



The Dover High baseball squad: FRONT — Tim Jones (L), Dave Contini, Jeff Fickes, Chris Hale, Jeff Auman, Steve Johnson, Mike Sudduth and Greg Lutz. REAR — Assistant coaches Bob Becker and

Judd Compton, Rich Craig, Brian Poland, Paul Monaco, Sid Beitzel, Jeff Mason, Vic Hill, Steve Cox and head coach Dave Contini. Absent were Todd McCahill, Dennis Harmon and Joel Hamsher.

Dover faces Whitehall in regional

By **DAVE WHITMER**
Sports Editor

The Dover Tornadoes return to the Class AA regional baseball tournament for the second straight year Thursday at Municipal Stadium in Zanesville.

They made it to the regional finals in 1983 before falling to Portsmouth Northwest.

"It was exciting last season and we want to get that feeling again," said right fielder Jeff Auman, one of six seniors in the starting lineup. "We made it our goal again this year, and we've been playing good team ball."

Dover's opponent tomorrow at 4:30 will be Columbus Whitehall. Both clubs owned 12-6 records entering scheduled league games Tuesday.

The first semifinal game at 2 will match Steubenville against Hebron Lakewood, with the winners returning for the championship contest Saturday at 2.

WHITEHALL, WHICH has played mostly Class AAA opposition, earned its first regional berth since 1976 by whipping Marion Edin 23-6 in the district finals at Westerville.

"They had 25 base hits and there weren't any bloopers," said Dover skipper Dave Contini, who scouted the Rams last week.

"Whitehall's a good ball club," he added.

"They're a good hitting team with a lot of speed at the top of the order. It will take us playing a good game to stay with them... pitching, fielding and hitting."

The Rams' attack is led by speedy leadoff batter Todd Cline, who's hitting .436 for the season. They have two capable pitchers in Brian Jones and Calvin Green, both right-handers. Jones, who will start Thursday, is primarily a power pitcher while Green is a knuckle ball specialist used mostly in relief.

Dover will counter with junior right-hander Paul Monaco, who's coming off a 14-strikeout performance last week in the district.

THE TORNADOES' offense has received contributions from throughout the lineup, eight of the nine regulars hitting at least one home run this season.

Senior first baseman/pitcher Steve Cox owns the top average, batting right around the .500 mark most of the year. "I only batted .225 last season, so I've almost doubled that," noted Cox, the cleanup hitter. "I have a lot more confidence this year."

Fellow seniors Greg Lutz, Mike Sudduth and Sid Beitzel are the first three batters in the Dover lineup.

"I mostly just try to get a walk or a little hit to the outfield," said Lutz, the second baseman who bats leadoff and has shown

some power in recent games.

Sudduth, the No. 2 hitter, provided the big blow in Dover's district title win over John Glenn last week with a grand-slam home run. "It's been a great season, and there would be nothing better to cap it off than to go to state," grinned Sudduth, the left fielder who leads the team in stolen bases with 15.

Center fielder Beitzel, who has a .400 average, added: "Last year was exciting, but I think this team is better because we have power all the way through the lineup."

CONTINI HAS BEEN puzzled by his club's periodic dry spells at the plate, however.

"Some days we look like champions and at other times we can't seem to smell the ball," he said about the Dover attack. "But the potential is there down through the lineup to hit well."

Defensively, the Tornadoes have been fairly steady. A key to the infield play, Contini noted, has been Steve Johnson's performance after taking over at third base.

"I moved from the outfield to third early this season," said Johnson, another senior veteran. "It's not too bad there, but some times you get some shots hit right at you."

The Tornadoes will be trying to get in a few shots of their own Thursday.