



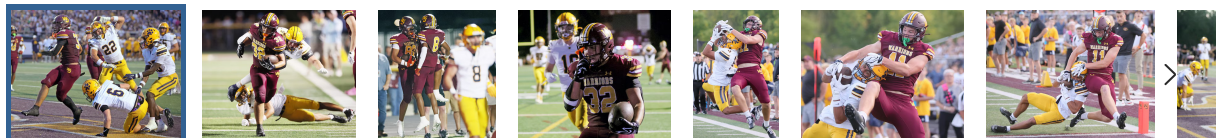
No. 1 vs. No. 2 meet Friday: Matt Goul's NE Ohio high school football Top 25 for Week 5

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High school football: Walsh vs. St. Ignatius, September 11, 2026



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CLEVELAND, Ohio — The No. 1 spot in the cleveland.com Northeast Ohio high school football Top 25 will be on the line Friday night in Berea, when No. 2 St. Edward plays host to No. 1 Massillon at Baldwin Wallace's Finnie Stadium.

Both have been in those spots since the preseason. The top three teams remain in place since last week, and St. Ignatius moves up a spot after a back-and-forth game with No. 3 Walsh Jesuit.

Read more about the Northeast Ohio rankings entering Week 5 with this breakdown:

On The Edge

Three teams jumped into the Top 25, including two from Stark County in Green and Jackson. They happen to meet Friday in Federal League play, as the Polar Bears bounced back from a close loss to undefeated Wadsworth by winning a shootout at Warren Harding. Green takes a three-game win streak into that one.

Benedictine (3-1, was No. 21) dropped out of the Top 25 after its 31-13 loss to Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin. Youngstown Cardinal Mooney (2-2, was No. 24) and Harding (2-2) also are out.

Teams under consideration for the Top 25 but still on the cusp include: Akron East (3-1), Berea-Midpark (3-1), Eastlake North (4-0), Girard (4-0), Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin (3-1), Uniontown Lake (3-1), West Branch (4-0) and Woodridge (4-0).

Here is the full Top 25:



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25. Willoughby South (4-0)

Last week: Not ranked; beat Ashtabula Lakeside 41-7

This week: Friday vs. Madison

24. Jackson (2-2)

Last week: Not ranked; won at Warren Harding 44-37

This week: Friday at Green

23. Green (3-1)

Last week: Not ranked; won at North Canton Hoover 24-20

This week: Friday vs. Jackson



In The Mix

Before getting to the top 10, let's address Archbishop Hoban. The Knights remain in the top 20 despite their 0-4 record. Why? Wins and losses aren't all that is considered these rankings. Performance and caliber of opponents are factors, and [Hoban's schedule](#) has been as tough as anyone with a trip to Florida and a four-point loss to an undefeated team, an NFL academy and another four-point loss to an unbeaten squad from New York. Then there is undefeated St. Edward, which had its closest win since Week 1 against Olentangy Liberty. Few teams would fare better against that slate.

22. Strongsville (2-2)

Last week: Ranked No. 23; beat Cleveland Heights 45-18

This week: Friday at Euclid

21. Mayfield (4-0)

Last week: Ranked No. 22; beat Aurora 40-0

This week: Friday vs. Barberton

20. Olmsted Falls (3-1)

Last week: Ranked No. 19; won at Elyria 35-13

This week: Friday vs. Avon

19. Archbishop Hoban (0-4)

Last week: Ranked No. 18; lost at St. Edward 17-14

This week: Friday vs. Cardinal Gibbons (N.C.)

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18. Villa Angela-St. Joseph (2-1)  cleveland.com



Last week: Ranked No. 20; beat Columbus DeSales 20-17

This week: Friday vs. Garfield Heights

17. Garfield Heights (3-1)

Last week: Ranked No. 14; lost to Erie McDowell (Pa.) 21-20 (OT)

This week: Friday at Villa Angela-St. Joseph

16. Mentor (3-1)

Last week: Ranked No. 17; beat Brunswick 63-18

This week: Friday at Riverside

15. Avon (2-2)

Last week: Ranked No. 16; beat North Ridgeville 62-21

This week: Friday at Olmsted Falls

14. Rocky River (4-0)

Last week: Ranked No. 15; beat Lakewood 49-7

This week: Friday at Valley Forge

13. Kirtland (3-1)

Last week: Ranked No. 13; won at Rootstown 50-7

This week: Friday vs. Conneaut

12. Nardonía (3-1)

Last week: Ranked No. 7; lost at Highland 23-21

This week: Friday vs. Hudson

11. Austintown Fitch (2-1)

Last week: Ranked No. 12; beat Maple Heights 28-20

Last week: Ranked No. 12; beat Maple Heights 30-20

The Top 10

10. Highland (3-1)

Last week: Ranked No. 11; beat Nordonia 23-21

This week: Friday at Medina

The Hornets built a 23-point lead in the first half and held off the Knights for a strong debut in the Suburban League's National Conference. The move came after Highland won the last two American Conference titles. Jonah Kowza nailed three field goals and sophomore Colton Wadle made his second start. The Hornets have won three straight games since their opening shutout loss to Walsh Jesuit. Highland coach Mike Gibbons praised his defense, which held down Nordonia's high-powered offense.

9. St. Ignatius (2-2)

Last week: Ranked No. 10; lost at Walsh Jesuit 31-24

This week: Friday vs. John Marshall

The Wildcats pushed the Warriors to the limit, as Dominick Courtad's 38-yard touchdown run down the stretch pushed Walsh Jr. in their heavyweight slugfest. St. Ignatius had a two-game winning streak, including wins at Pickerington North and its blowout of Mentor. There is no debating the Wildcats' turnaround. A year ago, Walsh shut them out during a one-win season. "They're probably one of the better teams in the state," coach Tom Kaufman said. "We're right there, so it's a major turnaround. It happened quick. We're 2-2. We have everything we want in front of us."

8. Hudson (4-0)

Last week: Ranked No. 9; beat North Royalton 42-7

This week: Friday at Nordon

The Explorers are proving more and more to be a contender in Division I, Region 1 after opting up from Division II. First, they have their eyes on Suburban League National Conference title contention.

7. Perry (4-0)

Last week: Ranked No. 8; won at Jefferson Area 62-0

This week: Friday vs. Hawken

Perry didn't let up after its massive victory in Week 3 against Kirtland. The Pirates, who are the state's top-ranked team in Division V, have won all four of their games by at least 21 points.

6. Glenville (2-2)

Last week: Ranked No. 4; lost at Columbus Bishop Watterson 35-13

This week: Friday at Rhodes

The Tarblooders had an early lead in their trip to Columbus, but the Eagles changed that in their matchup of defending state champions. Glenville should find out what division it will play in early this week after the OHSA took updated enrollment numbers.

5. Canton McKinley (3-1)

Last week: Ranked No. 6; won at Canton GlenOak 48-14

This week: Friday vs. Massillon Perry

The Bulldogs have won two straight since their loss to St. Edward, and their Federal League schedule will start to get more interesting with Perry and Green in the next two weeks.   

4. Wadsworth (4-0)

Last week: Ranked No. 5; beat Solon 42-8

This week: Friday at North Royalton

Wadsworth has won 24 of its last 25 regular-season games, and last Thursday's blowout of Solon has the Grizzlies off to a strong start in their bid for a fourth straight Suburban League National Conference title. Brysen Hall threw for 304 yards and four touchdowns, including two to Jay'len King.

3. Walsh Jesuit (4-0)

Last week: Ranked No. 3; beat St. Ignatius 31-24

This week: Idle

Unlike Walsh's forfeit win two weeks ago, this was a scheduled bye. Coach Nick Alexander said he had an idea of how to approach it, but admitted Friday he could reconsider it because the Warriors didn't play Springfield in Week 2. "I do think having Toledo Central Catholic and St. Ignatius back-to-back, those are two physical teams that are going to win a ton of football games," he said. "We have to get healthy first and foremost." They already lost senior receiver Sam Barrett, but sophomore Cayden Levert and freshman Cameron Brunson have emerged in his absence. The run game also has been big, as junior Dominick Courtad rushed for 142 yards and three touchdowns with physical play behind a powerful offensive line. Walsh, which will remain home through Week 9, has a 27-game winning streak at Conway Memorial Stadium.

2. St. Edward (4-0)

Last week: Ranked No. 2; beat Archbishop Hoban 17-14

This week: Friday vs. Massillon

It doesn't get any easier for the Eagles, who will have Massillon at Baldwin Wallace on Friday in a No. 1 vs. No. 2 showdown. They have unbeaten St. John's College from Washington, D.C. next week and then face rival St. Ignatius.

1. Massillon (4-0)

Despite the Tigers’ shutout of Canisius, coach Nate Moore characterized it as a sloppy win. “We gotta figure out how to keep our composure,” he said afterward. “It’s Week 4. We shouldn’t still be making these types of mistakes.”



Matt Goul

Matt Goul has covered high school sports with some college and pros sprinkled in since 2005 with a bachelor's degree from Kent State University. He has covered high school basketball and football in Northeast...more

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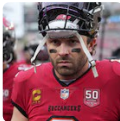
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