

# *The Trojanettes: Tusky Valley's First Sports Dynasty*



Their pictures do not hang on the Wall of Fame. There are no trophies or pictures recognizing them in the trophy cases. Their accomplishments were not even recognized in their own yearbooks. Their dominance was simply forgotten.

Who were they? They were the Trojanettes. They were the girls' basketball program that dominated Tuscarawas County in the early 1970s. Along the way these teams captured four consecutive league titles. In the middle of their title run they won 28 consecutive games, a streak that lasted nearly three calendar

years. Their 28-game winning streak remains tied for the longest winning streak of any sport in school history.

The story begins in the January of 1969 when Tusky Valley fielded the first girls' basketball team in school history under the direction of head coach Paula Martin. At the time the girls' basketball season began after winter break and games were only played about once a week. On January 31, 1969 the Trojanettes defeated Garaway 33-27 in the school's first ever game. While the Trojanettes won their first game they would lose two of their next three games and their record stood at a respectable 2-2 after four games. Little did anyone know what was to follow.

On February 17, 1969 the Trojanettes would defeat Garaway for the second time that season, this time by a score of 33-26. The significance of this game is that it started a streak of 28 consecutive victories for the girls' basketball program. A streak that would last for nearly three calendar years.



*The 1969 Trojanettes were Tusky Valley's first girls' basketball team*

The Trojanettes would then avenge their early season losses as they knocked off undefeated Hiland and Newcomerstown to finish the '69 season at 5-2 and finish in 2nd place in their initial season in the Tri-County League behind only Hiland. The Tri-County League was the original name of the IVC.

In 1970 the Trojanettes were once again coached by Paula Martin and returned several of their key players including 1969 leading scorer Tonya Dillon. The 1970 team had an early season scare as they defeated Newcomerstown 36-35 in the second game of the season. On February 9th the Trojanettes hosted the Hiland Hawks in a battle of unbeaten teams. The Trojanettes used strong defense and 16 points from Dillon to take a 31-23 victory and improve to 5-0.

Tusky Valley would cruise through their next four games to set up a season ending showdown at 8-1 Hiland with an outright Tri-County championship on the line. In the biggest game of the year the Trojanettes' best player came through as Dillon scored 26 points to lead Tusky Valley to a 41-38 victory.

The Trojanettes ended the '70 season with a perfect 10-0 record and had claimed the league title in just their second year of existence. The Trojanettes would end the 1970 season on a 13 game winning streak.

The 1971 team entered the season with question marks as they had lost Tonya Dillon to graduation. The questions would quickly be answered as the '71 Trojanettes became arguably the most dominant team in the history of Tusky Valley athletics. The team demolished their opponents as they went 10-0 on the season with an average margin of victory of 31.6 points per game.

Unlike the two previous seasons when the Trojanettes relied heavily on the scoring of Dillon, the '71 team featured a balanced attack with multiple scorers. Sophomore Danita Harvey emerged as the team's leading scorer with 115 points (11.5 ppg). They also received scoring contributions from 3-year varsity players Paula Lundenberger & Becky Eichel as well as sophomores Paula Levengood & Bonnie Boyd.



*The 1971 Trojanettes are arguably the most dominant team in TV sports history*

The '71 team was rarely challenged during the season with their closest game coming in the 8th game of the season when they defeated Conotton Valley 51-36. The Trojanettes wrapped up their second consecutive Tri-County League championship by pummeling Garaway 59-21 on February 25th.

The season finale was a showdown of unbeaten squads as Tusky Valley faced Stark County League champion Malvern. The game was no contest as the Trojanettes whipped the Hornets 39-21 to finish a perfect season and extend the program's winning streak to 23 games.

The 1971 season would be the last season for Tusky Valley head coach Paula Martin. In July of 1971 Coach Martin was granted a leave of absence from TVHS to further her education in graduate school at Western Kentucky University. In July of 1972 Coach Martin officially resigned her position as physical education teacher at TVHS. Coach Martin would leave Tusky Valley with a career record of 25-2.

Fran Blinn would take over the head coaching duties for the 1972 season. The Trojanettes started quickly with five wins over Tuslaw, Fairless, Conotton Valley, Malvern, and Hiland. The program's winning streak stood at 28 games heading into their February 6th game vs. Newcomerstown. It was there that the streak would end as the Trojanettes struggled offensively and lost their first game in 1,086 days by a final score 28-21. Ironically, Newcomerstown had been the last team to defeat the Trojanettes before their incredible winning streak began.



*The 1972 Trojanettes knocked off Dover 27-14 in a late season showdown of Tuscarawas County powers*

Tusky Valley would lose a second game to Fairless and entered the final two games of the '72 season with an 8-2 record. The Trojanettes would finish strong as they knocked off a 10-1 Dover team 27-14 to set up a rematch vs. Newcomerstown on March 9th with the Tri-County Conference championship on the line. The Trojanettes dominated play as Danita Harvey scored 16 points and grabbed 9 rebounds to lead the team to a 33-13 victory. The win gave the Trojanettes their third consecutive league title.

The '73 season brought more change as the Trojanettes once again welcomed a new head coach as Mary Sweitzer took over the reins of the program. The '73 team featured 3-year letterwinners Danita Harvey, Bonnie Boyd, and Gretchen Reed with junior Donna Barnhart emerging as a scoring threat for the Trojanettes.

The team opened the season with six straight victories to set up a showdown with Stark County's Perry Panthers. The Trojanettes once again showed they were more than just the dominant program in Tuscarawas County as they knocked off the Panthers 51-45 behind 20 points from Barnhart and 18 from Harvey.

The Trojans would wrap up their fourth consecutive league title with little trouble and entered the season finale vs. Dover with a 9-0 record. The Tornadoes entered the game sporting a 9-1 record and looking for revenge for their '72 defeat. The game was close throughout but the Tornadoes ended the Trojanettes' hopes of a perfect season with a 30-27 victory.

Following the 1973 season it would be 14 years until coach John Hurst and the 1987 Lady Trojans brought another league title to Tusky Valley. The late '70s teams would feature many great individual talents such as Barnhart, Linda Deibel, Alice Huggins and Pam Smith, but the teams would never be as dominant as those early 70s' juggernauts.

From 1969-1973 the Tusky Valley Trojanettes went 44-5 and captured four league titles. Unfortunately they never got to test their mettle against other teams across the state as the Ohio High School Girls' Basketball Tournament would not begin until 1976. Despite not getting the chance to prove themselves against the rest of the state they did accomplish something worthwhile. They became Tusky Valley's original sports dynasty.

### The 28-Game Winning Streak

Date	Opponent	Score
2/16/1969	Garaway	33-26
2/26/1969	Hiland	32-26
3/3/1969	Newcomerstown	43-38
1/7/1970	Strasburg	50-34
1/21/1970	Newcomerstown	36-35
1/28/1970	Garaway	51-15
2/4/1970	Dover St. Joseph	25-16
2/9/1970	Hiland	31-23
2/16/1970	Strasburg	35-16
2/19/1970	Conotton Valley	43-19
2/25/1970	Newcomerstown	45-26
3/2/1970	Garaway	51-29
3/11/1970	Hiland	41-38
1/6/1971	Conotton Valley	49-15
1/12/1971	Hiland	53-12
1/21/1971	Newcomerstown	51-12
1/25/1971	Garaway	55-26
1/31/1971	Strasburg	47-23
2/10/1971	Newcomerstown	62-16
2/18/1971	Strasburg	55-23
2/22/1971	Conotton Valley	51-36
2/24/1971	Garaway	59-21
2/28/1971	Malvern	39-21
1/5/1972	Tuslaw	39-23
1/11/1972	Fairless	35-25
1/19/1972	Conotton Valley	38-30

## Longest Winning Streaks by Sport

Sport	Streak	Year(s)
Girls' Basketball	28	1969-1972
Volleyball	28	2010
Volleyball	28	2017
Football	14	1964-1965 & 1973-1974
Baseball	12	1995
Soccer	11	2006
Boys' Basketball	10	1962-1963 & 2020-2021
Softball	10	2022
<i>Note: The volleyball team won 50 consecutive regular season games during 2008-2011 seasons. Golf, wrestling, track &amp; cross country are not included due to competing in invitationals.</i>		

## Notable Tusky Valley Dynasties

Sport	Years	Accomplishment
Volleyball	2015-2018	4 consecutive regional championships
Volleyball	1997-2007	11 consecutive league titles, 95 match league winning streak
Boys' Track	1989-1996	8 consecutive league titles, 63-0-1 in dual meets
Girls' Cross Country	1990-1995	6 consecutive league titles
Girls' Basketball	1969-1973	4 consecutive league titles, 28 game winning streak
Girls' Track	1985-1988	4 consecutive league titles
Football	2005-2007	3 consecutive league titles & playoff appearances

**Note:** On January 8, 2004 the TVHS web team began researching the history of the girls' basketball program (along with other sports) using the only resource we had at our disposal at the time: Old TVHS yearbooks. Unfortunately, we did not have a yearbook for every year and not all of the yearbooks contained the scores for girls' basketball.

We posted all of the information we had but were missing the entire 1970, 1971, 1972 & 1975 seasons. We thought we had done the best we could and moved on to other projects.

Fast forward a little more than a decade later when we received an email from Bonnie (Boyd) Stuck. Bonnie was a member of the early 1970's teams and she let us know that her teams were very successful during this time. This



*encouraged us to resume our research. With the help of technological advancements, we were able to search through old Daily Times and Daily Reporter newspapers to find the score of virtually every game.*

*The search was exciting as not only did it show us the greatness of the early 70s teams but it allowed us to learn a lot of history about the Tuscarawas Valley Local Schools. The search for the girls' basketball records (along with the search for Ben Price's scoring records from the late 1950s) inspired us to begin the On This Date feature on our Facebook and Twitter pages.*

*Finally, we would like to thank Bonnie Stuck for calling to our attention that worthwhile information was out there to find. Without your email this information would've likely been lost to history and our current students would never know about many aspects of the rich history of the Tuscarawas Valley Local Schools.*