Arena in Wheeling Saturday for team competition in each division:

- 9:33 a.m. class A competition
- 10:20 a.m. class AA competition
- 11:15 a.m. awards presentation for classes A/AA
- Break
- 12:30 - 1 p.m. class AAA competition
- 2 p.m. class AAAA competition
- 3 p.m. awards presentation for classes AAA/AAAA



Competition in late September.

"The entire squad has attended gymnastics classes together at Basics Gymnastics in Wellsburg, WV. In addition, the girls have practiced on an average of eight hours a week," Verba continued. "The Red Devil Cheerleaders know that to bring home the OVAC title for the third year in a row, the squad must perform a 'perfect' routine."

Clairsville cheering coach Joanne Verba. "Our 14-member squad began competing this summer, taking first place in our division and 'overall high point winner for the day' at Champion Cheer Central's Cheering Competition at Kennywood Park in August. The Red Devils Competition Squad then took the first place trophy home at the Buckeye 8 Cheering

"The Red Devil cheerleaders know that to bring home the OVAC title for the third year in a row, the squad must perform a 'perfect' routine."

- Joanne Verba
coach of the
defending AAA
division champions
St. Clairsville Red
Devil Cheerleaders

Central high schools.

Wheeling Park has 13 trophies in their trophy case. Brooke has unseated the divisional favorites three times in '05, '07 and '08. The only other team to win in AAAA was Weir in 2003. Last year Park returned to the top of the class and once again will be the team to beat. Newcomers to the conference Parkersburg South will take to

the floor at the competition for the first year, which has the four-A division buzzing.

"The competition will be a little more interesting and different this year in our division," said wheeling Park cheering coach Shawna Shepherd as Parkersburg South joins the field. "Their coach and I are actually friends, we share a choreographer."

"We have never competed against them before but I think that being from a different area of the state they will bring a different style of cheering to the competition," Park's coach commented, "We will perform back-to-back on Saturday afternoon, they are sixth and we are seventh, so their coach and I have already started talking about which Patriots team will win that competition."

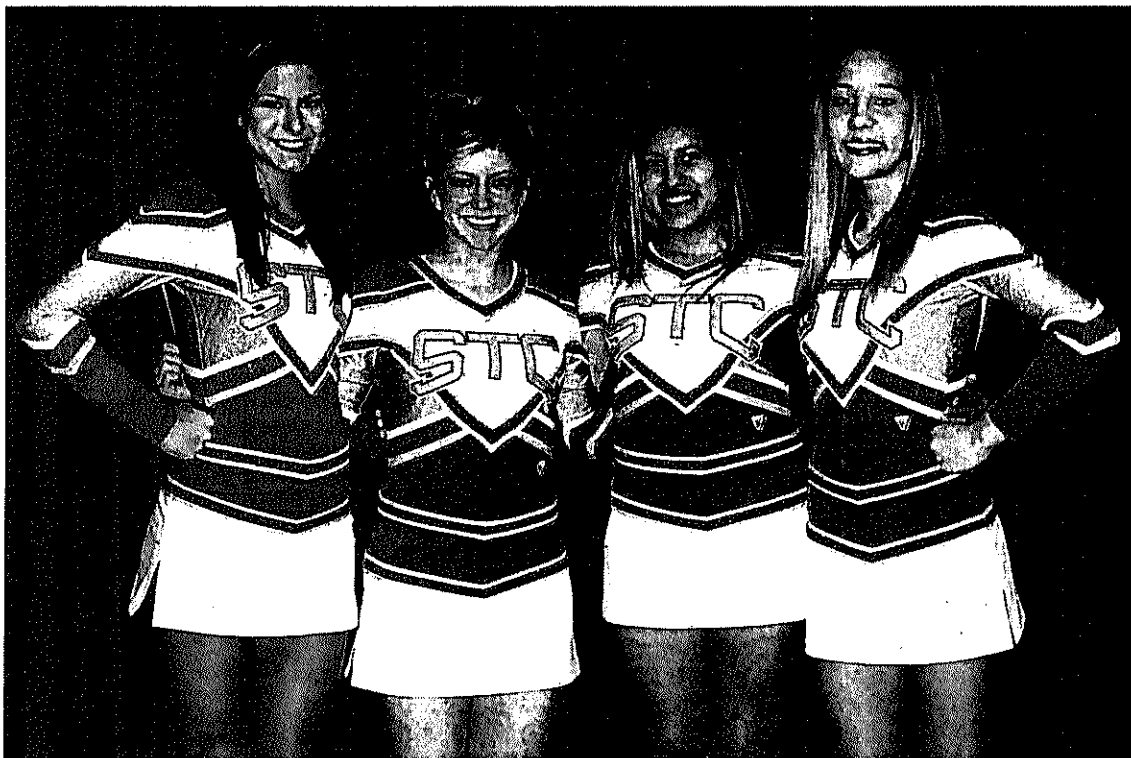
Seven cheering squads will take to the mats in the big school division on Saturday. The class AAAA competitors are Parkersburg South, Steubenville, Buckeye Local, John Marshall, East Liverpool, Indian Creek, and Wheeling Park high schools.

"This year's competition will feature a lot of good matchups," said Libby Shepherd, OVAC Cheering Director, inviting fans that have never attended the competition to come to this year's event. "We have a large crowd for the event, it is not only one of the biggest money makers for the OVAC, it is a great atmosphere for the cheerleaders competing on the floor when the crowd gets into their routine."

Judges for the competition make their decisions based on the teams' precision, formation, choreography, and degree of difficulty. Each team has three minutes to perform their cheer and combination dance routines.

The tentative scheduled times are:

- 9:33 a.m. class A competition
- 10:20 a.m. class AA competition
- 11:15 a.m. awards presentation for classes A/AA
- Break
- 12:30 - 1 p.m. class AAA competition
- 2 p.m. class AAAA competition



for titles as champions on Saturday

By MICHAEL PALMER
Times Leader Staff Writer

THE 18TH Annual OVAC Cheering Competition will be in full swing Saturday at the WesBanco Arena in Wheeling, where 34 teams from schools throughout the Ohio Valley are competing for first-place honors.

Each year, the crowd pours into the arena excited to cheer on the cheerleaders. The doors open to the public at 8:30 a.m.; the event begins at 9:30 a.m. with a performance by one of the winners of this year's Junior OVAC Competition, Warwood. The two other junior high squads are St. Clairsville and Parkersburg South. The Red Devils will perform during the break between A and AA and the Patriots will take to the floor before the afternoon session at approximately 12:30.

The competition is fierce as teams go head-to-head to outdo the champions of previous years and win against old rivals. Last year's defending champions are Toronto in class A division; River in the class AA division; St. Clairsville in the class AAA division; and Wheeling Park in the class AAAA division.

Toronto won their first single A crown in 2008 and was the first in their division to earn back-to-back crowns since Paden City in the 2001-02 seasons.

"My girls spoke briefly about another win but as their coach I do what I can to keep them well grounded," said cheering coach for the Red Knights Mary Beth Takacs. "I reminded them that if each girl gives 100 percent in those three minutes we're performing then we're winners already."

Seven teams are scheduled to compete in the single A division. The teams competing this year in the class A division include Bishop Donahue, Bridgeport, Madonna, Valley, Paden City, St. John and Toronto high schools.

Wheeling Central has 14 trophies from the cheerleading competition and had won 10 straight titles before Monroe Central unseated them from atop AA in 2008, a feat that had not been accomplished since Barnesville's win in 1996. Last year the Maroon Knights again watched the title go to another school as River earned their first cheerleading title in 2009.

"We lost six talented seniors last year, but we are ready to give it another shot to stay as the Champions in AA," Pilots coach Angi McDonald commented. "River High School will field a small squad, but the girls are very talented and prepared to win."

There are nine squads competing for the AA crown this year including the Maroon Knights who dropped down from the AAA division this season along with the Shamrocks cheering squad. The class AA competitors include Barnesville, Wheeling Central, Steubenville Catholic Central, Shenandoah, River, Shadyside, Linsly, Fort Frye and Monroe Central high schools.

St. Clairsville and Martins Ferry had traded off titles in AAA since 2003 when the Red Devils snapped a five-year streak by Paden City. The swap lasted until 2009 when St. Clairsville doubled up to win a fifth title for the Red Devils.

"Yes, The St. Clairsville Red Devil Competition Squad is ready to defend its AAA Title at the OVAC Cheering Competition on Feb. 6 at the WesBanco Arena," said St.



THE PILOTS pose with the trophy for AA after last year's competition. River's squad will be among the top teams returning to defend their titles at the OVAC Cheering Competition, set for this Saturday at WesBanco Arena in Wheeling.

T-L Photo/MIKE PALMER

2010 OVAC Cheerleading Competition

Tentative schedule of times at WesBanco Arena in Wheeling Saturday for team competition in each division:

- 9:33 a.m. class A competition
- 10:20 a.m. class AA competition
- 11:15 a.m. awards presentation for classes A/AA
- Break
- 12:30 - 1 p.m. class AAA competition
- 2 p.m. class AAAA competition
- 3 p.m. awards presentation for classes AAA/AAAA



Competition in late September.

"The entire squad has attended gymnastics classes together at Basics Gymnastics in Wellsburg, WV. In addition, the girls have practiced on an average of eight hours a week," Verba continued. "The Red Devil Cheerleaders know that to bring home the OVAC title for the third year in a row, the squad must perform a 'perfect' routine."

There is a crowded field in the AAA division with 11 teams vying for the trophy including the Wildcats and Red Knights stepping down from AAAA and the addition of the Colts squad. Class AAA competitors are Edison, Meadowbrook, Weir, Magnolia, Union Local, Martins Ferry, Oak Glen, Tyler, St. Clairsville, Bellaire and Harrison

"The Red Devil cheerleaders know that to bring home the OVAC title for the third year in a row, the squad must perform a 'perfect' routine."

*- Joanne Verba
coach of the
defending AAA
division champions
St. Clairsville Red
Devil Cheerleaders*

Central high schools.

Wheeling Park has 13 trophies in their trophy case. Brooke has unseated the divisional favorites three times in '05, '07 and '08. The only other team to win in AAAA was Weir in 2003. Last year Park returned to the top of the class and once again will be the team to beat. Newcomers to the conference Parkersburg South will take to

the floor at the competition for the first year, which has the four-A division buzzing.

"The competition will be a little more interesting and different this year in our division," said wheeling Park cheering coach Shawna Shepherd as Parkersburg South joins the field. "Their coach and I are actually friends, we share a choreographer."

"We have never competed against them before but I think that being from a different area of the state they will bring a different style of cheering to the competition," Park's coach commented. "We will perform back-to-back on Saturday afternoon, they are sixth and we are seventh, so their coach and I have already started talking about which Patriots team will win that competition."

Seven cheering squads will take to the mats in the big school division on Saturday. The class AAAA competitors are Parkersburg South, Steubenville, Buckeye Local, John Marshall, East Liverpool, Indian Creek, and Wheeling Park high schools.

"This year's competition will feature a lot of good matchups," said Libby Shepherd, OVAC Cheering Director, inviting fans that have never attended the competition to come to this year's event. "We have a large crowd for the event, it is not only one of the biggest money makers for the OVAC, it is a great atmosphere for the cheerleaders competing on the floor when the crowd gets into their routine."

Judges for the competition make their decisions based on the teams' precision, formation, choreography, and degree of difficulty. Each team has three minutes to perform their cheer and combination dance routines.

The tentative scheduled times are:

- 9:33 a.m. class A competition
- 10:20 a.m. class AA competition
- 11:15 a.m. awards presentation for classes A/AA
- Break
- 12:30 - 1 p.m. class AAA competition
- 2 p.m. class AAAA competition
- 3 p.m. awards presentation for classes AAA/AAAA

The event is open to the public. Admission is \$6 for adults and \$4 for children.

Palmer can be reached at mpalmer@timesleaderonline.com



THE SPIRITED St. Clairsville team will bring to the 2010 OVAC Cheering Competition four Seniors: Julia Avila, Erica DeFilippo, Emily Tennant and Stephanie Verba. "The latter three athletes are three-year veterans of the Red Devil OVAC Competition Squad and are exceptionally talented gymnasts and performers," said coach Joann Verba of her senior quartet. "These girls have set the standards for the team this year."

T-L Photo/MIKE PALMER

OVAC CHEERING CHAMPIONSHIPS



WesBanco Arena
Cheering Begins at
9:30 a.m.
Doors Open at 8:30 a.m.

CUSTOM SCREEN PRINTING
 COMPUTER EMBROIDERY

GOOD LUCK!

**Jenkins
Sporting
Goods**

JOHN JENKINS • OWNER

148 W. MAIN STREET,
 ST. CLAIRSVILLE, OH
 (740) 695-9300
 (740) 695-3799

GOOD LUCK

WHEELING CENTRAL
 CATHOLIC MAROON
 KNIGHTS
 CHEERLEADERS



From CCHS Athletic Dept.

GOOD LUCK

WHEELING
 PARK PATRIOT
 CHEERLEADERS



From The
 Administrative Staff
 & Students at
 Wheeling Park High School

GOOD LUCK

BUCKEYE LOCAL CHEERLEADERS
 We are so proud of you!!!

• ALYSSA • BRITNI • SHELBY
 • KAYLA • KYLIE • CHARLIE
 • NICOLE • TARYN • MARLENA

From the Buckeye Local Cheer Boosters

**ST. JOHN CENTRAL
HIGH SCHOOL**

3625 Guernsey Street
 Bellaire, OH 43906
 676-4932



"Dedicated to facilitating the work of
 God's grace in the integration of the
 spiritual, intellectual, physical, cultural
 and social lives of each student."

Enter to learn  Leave to serve

**GOOD LUCK SJC CHEERLEADERS!
 WE ARE SO PROUD OF YOU!**

Good Luck Girls!

**Belmont Career
Center**

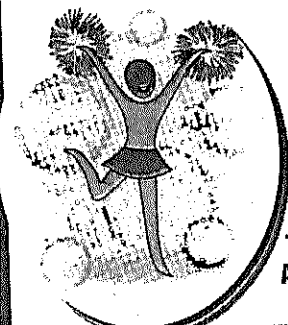
110 Fox-Shannon Place, St. Clairsville, OH 43950
 (740) 695-9130

**Harrison Career
Center**

82500 Cadiz Jewett Rd., Cadiz, OH 43907
 (740) 942-2148

GOOD LUCK

**JETS
CHEERLEADERS**



• KENNEDY • ABBEY
 • MADISON • AMBER
 • MADYSON • CHRISTINA
 • KARA • EMILY
 • KATIE • MAKENZIE

& COACH ANNETTE

THE UNION LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD
 APPRECIATES & RECOGNIZES YOUR
 HARD WORK & SCHOOL SPIRIT!

The Linsly School....
 Where Learning Never Ends.

Good Luck Linsly
 Cadet Cheerleaders!

Go Cadets!

Please call (304) 233-1436 or Email admit@linsly.org
 for admissions information or to arrange a visit.

The Linsly School
 BRINGING YOUNG MINDS TO LIFE.

The Linsly School is an equal opportunity school.