

## **Introduction**

Thank you for taking the time to read the *State Tournament Predictions Report*. As I embark on year number fifteen – for which I have record – of doing this in some way, shape, or form ... let's take a quick look back at how the first fourteen years have went in predictions, as well as the current landscape in Ohio high school wrestling.

For a third straight year, there are multiple wrestlers seeking to win their fourth state title at the state tournament. On this occasion, the number is three, one in each division: David Carr (Massillon Perry) in Division I, Mitch Moore (St. Paris Graham) in Division II, and Tommy Hoskins (Legacy Christian Academy) in Division III.

Prior to 2016, 27 wrestlers in all had reached the state tournament with three titles in hand, all 27 took home a fourth. However, in that year, Tyler Warner (Claymont) was upset in the state semifinal 6-4 at 120 pounds in Division II; Alex Marinelli (St. Paris Graham) did win his fourth title at 170, also in Division II. Last year also had two wrestlers enter the state tournament after a fourth state title, Kyle Lawson (Olentangy Liberty) was denied by Cody Surratt (Wadsworth) in the quarterfinals at 160 pounds in Division I, losing a 3-2 decision; while Kaleb Romero (Mechanicsburg) scorched through the Division III bracket at 170 pounds to ascend to the top of the podium for a fourth title.

Also in the hunt for fourth state finals match appearances are Jaden Mattox (Grove City Central Crossing) in Division I and Rocky Jordan (St. Paris Graham) in Division II. Mattox was champion in 2016, but fell short in 2015 and last year in a champ vs. champ match with Carr; while Jordan was runner-up as a freshman before winning the last two years.

Twenty returning state champions are slated to compete in the state tournament series this year, a number that increases to 22 if you count for titles won in a year prior to 2017. Relative to recent years, this is in the middle (2017 had 21 defending and/or previous state champions, 2016 had 24, 2015 had 18, 2014 had 21, and 2013 had 17).

As of the rankings published on February 7<sup>th</sup> by InterMat, there are 37 Ohio wrestlers within the top 20 of their weight classes nationally. It includes at least one wrestler in every weight class from 106 through 195, while no wrestlers are ranked at either 220 or 285. Two wrestlers are presently ranked first in the country, Jacob Decatur (CVCA) at 106 and David Carr (Massillon Perry) at 152. Ryan Thomas (St. Paris Graham) is ranked third at 160, Rocky Jordan (St. Paris Graham) and Jared Ball (Hilliard Darby) are ranked fourth nationally at 170 and 195, while Julian Tagg (Brecksville) and Jaden Mattox (Central Crossing) are ranked fifth at 120 and 160.

The team titles in each individual division have a clear favorite. St. Paris Graham is prohibitively favored to win their 18<sup>th</sup> state title in a row, and 20<sup>th</sup> in total. The only question in Division II is the final margin of victory, if it's by a factor of three, and how many of the next teams in the standings it takes to equate to the Falcons' point total. In Division III, last year's state runner-up returns all of its state tournament points, and is a runaway favorite; the only question is which team can emerge to take second. While Division I has a solid favorite in St. Edward, though it will likely be the closest margin of victory between first and second, along with an interesting battle of the second place trophy spot. There is a challenge pack that includes four other nationally ranked teams (Cincinnati LaSalle, Brecksville, Wadsworth, and Massillon Perry)

One of the obvious purposes for writing this report is to predict (hopefully correctly) who wins the state title in each of the 42 weight classes (14 in each of the three divisions). Let's see how that has played out over the last thirteen years.

2004- DI 8/14, DII 10/14, DIII 10/14 (TOTAL = 28)

2005- DI 9/14, DII 9/14, DIII 3(or4)/14 (TOTAL = 21 or 22)

2006- DI 10/14, DII 9/14, DIII 7(or8)/14 (TOTAL = 26 or 27)

2007- DI 10/14, DII 8/14, DIII 9/14 (TOTAL = 27)

2008- DI 9/14, DII 8/14, DIII 9/14 (TOTAL = 26)

2009- DI 12/14, DII 9/14, DIII 9/14 (TOTAL = 30)

2010- DI 9/14, DII 10/14, DIII 10(or11)/14 (TOTAL = 29 or 30)

2011- DI 8(or9)/14, DII 8/14, DIII 11/14 (TOTAL = 27 or 28)

2012- DI 11/14, DII 10/14, DIII 7(or8)/14 (TOTAL = 28 or 29)

2013- DI 9/14, DII 9/14, DIII 9/14 (TOTAL = 27)

2014- DI 9/14, DII 9/14, DIII 9/14 (TOTAL = 27)

2015- DI 5/14, DII 10/14, DIII 13/14 (TOTAL = 28)

2016- DI 7/14, DII 8/14, DIII 10/14 (TOTAL = 25); note: DI and DII each had one case where projected champ did not make weight at sectional, and the second-ranked kid won the title

2017 – DI 7/14, DII 10/14, DIII 9/14 (TOTAL = 26)

Where were the other champs ranked? (note this may not be perfect):

2<sup>nd</sup>- 107, 3<sup>rd</sup>- 45, 4<sup>th</sup>- 21, 5<sup>th</sup>- 13, 6<sup>th</sup>- 5, 7<sup>th</sup>- 3, 8<sup>th</sup>- 3, 9<sup>th</sup>- 2, 10<sup>th</sup> – 2, >10- 4

Each weight class breakdown starts with an ordinal listing of the top 16 wrestlers. Following that ranking, is a listing of the top five (or more) wrestlers at each of the district tournaments; note that four wrestlers at each district tournament site, of which there are four per division, earn state tournament qualification. Then, finally is the commentary, which provides an analysis of the weight class as a whole, the top wrestlers in the weight class, as well as some relevant and/or tangential commentary. After each weight class is presented in the division, a team ranking is presented based on a formula that is intended to replicate scoring at the state tournament.

In addition to being an attempt to accurately predict the champion (and those towards the top) of each weight class, there are two other primary objectives in the creation of this report: (1) an attempt to accurately gauge the composition of each district tournament weight class (2) to provide fans an informative, yet entertaining, read on what to expect in the state series over the next few weeks.

Please note that this report is a reflection of the information acquired based on wrestling through the weekend ending February 3<sup>rd</sup>, with publication done on February XX, so the dual team state championship rounds are not captured. There is a week left of wrestling in the regular season, though it not one in which every team has a competition scheduled.

Also, remember that come the state series, it is a new season. The rankings and summaries carry the value of understanding where one person sees things at this point in time, and also an entertainment factor. However, as the writer of this report, I feel it is important to state: (1) there are matches to be wrestled for a reason (2) it is the upsets, the unexpected, and the thrillers that define state series wrestling (3) if I was somewhat perfect, there would be a different line of employment for me (i.e. psychic or bookie).

These are two predictions that I guarantee to be correct:

\*The state tournament will be staged at Value City Arena on the campus of Ohio State University March 8<sup>th</sup> through 10<sup>th</sup>.

\*42 wrestlers will be crowned as champions, 14 weight classes across 3 divisions.

All others ... I can make no guarantees. Best of luck on the remainder of the season, hope you all achieve the levels of success you wish for, and enjoy the reading!

### **District Tournament Site Analysis**

This is the first year of the enrollment cycle, which means there were some notable changes within the district compositions. Starting in Division I, the all-northeast district remains at North Canton Hoover, but there is a change in sectional composition (the Brecksville sectional is now in the mixed district, while the Willoughby South sectional moves to this all-northeast district).

Additionally, all northeast district teams are in the six northeast sectionals instead of some teams being moved to the two northwest sectionals; with that there is only one sectional in the northwest district, with the extra sectional going to the central district, though three northwest district teams will be competing in Central district sectionals.

The mixed district this year is at Perrysburg, and will feature two northeast district sectionals (those hosted by Westlake and Brecksville), the one northwest district sectional, and a central district sectional (that is really weak). The Southwest district remains self-contained, while the Central district is self-contained less those teams that were stuck going to the mixed district.

Division II district compositions do remain unchanged, though the structure of sectionals in the two “southern” districts have changed. There is again an all-northeast district (4 sectionals) and a mixed district hosted by the northwest (3 NW sectionals, 1 NE sectional). The southeast remains with two sectionals, one that goes to a district that the southwest hosts and the other going to a district hosted by the central or east (this year Claymont in the East); however, there are no southwest district teams assigned to a sectional hosted in the southeast. The change to the district hosted by the East (Claymont) involves sectional composition, with the East district featuring two sectionals instead of one with some teams going to one of the two in the central; while the central district loses a sectional, and is down to a lone sectional.

Division III remains the same for the two “northern” district tournaments. There is a northeast district featuring all teams in that district (4 sectionals), and an all-northwest district that features four of the five sectionals. This year’s change involves the two central district sectionals both going to the mixed central/east district (this year hosted by Heath in the Central) instead of one each going to the mixed southwest district and the central/east mixed district.

The residual result is the east district picking up a second sectional, while the southeast district loses its sectional; teams in the southeast district will be split between sectional(s) in the southwest and east district. The mixed district hosted by the southwest will feature 1 NW sectional, 2 SW sectionals, and a third SW sectional featuring some SE teams; while the mixed district hosted by the central will feature 2 C sectionals, one all-E sectional, and one E sectional including some SE teams.

When looking at the below district tournament statistics, keep in mind that each site should have the following marks from an expected value standpoint: overall record of 105-105, with a 52.5-52.5 mark in championship bracket matches, and 14 wrestlers going two-and-out. Below are four years of records for each district at the state tournament.

#### **DIV I - All Northeast (North Canton Hoover)**

2017: 126-105, 54.5% (overall); 61-50, 55.0% (championship only); 8 (two-and-out)

2016: 108-109, 49.8%; 50-53, 48.5%; 11

2015: 93-105, 47.0%; 50-52, 49.0%; 19

2014: 107-99, 51.9%; 61-50, 55.0%; 19

DIV I - Combined Northeast (2)/Northwest (1)/Northwest & Central (1) <Perrysburg>  
2017: 96-100, 49.0% (overall); 61-50, 55.0% (championship only); 18 (two-and-out)  
2016: 124-96, 56.4%; 82-49, 62.6%; 10  
2015: 139-92, 60.2%; 76-50, 60.3%; 7  
2014: 142-98, 59.2%; 57-53, 51.8%; 7

**Note** – The all-Northeast and mixed “northern” districts have a different composition than either 2014-2016 or 2017. The Wadsworth sectional is in the all-northeast district for a second straight year, instead of being in the combined district; the Willoughby South sectional returns to the all-northeast district as it was in 2014-2016, after being in the combined district last year; while the Brecksville sectional is in the combined district for the first time in this period. Instead of there being two northwest district sectionals, there is now just one, with a new fifth central district sectional taking its place.

DIV I - All Southwest (Kettering Fairmont)  
2017: 101-110, 47.9% (overall); 46-55, 45.5% (championship only); 13 (two-and-out)  
2016: 88-112, 44.0%; 31-56, 35.6%; 18  
2015: 77-118, 39.5%; 31-55, 36.0%; 21  
2014: 83-110, 43.0%; 50-54, 48.1%; 16

DIV I - All Central (Hilliard Darby)  
2017: 97-105, 48.0% (overall); 42-54, 43.8% (championship only); 17 (two-and-out)  
2016: 100-103, 49.3%; 47-52, 47.5%; 17  
2015: 111-105, 51.4%; 53-53, 50.0%; 9  
2014: 88-113, 43.8%; 42-53, 44.2%; 14

DIV II - All Northeast (Alliance)  
2017: 128-97, 56.9% (overall); 66-51, 56.4% (championship only); 8 (two-and-out)  
2016: 104-114, 47.7%; 45-54, 45.5%; 11  
2015: 115-111, 50.9%; 56-54 50.9%; 10  
2014: 124-103, 54.6%; 60-52, 53.6%; 10

DIV II - Combined Central (1)/East (2)/Southeast (1) <now Claymont>  
2017: 88-111, 44.2% (overall); 42-55, 43.3% (championship only); 13 (two-and-out)  
2016: 84-106, 44.2%; 46-54, 46.0%; 17  
2015: 79-111, 41.6%; 33-53, 38.4%; 22  
2014: 91-108, 45.7%; 45-53, 45.9%; 16

**NOTE:** 2014-2015 had composition of Central (2)/East (2)

DIV II – primary Northwest district (now Norwalk)  
2017: 108-111, 49.3% (overall); 51-55, 48.1% (championship only); 14 (two-and-out)  
2016: 122-104, 54.0%; 64-53, 54.7%; 10  
2015: 113-104, 52.1%; 55-53, 50.9%; 12  
2014: 93-109, 46.0%; 53-53, 50.0%; 16

**NOTE:** 2014-2015 had 2 NW sectional, 1 NE (some NW) sectional, 1 SW sectional (teams chose whether to attend NW or SW district); while in 2016 to present, the composition was 3 NW, 1 NE.

DIV II – primary Southwest district (Wilmington)

2017: 96-101, 48.7% (overall); 51-49, 51.0% (championship only); 21 (two-and-out)

2016: 110-96, 53.4%; 55-49, 52.9%; 18

2015: 113-94, 54.6%; 66-50, 56.9%; 12

2014: 112-100, 52.8%; 52-52, 50.0%; 14

**NOTE:** 2014-2015 had 2 SW sectionals (one of which was a sectional involving teams with a choice between NW or SW district), 1 all SE sectional, 1 SE (with some SW) sectional; while from 2016 to the present, the composition was 3 SW sectionals, 1 SE sectional

DIV III - All Northeast (Garfield Hts)

2017: 104-108, 49.1% (overall); 48-53, 47.5% (championship only); 18 (two-and-out)

2016: 104-108, 49.1%; 55-53, 50.9%; 16

2015: 106-121, 46.7%; 41-54, 43.2%; 10

2014: 104-100, 51.0%; 59-50, 54.1%; 12

DIV III - Combined Central (2)/East and part of southeast (2) <now Heath>

2017: 77-113, 40.5% (overall); 35-55, 38.9% (championship only); 23 (two-and-out)

2016: 70-116, 37.6%; 33-56, 37.1%; 19

2015: 61-109, 35.9%; 30-55, 35.3%; 25

2014: 68-118, 36.6%; 31-56, 35.6%; 19

DIV III - Combined Southwest (2)/Southwest part of southeast (1)/Northwest (1 <Troy>

**Note:** For 2014 and 2015, it was 3 SW and 1 NW sectional; for 2016 and 2017, the composition is 2 SW sectionals and 1 NW sectional, with the extra sectional coming from the Central; while this year it is 3 SW and 1 NW sectional, though the third SW sectional will feature half of the SE district teams

2017: 120-101, 54.3% (overall); 65-52, 55.6% (championship only); 6 (two-and-out)

2016: 122-93, 56.7%; 61-51, 54.5%; 13

2015: 133-90, 59.6%; 76-50, 60.3%; 11

2014: 117-97, 54.7%; 64-48, 57.1%; 14

DIV III - All Northwest (now Defiance)

**Note:** In all years recorded here, it has been four of the five northwest sectionals present

2017: 119-98, 54.8% (overall); 62-50, 55.4% (championship only); 9 (two-and-out)

2016: 124-103, 54.6%; 61-50, 55.0%; 8

2015: 120-100, 54.5%; 63-51, 55.3%; 10

2014: 129-105, 55.1%; 55-55, 50.0%; 12

## DIVISION I

### *106 pounds*

1. Zach Shupp, Fairfield, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
2. Logan Agin, Lancaster, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
3. Jacob Moon, Oregon Clay, freshman (Perrysburg)
4. Dustin Norris, Cincinnati LaSalle, freshman (Kettering Fairmont)
5. Richard Delsanter, St. Edward, freshman (Perrysburg)
6. Michael Shaw, Olmsted Falls, senior (Perrysburg)
7. William Dopeker, Cincinnati Elder, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
8. Jack Stanley, Brecksville, junior (Perrysburg)
9. Pacey Nasdusak, Mason, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
10. Douglas Patterson, Columbus Mifflin, senior (Hilliard Darby)
11. Mikey Lewarchik, Wadsworth, freshman (North Canton)
12. James Baumann, Dublin Coffman, freshman (Hilliard Darby)
13. Jake Williams, Massillon Perry, sophomore (North Canton)
14. Bryce Allison, Elyria, sophomore (Perrysburg)
15. Colin Roberts, Austintown Fitch, freshman (North Canton)
16. Johnny Novak, St. Ignatius, sophomore (Perrysburg)

HDAR – Agin, Patterson, Bauman, Deacon Sawchuk (Hilliard Bradley, freshman); Malik Branson (Pickerington Central, sophomore)

KF – Shupp, Norris, Doecker, Nasdusak; Josh Miller (Trenton Edgewood, senior)

NC – Lewarchik, Williams, Roberts, Kollin Howard (Maple Hts, sophomore); Jacob Hamad (Nordonia, junior)

PBG – Moon, Delsanter, Shaw, Stanley; Allison, Novak

Traditionally, the opening weight class has been viewed as a bastion for freshmen, having a freshman actually stand on top of the podium in this big-school division weight class has been relatively uncommon. In the previous 15 state tournaments, only six freshmen have won: Lance Palmer (2003, would win four titles), Shawn Harris (2004, would not win another title), Tony Jameson (2005, would win four titles), Dean Heil (2010, would win four titles), Bryce Andonian (2016, did not win last year), and Julian Tagg (last year).

The two primary contenders for the title this year are not freshmen, in fact they met in the state semifinal last year, a match that was won 2-1 by Shupp in the ultimate tiebreaker. So far on the season these wrestlers have been at 106 for a combined one event. Agin placed third at the Ironman, while Shupp will be descending to this weight class for the post-season.

At the 113 pound weight class, Agin has won four tournaments; two of those titles were won over two-time state qualifier Jacob Sherman, while a third was a 2-1 victory over two-time state placer Brandon Lucas. Shupp has won at least three tournaments on the season, most notably earning Outstanding Wrestler honors when he won his fourth SWOWCA title; while his lone loss came in the Brecksville final, 5-2 to nationally ranked Dylan Shawver.

There are two freshmen viewed as primary challengers to Shupp and Agin, both won junior high state titles last year. Moon won his title at the 114 pound weight class, while Norris won his at 90. Moon has three tournament titles at 106 pounds, most notably at Maumee Bay, while he was a semifinalist at the

Ironman before placing sixth; in the 113 pound weight class he was fifth at Brecksville and third at Brooke. Norris has titles at Franklin and the Dvorak, while he was third at Escape the Rock, and missed placing at the Ironman by one bout where both his losses were by a single point.

Shupp and Norris are the top two wrestlers at the Kettering Fairmont district, where two other ranked wrestlers join them. The sophomore Doepker has titles at three tournaments this year, while he placed fifth at Brecksville; fellow sophomore Nasdusak is a returning state qualifier and was champion at his conference tournament and fourth at the Dvorak in Illinois.

Agin leads a district at Hilliard Darby that features just two other ranked wrestlers. Returning state qualifier Patterson has spent much of this season up in weight, including a championship at Mount Vernon in the 113 weight class; while the freshman Bauman placed at junior high state last year and has a title at the GMVWA to his credit to go with runner-up finishes at North Canton and Delaware Hayes.

Moon is the top ranked wrestler at the Perrysburg district, which is the deepest in this weight class, and is going to be in many weight classes. When one tournament features St. Edward, Brecksville, AND Elyria – that is often going to be the case. Fellow freshman Delsanter is the next ranked wrestler in this district, and he most notably carries an overtime win over returning state qualifier Shaw this season, who is the third ranked wrestler at this site. Shaw was champion at Olentangy Liberty and third at Medina. The fourth ranked wrestler is the junior Stanley, who placed sixth at the Beast and seventh at Brecksville, while beating Lewarchik for a second time on the season to win his conference meet. Rounding out the ranked wrestlers are the sophomore Allison, who has missed much of the season; along with fellow sophomore Novak, who was runner-up at Solon and champion at Riverside.

Rounding out the districts is the one at North Canton, which has just three ranked wrestlers, none among the top ten. The freshman Lewarchik is the leader of the group, having placed fourth at North Canton and carrying a 6-5 dual meet win over Nasdusak. The sophomore Williams was up at 113 through Top Gun before making the late move down, and placing third at Delaware Hayes; while the freshman Roberts was fourth at Medina and the Top Gun.

### *113 pounds*

1. Lucas Byrd, Cincinnati LaSalle, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
2. Dylan Shawver, Elyria, sophomore (Perrysburg)
3. Andrew Perelka, Brecksville, senior (Perrysburg)
4. Brandon Lucas, Western Brown, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
5. Scotty Richter, St. Edward, sophomore (Perrysburg)
- \*\*Gavin Sampsel, Massillon Perry, sophomore (North Canton)\*\*
6. Jacob Sherman, Olentangy, junior (Hilliard Darby)
7. Jack Haskin, Toledo Whitmer, freshman (Perrysburg)
8. Kyren Butler, Copley, freshman (North Canton)
9. Kyle Murray, Dublin Coffman, senior (Hilliard Darby)
10. Pino Dipiero, Berea-Midpark, sophomore (Perrysburg)
11. Moustapha Bal, Fairfield, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
12. Nick Sabin, Mentor, sophomore (North Canton)
13. Josh Suddeth, Vandalia Butler, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
14. Mitch Herren, Upper Arlington, junior (Hilliard Darby)
15. Darius Lovett, Winton Woods, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
16. Kyah Patrick, Beavercreek, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)

HDAR – Sherman, Murray, Herren, Trevor Mangahas (Pickerngton Central, junior); Cole Jackson (Olentangy Orange, junior)

KF – Byrd, Lucas, Bal, Suddeth; D. Lovett, Patrick

NC – **\*\*Sampsel\*\***, Butler, Sabin, Derek Slipkovich (Boardman, senior); Brayden Potter (Medina, senior)

PBG – Shawver, Perelka, Richter, Haskin; Dipiero

On the way to Julian Tagg's championship at 106 pounds last year, the key match of his tournament was a semifinal showdown with Lucas Byrd, which was a rubber match for the season. Tagg had won the Ironman final, while Byrd beat him at Brecksville. In the state semifinal, Tagg would win 3-1 in overtime, while Byrd did bounce back to finish third. During the past off-season both wrestlers represented the United States in the Cadet World championships at 50 kilos (110 pounds), Tagg in freestyle and Byrd in Greco-Roman.

Byrd's lone tournament title this season came in the opening weekend at Franklin where he beat two-time state placer Jake Gentry 7-5 in the final at 120 pounds. In three national caliber tournaments, he was fifth at the Ironman before finishing second to top five wrestlers at the Dvorak (Noah Surtin from Illinois) and Escape the Rock (Anthony Clark from New Jersey).

Five ranked wrestlers join Byrd at the Kettering Fairmont district, though only one would be called a true challenger, and that's two-time state placer Lucas. Even so, Byrd beat him 13-5 in the regional final of the state dual meet series. On the season Lucas has two tournament titles, a runner-up finish to Agin at New Lexington, and a fourth at Brecksville. The junior Bal has been at 120 for the season, but will drop as Shup drops; most notably he was runner-up at Fairfield and third at SWOWCA.

Fellow junior Suddeth qualified for state two years ago and has dropped down two weight classes from where he competed the first half-plus of the season, and was third at Central Crossing since the drop. Also ranked are the senior Lovett, who was runner-up at Fairfield, and returning state alternate Patrick who lost to Lovett in the fifth place match at SWOWCA.

In terms of a rival for Byrd this year, one can look to another Class of 2020 wrestler from Northeast Ohio. Shawver placed fourth at state last year in this weight class, splitting matches with two-time state placer Gabriel Tagg and losing to eventual state champ Brakan Mead in the quarterfinal. On this season he was champion at Brecksville and Maumee Bay, while missing placement at the Ironman by one match, but beating eventual tournament placer Tanner Jordan along the way. Four other ranked wrestlers join Shawver at Perrysburg.

Most notable in that group is Perelka, a state alternate last year at 120 pounds. He placed third at Brecksville, which was his third straight placement in that tournament. Next is the sophomore Richter, who missed placing at the Ironman by one bout. The freshman Haskin was a junior high state runner-up last year, and has a pair of tournament titles to go with third place finishes at Perrysburg and Maumee Bay; while the sophomore Dipiero was seventh at Maumee Bay and won the 120 pound title at Milan Edison.

Next up is the district at North Canton, which has just two ranked wrestlers, excluding the potential inclusion of sophomore Gavin Sampsel. Projected to qualify for state last year, Sampsel missed weight at the district tournament; he has missed all of the season to date with an injury, but a return by the state series is possible. Leading the rest of the pack is the freshman Butler, who won the Hephner and was

third at Medina. The sophomore Sabin was a state alternate last year, and this year was champion at Perry while missing placement at Brecksville by a match.

A trio of ranked wrestlers presents itself at Hilliard Darby, including returning state qualifiers in the junior Sherman and the senior Murray. Sherman was champion at Delaware Hayes (beating Murray in the final), runner-up at Medina and Top Gun, while placing third at North Canton; while Murray was third at the GMVWA and sixth at North Canton. The other ranked wrestler is the junior Herren, who was fifth at Medina.

#### *120 pounds*

1. Julian Tagg, Brecksville, sophomore (Perrysburg)
2. Brendon Fenton, Elyria, senior (Perrysburg)
3. Logan Heil, Brunswick, junior (North Canton)
4. Jake Canitano, Solon, junior (North Canton)
5. Angelo Rini, St. Edward, junior (Perrysburg)
6. Jabari Thomas, Fairfield, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
7. Micah Dusseau, Hilliard Davidson, senior (Hilliard Darby)
8. Logan Hoskins, Vandalia Butler, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
9. Antoine Allen, Cincinnati LaSalle, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
10. Mason Kleinberg, Springboro, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
11. Cameron Baird, Harrison, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
12. Jedidiah Marlow, Western Brown, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
13. Ricardo Oviedo, Perrysburg, sophomore (Perrysburg)
14. Lucas Seibert, Westerville North, senior (Hilliard Darby)
15. Landon Hacker, Wadsworth, freshman (North Canton)
16. Jared Dressler, Medina, senior (North Canton)

HDAR – Dusseau, Seibert, Joseph Eckelberry (Tri-Valley, freshman), Mitchell Coultas (Licking Hts, junior); Luke Blaine (Olentangy Liberty, senior)

KF – Thomas, Hoskins, Allen, Kleinberg; Baird, Marlow

NC – Heil, Canitano, Hacker, Dressler; Zach Wiseman (Stow, freshman)

PBG – Tagg, Fenton, Rini, Oviedo; Kyle Maville (Oregon Clay, junior)

In 2016 Bryce Andonian won the 106 pound weight class as a freshman. Last season, he competed in the 120 pound weight class, and won a district title beating fellow state champion Brendon Fenton in the final. However, Andonian suffered an overtime defeat in the state semifinal against Gio DiSabato, who Fenton would go on to beat for his second state title the next day. Julian Tagg will enter his sophomore state tournament in this weight class having won state last year at 106 pounds. Like with Andonian, Tagg and Fenton will exit the same district tournament at Perrysburg. Also like Andonian, Tagg is going to be the projected state champion.

On the season Tagg has three losses, they are two wrestlers ranked first (3-0), third (6-5), and fourth (3-2) in the country. He also has a pair of wins over nationally ranked opposition (5-3 over Alvarez from New Jersey in the Beast of the East semi and 11-5 over Kamali from Michigan in the Brecksville final). Tagg placed fourth at Ironman, second at the Beast, and was champion at Brecksville (also beating Canitano 9-3 in the semifinal). The season has not gone as well for two-time state champion Fenton, who failed to place at either the Ironman or the Beast, and then missed Brecksville with an injury. He did

win a title at Maumee Bay, beating Canitano 2-0 in the semifinal, and picked up a 3-0 dual meet victory over projected Division II state champion Matthew Cardello.

Two other ranked wrestlers join Tagg and Fenton at Perrysburg. The junior Rini placed fifth at 106 pounds last year, and was one match from placing at the Ironman. His highlight of the season came in the Graham dual when he pinned Alek Martin midway through the third period to spark the late match comeback for St. Edward that came just short. The sophomore Oviedo went two-and-out at 106 last year, while on this season he has a title at Perrysburg to his credit.

The remaining wrestlers in the top five both exit the district tournament at North Canton. Juniors Heil and Canitano met in the final at Solon during the season's opening weekend, with Heil coming out on top 4-3. Heil missed placement at the Ironman by one match, was runner-up at Medina, and picked up a 10-4 win over Shawver (who was up a weight) in his conference final. Canitano was champion at the North Coast Classic, third at Maumee Bay, and fourth at Brecksville. Two other wrestlers are ranked at North Canton, the freshman Hacker, and the senior Dressler who qualified for state in 2016. Hacker beat Dressler 7-0 in the consolation quarterfinal at Medina; Hacker would go on to place fifth there and third at Wadsworth, while Dressler was seventh there and would take fourth at Maumee Bay.

Six ranked wrestlers reside at the Kettering Fairmont district, all slotted between sixth and 12<sup>th</sup>, and five of them are returning state qualifiers. Leading that group is the junior Thomas, eighth in this weight last year but has spent all of this season up at 126, where he has three tournament titles (including SWOWCA) and an eighth at Brecksville. The sophomore Hoskins went two-and-out at 113 last year, but this has been an excellent season for him with titles at three tournaments (including SWOWCA and GMVWA). Fellow sophomore Allen also went two-and-out last year at 113, while this season he was champion at the Dvorak and fourth at Escape the Rock.

The lone wrestlers not to make state from this group is fellow sophomore Kleinberg, who made the drop to this weight class late in the year; he has three tournament titles at 126, most notably the GMVWA. The junior Baird won a state match last year at 106 and has a runner-up finish at Delaware Hayes in this weight class, while he was third in the 126 weight at both SWOWCA and Medina. Rounding it out is the senior Marlow, a state placer last year at 106 in Division II; this season he was seventh at Brecksville, but does have a recent 6-3 dual meet loss to Allen.

Rounding it out is a Hilliard Darby district that features just two ranked wrestlers, led by the senior Dusseau, who has been excellent this season: titles in three tournaments, including a 5-4 victory over Baird in the Delaware Hayes final, and a sixth place finish at Brecksville. The other ranked wrestler is fellow senior Seibert, a state alternate last year at 106.

### *126 pounds*

1. Bryce Hepner, St. Edward, sophomore (Perrysburg)
2. Mick Burnett, Elyria, sophomore (Perrysburg)
3. Gio DiSabato, Hilliard Davidson, senior (Hilliard Darby)
4. Gus Sutton, Austintown Fitch, junior (North Canton)
5. Micah Norwood, Lancaster, freshman (Hilliard Darby)
6. Jordan Rosselli, Olentangy Liberty, senior (Hilliard Darby)
7. Kyle Gruber, Massillon Perry, senior (North Canton)
8. Jimmy Carmany, Brecksville, sophomore (Perrysburg)
9. Jack Collins, Cincinnati Elder, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)

10. Nick Nastasi, Kenston, sophomore (North Canton)
11. Casey Wiles, Cincinnati LaSalle, freshman (Kettering Fairmont)
12. William Harris, Tri-Valley, senior (Hilliard Darby)
13. Dylan Waugh, Mason, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
14. Chase Walczak, Perrysburg, senior (Perrysburg)
15. Charles Chapman, Fremont Ross, junior (Perrysburg)
16. Derek Fields, Brunswick, freshman (North Canton)

HDAR – DiSabato, Norwood, Rosselli, Harris; Alec Fulwider (Watkins Memorial, senior)

KF – Collins, Wiles, Waugh, Tanner Donathan (Western Brown, junior); Joe Pascale (Troy, senior)

NC – Sutton, Gruber, Nastasi, Fields; Alec Bailey (Green, senior)

PBG – Hepner, Burnett, Carmany, Walczak; Chapman

Life can be about the co-existence of organized symmetry and messy chaos, so can the sport of wrestling. This weight class is one of those where it's absolute chaos. Though one can narrow it down to four wrestlers with a realistic shot at winning the state title, trying to discern separation among the group is far from easy.

Two of the wrestlers in this group are returning state runners-up (Hepner and DiSabato), the other two wrestlers in the group were Cadet freestyle All-Americans in Fargo last summer (Burnett and Sutton), with all four wrestlers placing at state last year. In picking Hepner as the projected champion, he has the two best wins of this regular season out of the four wrestlers in beating state champions Austin Macias and Cleveland Belton on the way to an eighth place finish at the Ironman (Macias was also a Junior National double All-American this summer). On the other hand, Hepner has what clearly is the worst in-season loss for this group, falling to a 4-3 dual meet defeat against Johnson from Cathedral Prep (PA) the following week.

Should Hepner and DiSabato win their respective district tournaments, the pair would be in opposite halves at the state tournament. However, it is no guarantee that either wrestler earns the top spot at the district level.

Hepner exits a Perrysburg district that features four other ranked wrestlers, most notably one of those other title contenders in the sophomore Burnett. The fellow sophomore placed a relatively disappointing sixth at state in the 106 class last year, but would advance to the Cadet freestyle semifinal before sliding back to sixth. Burnett went an aggregate 4-4 between the Ironman and the Beast before finishing third at Brecksville with a win over DiSabato in the consolation final before finishing runner-up at Maumee Bay (to Cole Mattin).

Fellow sophomore Carmany qualified for state last year at 113, went 4-2 at the Beast before placing seventh at Brecksville. The senior Walczak was a district placer last year, and this year missed placement at Brecksville by one match; while the junior Chapman placed third at the Gorman and fifth at Delaware Hayes.

Now a three-time state placer, DiSabato beat Andonian in overtime last year in the 120 pound state semifinal. This season he was champion at Olentangy, fourth at Brecksville (losing in the tiebreaker to 2016 Indiana state champ Garcia and then 3-2 to Burnett), and third at Delaware Hayes (losing to Mattin in the semifinal). He will be joined at the Hilliard Darby district by returning state placer Rosselli, who was at 120 earlier in the season and failed to place at Brecksville, before moving up to this weight and

placing third at Wadsworth; he also has a dual meet win over Gruber. Also at this district will be the freshman Norwood, a junior high state champion last year and champion at Medina this year to go with third place finishes at Olentangy and Olentangy Liberty. Rounding out the ranked group is 2016 state qualifier Harris, who missed his junior season last year due to injury.

Closing out the title contenders is the junior Sutton, who found his verve starting in the consolation semifinal match last year at district (beating Perelka 3-1 in overtime) and then on Thursday at the state tournament (beating 2016 state placer Schuster 5-1). He would beat another returning state placer, Moosman 1-0, to make the semifinal before sliding back to sixth. Sutton would also make the Cadet freestyle semifinal this summer before sliding back to sixth. He is undefeated this season with titles at the Top Gun and Hephner. Three other ranked wrestlers join him at North Canton.

The senior Gruber qualified for state last year, but struggled a bit out of the gate going 1-2 at the nation's two toughest tournaments (Ironman and Beast). Since then he was runner-up at Medina (OT loss to Norwood) and fourth at Delaware Hayes. The sophomore Nastasi qualified for state last year at 106 pounds, while this season he was runner-up at Solon and Wadsworth to go with two tournament titles; while the freshman Fields was fifth at Medina.

Rounding it out is the one at Kettering Fairmont, which features just three ranked wrestlers led by the sophomore Collins, a returning state alternate. Collins did beat Gruber at the Ironman, finished runner-up SWOWCA, but lost 4-1 to Wiles in the state dual tournament series. The freshman Wiles placed eighth at the Dvorak and fourth at Escape the Rock before picking up dual meet wins over Collins and state qualifier (in Division II last year) Tanner Donathan. The senior Waugh has been closed out by Zack Donathan, Sam Glassco, and Colin Schuster the previous three seasons; so this is a last shot for him, and he has a title at Western Brown on the season (beat Donathan 3-1 in that final).

### *132 pounds*

1. Matt Kazimir, St. Edward, senior (Perrysburg)
2. Matt Fields, Brunswick, senior (North Canton)
3. Gabe Tagg, Brecksville, junior (Perrysburg)
4. Josh Breeding, Elyria, senior (Perrysburg)
5. Jordan Ward, Cincinnati Moeller, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
6. Ronnie Pietro, Vandalia Butler, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
7. Logan Messer, Wadsworth, freshman (North Canton)
8. Sam Glassco, Mason, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
9. D.J. Huff, St. Ignatius, junior (Perrysburg)
10. Blake Saito, Olentangy Liberty, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
- \*\*Ronnie Rowan, Akron Firestone, senior (North Canton)\*\*
11. Bailey Munday, Big Walnut, senior (Hilliard Darby)
12. Blake Wright, Westerville North, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
13. Darnai Heard, Cincinnati LaSalle, freshman (Kettering Fairmont)
14. Caleb Graber, Green, junior (North Canton)
15. Hunter Barge, Harrison, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
16. Deshea Pettiford, Fremont Ross, junior (Perrysburg)

HDAR – Saito, Munday, Wright, Zach Williams (Delaware Hayes, junior); Brady Pethel (Olentangy, junior)

KF – Ward, Pietro, Glassco, Heard; Barge

NC – Fields, Messer, **\*\*Rowan\*\***, Graber; Jaivon Jones (Shaker Hts, junior)  
PBG – Kazimir, Tagg, Breeding, Huff; Pettiford, Khalil Brown (Lorain, senior)

Another four person muddle is present in this weight class, and finding separation can be even messier than in the previous weight class. From a transitive perspective: Kazimir beat Tagg at the Ironman in the round of 16 by major decision, Tagg beat Fields for seventh place, and Fields beat Kazimir in the consolation match to place in the ultimate tiebreaker. Breeding missed placement by one match at the Ironman and by two at the Beast, but beat Tagg in the Brecksville final; while at the Beast, Tagg picked up wins over both wrestlers that beat Breeding (Jake Routnda and Carmen Ferrante). Tagg also has a win at the Beast over a wrestler that Kazimir lost to in a dual meet (Ferrante), while Fields went up a weight in a dual meet to beat a nationally ranked Walsh Ironman placer (Luke Baughman).

Kazimir, Tagg (returning state third placer), and Breeding all exit the Perrysburg district, with Kazimir and Breeding both exiting the Westlake sectional. From a draw standpoint, this means that Tagg will have to beat both wrestlers in order to win a district title, the order of which is unknown. If Tagg wins the district at Perrysburg, it would guarantee him separation from Fields at the state tournament, should he win the title at North Canton. You could have a draw where the Perrysburg champ is opposite of Fields and the other two contenders from Perrysburg.

Moving past the big three contenders at Perrysburg, there is still one remaining state tournament spot. The two prime contenders would be a pair of juniors in Huff and returning state qualifier Pettiford. Huff placing third at Solon and went 1-2 at the Ironman, but has seemingly missed all competitions since then; while Pettiford was runner-up at the Gorman and third at Delaware Hayes.

In addition to the above, Fields was runner-up at Medina, losing in overtime to two-time state champion Dylan D'Emilio. Two other ranked wrestlers and a "wild card" join him at North Canton. The freshman Messer was runner-up at North Canton and Wadsworth, while finishing third at Medina and the Suburban League, plus beating Glassco 9-3 in a dual meet. The junior Graber was runner-up at Solon, third at North Canton, and fifth at Medina. The wild card here is the senior Rowan, who I've yet to see in any results this season; as a sophomore he missed state by one match in an absolutely loaded district, while last year he was on the way to contending for a state spot before ineligibility derailed his path from late January onward.

Looking past the top four, three of the next four in the rankings exit the Kettering Fairmont district. The junior Ward placed seventh at state last year, and this season was runner-up at SWOWCA, sixth at Powerade, and champion of the CIT. Three-time state placer Pietro went two-and-out in the 126 weight at the Ironman before deciding that was no more for him; since moving into this weight, he was third at both SWOWCA and Maumee Bay. 2016 state qualifier Glassco was closed out by eventual state runner-up Jamien Hood last year, while this season he finished runner-up at the Dvorak and has two tournament titles to his credit.

Two other ranked wrestlers are at this district tournament and seek the last spot. Freshman Darnai Heard was a junior high state runner-up last year, and this season finished third at the Dvorak and seventh at Escape the Rock. The junior Barge was a district placer last year, while finishing second at Delaware Hayes and third at Fairfield this season.

Rounding it out is a Hilliard Darby district that features just three ranked wrestlers, led by the sophomore Saito, who placed seventh last year at 106. This season, he went two-and-out at 126 in the

Ironman, but has found this weight class to be more amenable; champion at Olentangy Liberty, fifth at Brecksville, and third at Wadsworth. The senior Munday is a returning state qualifier, and was third at the GMVWA while also picking up a pair of tournament titles. Last among the ranked is returning state alternate Wright, who lost 4-3 to fellow sophomore Saito on the way to finishing third at Olentangy Liberty.

138 pounds

1. Elan Heard, Cincinnati LaSalle, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
2. Bryce Andonian, St. Edward, junior (Perrysburg)
3. Luke Baughman, Wadsworth, junior (North Canton)
4. Marco Regalbuto, Brecksville, junior (Perrysburg)
5. Lamonte Chapman, Fremont Ross, senior (Perrysburg)
6. Gavin Bell, Beavercreek, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
7. Daniel Segura, Dublin Scioto, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
8. Jovan Fuqua, Princeton, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
9. Jihad Salti, Olmsted Falls, senior (Perrysburg)
10. Justin Taylor, Oak Hills, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
11. Jacob Bernhardt, Harrison, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
12. Mitch Collica, Nardon, junior (North Canton)
13. Tyler Kaminski, Green, senior (North Canton)
14. Jordan Hamblin, Western Brown, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
15. Matt Zuckerman, Elyria, junior (Perrysburg)
16. Devin Wood, Central Crossing, senior (Hilliard Darby)

HDAR – Segura, Wood, James White IV (Olentangy, senior), Zander Ellison (Hilliard Bradley, junior); Cole Foster (Big Walnut, senior)

KF – Heard, Bell, Fuqua, Taylor; Bernhardt, Hamblin

PBG – Andonian, Regalbuto, Chapman, Salti; Zuckerman

NC – Baughman, Collica, Kaminski, Darese Sparkman (Massillon Perry, junior); Daniel Patten (Stow, sophomore)

Another weight class with a four-person group at the top, but in this one, two wrestlers have emerged ahead of the group over the course of this season. The sophomore Heard and the junior Andonian have not met head-on this season, but have wrestled against multiple common opponents with asymmetrical outcomes.

Heard, who was projected to earn a mid-place at last year's state tournament missed out on qualification with a 4-3 loss to eventual state runner-up Jamien Hood in the semifinal, and then losing 2-1 to Fuqua in the consolation semifinal. One month later, he would place fifth at the Flo Nationals. Heard continued his "locked in" form with a third place finish at the Ironman (losing 3-1 to Stickley, but beating Keller from Virginia 7-3, Yapoujian from Colorado 1-0 and Baughman 5-1). He won a title at the Dvorak and finished third at Escape the Rock in other tournaments, while losing 6-4 to Davenport from Michigan in a dual meet.

Andonian seeks to add to his freshman year state title after placing fifth in last year's state tournament. The first two weekends of the season saw a couple of results that were less than hoped, losing 4-3 to Baughman in a dual meet and then failing to place at the Ironman (9-3 loss to Yapoujian in consolation). He would go undefeated at the Clash at the end of December before losing to Keller the next weekend.

Since then, Andonian has been superb with wins over Stickley, Davenport (overtime), and Baughman in dual meet competition.

Two additional returning state placers feature in this weight class, juniors Baughman and Regalbuto. Baughman was fourth at state in the 132 weight last year, but went 0-3 against fourth place finisher Regalbuto (dual meet, conference, district semifinal); they lost to the same pair of wrestlers at the state tournament. On the present season, Baughman finished fourth at the Ironman, and has tournament titles at North Canton, Medina, Wadsworth, and his conference meet (one-point wins over Garr in the latter two finals). Regalbuto did not compete at the Ironman or Brecksville, but between those two events missed out on placement at the Beast by a single match; he placed third at the Suburban League meet, losing 3-2 to Garr in the semifinal.

Andonian and Regalbuto headline the Perrysburg district, which features three additional state qualifiers; as a result there will be one with state experience not returning to the state tournament. 2016 state runner-up Chapman was a semifinalist at Brecksville in this weight class, but since then has been up at 145 where he was runner-up at Delaware Hayes; Salti was champion at Olentangy Liberty and eighth at Medina; while two-time qualifier Zuckerman finished runner-up at Maumee Bay.

Heard leads proceedings at Kettering Fairmont where there are five other ranked wrestlers, four others with state tournament experience, so (at least) one won't be qualifying for state. The senior Fuqua is a two-time state participant, and has the only state tournament win of the lot. On the season he has a runner-up finish at SWOWCA to go with a fourth at the GMVWA, before winning his conference meet.

The sophomore Bell won the title at SWOWCA and was fifth at Medina. The senior Taylor placed fifth at SWOWCA in the 145 weight class before finishing runner-up to Fuqua in his conference meet in this weight; while fellow senior Hamblin qualified in Division II last year, this year missing placement at Brecksville by one match up at 145 before winning a pair of tournament titles in this weight class. Rounding out the ranked group is returning district placer Bernhardt, a junior, who has tournament titles Fairfield and Delaware Hayes to go with a third at SWOWCA.

Baughman leads the way at North Canton, where he is the only returning state qualifier, and there are only two other ranked wrestlers. The junior Collica has three tournament titles on the season, including one at Solon, and place seventh at the Top Gun; while the senior Kaminski was third at Solon and runner-up at North Canton.

Rounding it out is a Hilliard Darby district that features just two ranked wrestlers, but does have returning state qualifier Ellison among the unranked wrestlers. Leading the way here is the sophomore Segura, who qualified for state last year and is undefeated this season with titles in at least three tournaments. The other ranked wrestler is the senior Wood, who has competed at both 132 and 138 this season, including a runner-up finish at Delaware Hayes in this weight.

#### *145 pounds*

1. Sam Dover, St. Edward, junior (Perrysburg)
2. Victor Voinovich, Brecksville, freshman (Perrysburg)
3. Michael North, Wadsworth, junior (North Canton)
4. Walker Heard, Marysville, junior (Hilliard Darby)
5. Chris Donathan, Mason, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
6. Josh Jaeckin, Olmsted Falls, senior (Perrysburg)

7. Alexander Gore, Olentangy, senior (Hilliard Darby)
8. Garrett Anderson, Oregon Clay, senior (Perrysburg)
9. Ben Yost, Dublin Coffman, senior (Hilliard Darby)
10. Ben (Seth) Douglas, Findlay, senior (Perrysburg)
11. Austin Mullins, Huber Hts Wayne, freshman (Kettering Fairmont)
12. Amar Thomas, Fairfield, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
13. Ryan Wissel, Medina, senior (North Canton)
14. Demetrius Monroe, Hilliard Davidson, senior (Hilliard Darby)
15. Chucky Lipps, Cincinnati Elder, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
16. Connor Evans, Olentangy Orange, senior (Hilliard Darby)

HDAR – Heard, Gore, Yost, Monroe; Evans

KF – Donathan, Mullins, Thomas, Lipps; Luke Shirley (Harrison, senior)

NC – North, Wissel, Gary Gottschalk (Walsh Jesuit, senior), Antoine Holloway (Maple Hts, junior); Osiris Khalifani (Copley, senior)

PBG – Dover, Voinovich, Jaeckin, Anderson; Douglas

The simple being made complex, or the complex being made simple. That's the narrative surrounding the three-person group at the top of this weight class, all of whom are underclassmen. The junior Dover placed fifth as a freshman at 132 and third last year at 138. He beat the freshman Voinovich 3-1 in overtime in the quarterfinal of the Walsh Ironman (on the way to placing fifth), while has a pair of dual meet victories over returning state medalist North (7-4 and 9-4). Conversely, he has losses to Boone from Michigan, Mitch Moore, and Unger from New Jersey in dual meets.

The freshman Voinovich, a Cadet freestyle All-American this summer, missed placing at the Ironman by one match; his subsequent loss came 2-0 to North in consolation. Since then it's a runner-up finish at the Beast (beating Unger in the quarterfinal), a championship at Brecksville (wins over nationally ranked Boone and McIntosh from Indiana along the way), and a pair of 5-2 wins over North (dual meet and conference).

Both Dover and Voinovich will exit the Perrysburg district, which means a possible state tournament meeting would not occur until Saturday, an important item to note since Dover has the size advantage among those two. Also at that district are three other ranked wrestlers, including returning state placer Jaeckin and returning state qualifier Anderson. This season Jaeckin was champion at Olentangy Liberty and runner-up at Medina, while losing by technical fall to Dover in a dual meet; Anderson has a title at Fairfield, runner-up finishes at Solon and Maumee Bay, a third at North Canton, and a fifth at Brecksville. The senior Douglas has split dual meet matches with Anderson, was runner-up at Defiance and fourth at Maumee Bay.

The junior North placed third in last year's state tournament at 126, splitting matches with Kazimir. This season he placed fourth at the Ironman and has tournament titles at North Canton, Medina, and Wadsworth. Along with a 0-2 mark against Dover and a 1-2 mark against Voinovich, he has a 5-4 dual meet win over Mitch Moore and a 9-8 victory over Donathan. Just one other ranked wrestler joins North at the North Canton district, and that is returning state qualifier Wissel, who was champion at the Hephner and his league meet after failing to place at Maumee Bay; Wissel missed the first month of the season due to injury.

Returning state medalist Heard leads a group of five ranked wrestlers at the Hilliard Darby district. He was champion at SWOWCA up a weight class before placing fourth at Brecksville and advancing to the Top Gun semifinals (losing 4-2 to two-time state runner-up Ben Pasiuk) in this weight class. Three-time state qualifier Gore is next at this district, winning a title at Delaware Hayes, runner-up finishes at North Canton and the Top Gun, and finishing third at Medina. Fellow senior Yost is also a returning state qualifier, finishing sixth at North Canton and the GMVWA before placing third at Delaware Hayes. A fourth with state experience is fellow senior Monroe, who has a pair of tournament titles but placed fourth at Delaware Hayes and failed to place at Brecksville. Last of the ranked wrestlers is another senior Evans, a returning district placer, who was runner-up at Olentangy Liberty, fifth at Maumee Bay, and seventh at Medina.

The junior Donathan, a Cadet freestyle All-American in the summer, is the lone wrestler with state experience at the Kettering Fairmont district. On this season he was champion at the Dvorak and Western Brown up at 152 before dropping to this weight class where he won a title the JVH with a victory over two-time Indiana state placer Slivka. The present composition at this district has three other ranked wrestlers, led by the freshman Mullins; last year's junior high state runner-up to Voinovich was champion at SWOWCA and eighth at GMVWA. The junior Thomas was third at SWOWCA and runner-up at Brecksville, before winning his conference tournament up a weight class; while the senior Lipps was fourth at SWOWCA, third at CIT, and fifth at Delaware Hayes. Both Thomas and Lipps missed placement at Brecksville by a match in this weight.

#### *152 pounds*

1. David Carr, Massillon Perry, senior (North Canton)
2. Connor Brady, Olentangy Liberty, junior (Hilliard Darby)
3. Jake Marsh, Marysville, senior (Hilliard Darby)
4. Farouq Muhammed, Elyria, junior (Perrysburg)
5. Padraic Gallagher, St. Edward, freshman (Perrysburg)
6. Jordan Hardrick, Huber Hts Wayne, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
7. Brett McIntosh, Harrison, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
8. Drew Wiechers, Centerville, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
9. Chase Haehnle, Oak Hills, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
10. Will Schmidt, Walsh Jesuit, senior (North Canton)
11. Landon Plank, Ashland, senior (Perrysburg)
12. Jestin Love, Vandalia Butler, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
13. Xzavier Weathersby, Cincinnati Elder, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
14. Ben Vanadia, Brecksville, freshman (Perrysburg)
15. Naeem Russell, Lima Senior, junior (Hilliard Darby)
16. Aidan Corrigan, Twinsburg, freshman (North Canton)
17. Jonathan List, Medina, freshman (North Canton)

HDAR – Brady, Marsh, Russell, Luke Deweese (Hilliard Davidson, junior); Avery Flanagan (Olentangy, senior), Hunter Thornsberry (Newark, senior)

KF – Hardrick, McIntosh, Wiechers, Haehnle; Love, Weathersby

NC – Carr, Schmidt, Corrigan, List; Cameron Riggerbach (Wadsworth, senior)

PBG – Muhammed, Gallagher, Plank, Vanadia; Kyle Miller (Oregon Clay, junior)

The wrestling community in many cases has been branded a family. Furthermore, in many cases the sport of wrestling is passed down from generation to generation. Nate Carr, Sr. won a state title for Erie

Tech High School in Pennsylvania, but that was just the start of his prominence, which continued with three NCAA titles and a bronze medal in the 1988 Olympics. He is currently the head coach at Massillon Perry where his son David is an Iowa State commit seeking a fourth Ohio state title and fifth in all (David won a state title in Kentucky as an eighth grader).

David's wrestling resume sparkles and speaks for itself. He is a two-time Ironman and Beast of the East champion (2015 and 2017), a 2015 Super 32 Challenge champion, a 2016 Cadet World bronze medalist, and a 2017 Junior National freestyle champion. In his last two state championship bouts, Carr has had to knock off defending state champions to win those titles (8-4 over Demas in 2016 and 7-1 over Mattox, who was in a third state final himself, last year). Ranked first in the country this season, he has titles at the Ironman and Beast in this weight, won a champ/champ showdown in the 160 final at Medina, and recently beat nationally ranked Connor Brady 9-4 with a surge in the last three minutes of the bout.

The junior Brady is arguably the most talented wrestler in Ohio yet to reach a state final, placing fourth and third (3-1 loss to Carr in the state quarter) during his high school career. He placed at the Ironman as a sophomore, missing out on this year's event due to injury, and was third at the UWW Cadet Nationals this spring. In the current season he has three tournament titles, including at Brecksville, where he beat nationally ranked Amine from Michigan. However, there are significant questions about his availability for the state series due to injury sustained in his dual match against Carr.

That is not to say there won't be talented challengers for Carr in this weight class. Not with the presence of 2016 state placers Marsh and Muhammed as well as freshman phenom Gallagher, an All-American at both the UWW Cadet and Cadet Nationals in the past off-season.

Three-time state qualifier Marsh would join Brady at the Hilliard Darby district, where last year Marsh finished as runner-up to Demas before unexpectedly losing in the first round at state and failing to place. In the current season, he placed fourth at the Ironman and his titles at Top Gun and Watkins; Marsh also bumped up a weight class to beat Ironman champion Ryan Thomas 3-1 the opening weekend of this season. Just one other ranked wrestler resides in this district, the junior Russell, who has titles in three tournaments on the season.

Muhammed and Gallagher anchor the Perrysburg district. Muhammed advanced to the semis as a freshman before sliding back to a sixth place finish, but last year failed to qualify for the state tournament losing a pair of matches at district to wrestlers that would go on to place at state. He bounced back with fourth place finish at the Super 32 Challenge this fall, including a win in consolation over Marsh. During the present season, he was runner-up to Ramirez at Maumee Bay. The freshman Gallagher missed out on placing at the Ironman by one match, losing to Marsh and two-time state placer Sanchez. In dual meets he has an overtime loss to the nationally ranked Humphreys (in OT, a wrestler that Marsh beat at Ironman), a 7-5 loss to Sanchez, and win by fall over three-time New Jersey placer Angelo.

Two other ranked wrestlers are present at this tournament, returning state qualifier Plank (who competed in Division II last year) and the freshman Vanadia. Plank placed seventh down at 145 at Brecksville before coming up to this weight where he won the Gorman and lost the final at West Holmes to returning state placer Shaw; he has losses to Ramirez and Muhammed in dual meets. Vanadia went 2-2 at the Beast and missed placing by one match at Brecksville up in the 160 weight class before finishing runner-up in his conference meet in this weight class.

Carr is the dominant anchor at a North Canton district that does feature three other ranked wrestlers in the senior Schmidt, along with freshmen Corrigan and List. Schmidt was runner-up at Solon, seventh at Brecksville, and beat two-time state qualifier McKeon in overtime to win his conference title. Corrigan has placed third in four tournaments this season, while List was champion at the Kilted Classic and a semifinalist at the Hephner.

Last, but certainly not least, is the Kettering Fairmont district with six ranked wrestlers as presently constituted. The senior Hardrick qualified for state last year in this weight class, but went two-and-out. In the current season he was runner-up at SWOWCA in the 160 weight class before dropping here to win a title at the GMVWA and place seventh at Top Gun. The sophomore McIntosh was a Cadet freestyle All-American this past summer, and has built upon that performance to finish runner-up at SWOWCA and Medina (beating projected Division III state champ Stika 1-0 in the opening round) before earning a title at Fairfield.

The junior Wiechers and senior Weathersby were both state alternates last year, as was unranked junior Derek Spears (Western Brown), though he competed in Division II. Weichers was runner-up at the GMVWA and champion at Perrysburg, while Weathersby placed fifth at SWOWCA, won the CIT, and finished runner-up at Delaware Hayes. Wrapping up the ranked group is the senior Haehnle and sophomore Love, who both went 2-2 at district last year. Haehnle placed fourth up at 160 at SWOWCA, and fourth in this weight at the GMVWA; while Love was third at SWOWCA and champion at Central Crossing, but failed to place at the GMVWA.

#### *160 pounds*

1. Jaden Mattox, Central Crossing, senior (Hilliard Darby)
2. Nevan Snodgrass, Kettering Fairmont, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
3. Michael Ferree, Austintown Fitch, senior (North Canton)
4. Austin Murphy, Cincinnati Elder, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
5. Hudson Hightower, St. Edward, freshman (Perrysburg)
6. Luke Reicosky, North Canton Hoover, senior (North Canton)
7. Trey Sizemore, Cincinnati LaSalle, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
8. Alex Farenchak, Painesville Riverside, senior (North Canton)
9. Tyler Bates, Marysville, senior (Hilliard Darby)
10. Najee Lockett, St. Ignatius, sophomore (Perrysburg)
11. Dru Hernandez, Findlay, senior (Perrysburg)
12. Cole Foor, Watkins Memorial, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
13. Joey Bradberry, Lakota West, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
14. Jake Evans, Elyria, freshman (Perrysburg)
15. Jaden Hardrick, Huber Hts Wayne, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
16. Dominic Loparo, Wadsworth, sophomore (North Canton)

HDAR – Mattox, Bates, Foor, Emmanuel Johnson (Teays Valley, senior); Corbin May (Delaware Hayes, sophomore)

KF – Snodgrass, Murphy, Sizemore, Bradberry; Hardrick, Sean Mondello (Talawanda, junior)

NC – Ferree, Reicosky, Farenchak, Loparo; Joe Koplou (Kenston, junior), Austin Ceferrati (Twinsburg, junior)

PBG – Hightower, Lockett, Hernandez, Evans; Troy Murphy (Oregon Clay, junior)

Three state finals appearances in as many seasons, with a 2016 state title, makes the Ohio State commit Mattox one of the stars of high school wrestling not only in Ohio but across the nation. Mattox is a prodigal talent with supernatural tools, which manifested themselves in tournament titles at North Canton, Marion Harding, and Maumee Bay (4-1 over Snodgrass in that final). However, he was recently pinned late in the first period by Murphy in the final at Delaware Hayes, which moved him out of the national number one position at the weight class.

The next four-to-six wrestlers in the rankings are all very close to one another and could see themselves with the chance to play spoiler to Mattox – as well as to each other – at the state tournament. The sophomore Snodgrass did place fourth at state last year, while earning All-American honors at the UWW Cadet Nationals in the off-season. His start to this season was delayed by an injury in the fall, but he placed fifth at Brecksville and runner-up at Maumee Bay since returning. Two others in the said group of six join him at Kettering Fairmont.

The senior Murphy is a three-time state qualifier, placing sixth at 126 as a sophomore (qualified at 113 as a freshman and 145 as a junior). Beyond the giant killer pin of Mattox to win the title at Delaware Hayes, the Campbell commit has titles at SWOWCA and CIT while missing out on placement at the Ironman by one match. The junior Sizemore is a returning state qualifier, this season missing out on placing at the Ironman by a match before finishing fourth at the Dvorak and third at Escape the Rock.

Another pair of ranked wrestlers join those three at Kettering Fairmont, the sophomore Hardrick and the senior Bradberry. Hardrick has titles at Troy and Eaton to go with a sixth place finish at the Top Gun, while Bradberry has a title at Fairfield in this weight class to go with a seventh at SWOWCA and runner-up at the GMVWA in the 170 weight class.

Two seniors in the group of six are Ferree and Reicosky, both exit the North Canton district. The pair met in the finals at the Top Gun, with Ferree winning 6-5 in controversial fashion during the ultimate tiebreaker. Ferree qualified for the state tournament last year with a consolation semifinal win over 2016 state placer Joey Andrassy. Along with that title at Top Gun where he beat four returning state tournament participants, Ferree has three other titles and a third place finish at Medina, where he beat two returning state placers along the way. Reicosky placed seventh at state last year up at 170, where he also finished as runner-up at the North Canton tournament; along with the Top Gun runner-up finish, he placed third at Wadsworth in this weight class.

Another pair of ranked wrestlers are here at North Canton, at least as the weight class is presently constituted. Returning state qualifier Farenchak won titles at Solon and Kenston down a weight class, while he was champion at Riverside in this weight class and third at the Top Gun (losing 3-2 to Ferree). The sophomore Loparo placed fifth at Wadsworth and won his conference tournament.

Last among the six person challenge pack is the freshman Hightower, who also missed on placing at the Ironman by one match, but did pick up a win over Murphy on the front side of that bracket. His most notable result on the season was an upset win over National Prep placer Jake Hendricks from Pennsylvania, which knocked the Ironman fourth place finisher from the national rankings. Three other ranked wrestlers join him at the Perrysburg district.

The sophomore Lockett was a district placer last year, and on this season place third at Solon, went 2-2 at the Ironman (losing to Sizemore in consolation), took seventh at Brecksville, and was runner-up at the CIT. Hernandez qualified for state last year as a junior, while this season he was sixth at Defiance and

fourth at Wadsworth. The freshman Evans won junior high state last year, and spent much of this season at 170, where he went 5-2 between Brecksville and the Beast and finished third at Maumee Bay; since dropping to this weight, he won his conference tournament over a returning district placer.

Mattox towers over a Hilliard Darby district that features just two other ranked wrestlers, though both are returning state tournament participants. The senior Bates placed eighth at state last year, while he placed sixth in this weight at Brecksville and fourth up a weight class at SWOWCA, but failed to place at Top Gun in this weight. The sophomore Foor went 0-2 at the state tournament last year, and missed a decent amount of this season, but since his return lost 8-6 to Bates in the final at Watkins.

### *170 pounds*

1. Carson Kharchla, Olentangy Liberty, junior (Hilliard Darby)
2. Emil Soehnlén, Massillon Perry, senior (North Canton)
3. Cornell Beachem, Winton Woods, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
4. Brady Chrisman, Medina, senior (North Canton)
5. Eric Vermillion, Mason, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
6. Michael O'Horo, Boardman, junior (North Canton)
7. Simon Shirley, Harrison, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
8. Garrett Barth, Fremont Ross, senior (Perrysburg)
9. Eric Altman, Western Brown, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
10. Sam Wyche, Cincinnati Moeller, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
11. Dominic DiPietro, Walsh Jesuit, senior (North Canton)
12. Ethan Hatcher, Brecksville, sophomore (Perrysburg)
13. Jacob Yost, Springfield, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
14. Cody Wilson, Licking Hts, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
15. Jordan Deluse, Lancaster, senior (Hilliard Darby)
16. Micah Potterf, Westerville North, junior (Hilliard Darby)

HDAR – Kharchla, Wilson, Deluse, Potterf; Nathan Dewitt (Marysville, senior)

KF – Beachem, Vermillion, Shirley, Altman; Wyche, Yost

NC – Soehnlén, Chrisman, O'Horo, DiPietro; Tyler Tolarchyk (Massillon Jackson, senior)

PBG – Barth, Hatcher, Josh Nagy (Oregon Clay, junior), Logan Toth (St. Ignatius, senior); Jiryés Zakaib (St. Edward, senior)

Never has a non-freshman with zero state tournament series matches entered with such “buzz”. Well that’s what will happen when said individual was a junior high state champion, a two-time Fargo freestyle All-American (2015 Cadet and 2017 Junior), a Brecksville Holiday placer, a UWW Cadet All-American, and a Super 32 Challenge placer before the start of said junior season. In the current season, Kharchla placed fifth at the Ironman, earning a major decision in his finals match over a nationally ranked opponent from Missouri; losses in that tournament coming 1-0 to fourth-ranked Rocky Jordan and in overtime to fifth-ranked Ramirez from New Jersey. Since then he won Outstanding Wrestler honors at Brecksville with a pin over state champion Lagoa in the final, won at Wadsworth, and beat Soehnlén 3-1 in a dual meet.

Normally a defending state champion with the body of work that Soehnlén brings to the table would be a clear state title favorite. Since the fall he placed third at the Super 32, runner-up at both Ironman and Beast (loss by fall from neutral late against Rocky Jordan when he was leading at Ironman, 3-1 to Ramirez in the Beast final), and has titles at Medina and Delaware Hayes. Soehnlén also has five wins

over nationally ranked opposition: Hidlay from Pennsylvania and O'Malley from New Jersey at the Super 32, Redlin from Texas and Ramirez at the Ironman, and Foca from New Jersey at the Beast.

Two additional state placers feature in this weight class, seniors Beachem and Chrisman. Beachem, who also was an impact contributor for Winton Woods' state runner-up football team this fall, placed third at 160 last year. On this season he has four tournament titles, including those at SWOWCA and Fairfield in this weight class. Chrisman placed fifth at 152 last year, missed out on placing at the Ironman by one match, was runner-up to Soehnlén at Medina, and has titles at three tournaments including Maumee Bay.

Soehnlén and Chrisman exit the North Canton district together, where they are joined by another pair of ranked wrestlers. The junior O'Horo went 2-2 at district last year, but that was an absolute bear of a bracket, and this season spent much of the year at 182 where he beat state placer Johnson to win at Beaver Local before placing third at Kenston and Top Gun; since his drop to 170, he was third at the Hephner and beat state placer D'Alesio to win the EOWL. The senior DiPietro was champion at Solon, sixth at Brecksville, and lost twice to Cole Hivnor in finishing third at CIT and runner-up at his conference meet.

Kharchla heads a Hilliard Darby district that features three other ranked wrestlers. The sophomore Wilson was third at Olentangy and Olentangy Liberty before winning titles at Logan Elm and Westland. The senior Deluse was runner-up at Olentangy, fourth at Olentangy Liberty, and fifth at New Lexington (lone loss to state qualifier Altman). The junior Potterf missed the back end of last year due to injury, but has wrestled well in his return finishing second at Olentangy Liberty and sixth at Medina.

Beachem leads a highly congested district at Kettering Fairmont that features five other ranked wrestlers, two of whom are returning state qualifiers. Vermillion qualified in this weight last year as a junior, but went two-and-out; he has four tournament titles this season, including one at Western Brown plus a runner-up finish at the Dvorak. Fellow senior Altman went 1-2 in the Division II state tournament last year, while this season lost 8-3 to Vermillion in the final at Western Brown, was third at New Lexington, and missed out on Brecksville placement by a match.

The junior Shirley was a state alternate last year, and this season has three runner-up finishes in tournaments (to Beachem at SWOWCA and Fairfield, and to Soehnlén at Delaware Hayes). The senior Wyche qualified for state in 2016 at 182, has dropped down to this weight class after essentially not participating last season, and has hopes of one last state tournament moment. Fellow senior Yost was a district placer last year, and has placed in three tournaments this season (sixth at SWOWCA, fifth at GMVWA, and seventh at Maumee Bay).

Rare do we say it this year, but the Perrysburg district is weak at this weight class, with just two ranked wrestlers in returning state qualifiers Barth and Hatcher, both of whom went two-and-out at state. The senior Barth was seventh at Brecksville, third at Delaware Hayes, and has two tournament titles; while the sophomore Hatcher missed both Ironman and Beast due to injury, missed Brecksville placement by one match, and was champion at his conference meet.

### *182 pounds*

1. Victor Marcelli, Massillon Jackson, senior (North Canton)
2. Trevor Lawson, Olentangy Liberty, senior (Hilliard Darby)
3. Joey Baughman, Wadsworth, senior (North Canton)

4. Blake Wilson, Cincinnati LaSalle, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
5. Gary Wokojance, Barberton, junior (North Canton)
6. Lenox Wolak, Dublin Coffman, junior (Hilliard Darby)
7. Zach Blackiston, Massillon Perry, senior (North Canton)
8. Trever Begin, Midview, senior (Perrysburg)
9. Charles Sanders, Cincinnati Elder, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
10. Jansen Love, Vandalia Butler, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
11. Jaden Mendeluk, Olmsted Falls, senior (Perrysburg)
12. Sebastian Beachler, Miamisburg, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
13. Jacob Meek, Oregon Clay, sophomore (Perrysburg)
14. Deron Pulliam, Dublin Scioto, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
15. Jeremy Beamer, Loveland, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
16. A.J. McRitchie, Lancaster, senior (Hilliard Darby)

HDAR – Lawson, Wolak, Pulliam, McRitchie; Jacob Goldsmith/Bodi Bien (Westerville North, junior/senior)

KF – Wilson, Sanders, Love, Beachler; Beamer

NC – Marcelli, Baughman, Wokojance, Blackiston; Dominic Shelley (Mentor, senior)

PBG – Begin, Mendeluk, Meek, Nick Franks (Brecksville, senior); Tim Marshall (Toledo St. John, senior)

Glory's last shot, so close yet so far away. Those are the narratives in play for the three nationally ranked seniors that will be seeking that elusive state title in this weight class.

Marcelli qualified for state as a freshman and won his opening round bout, and has reached the state semifinal each of the last two years. As a sophomore, he lost 3-2 to Lawson, a wrestler that he had beaten earlier in the season; while last year it was a 2-1 ultimate tiebreaker loss to Thompson, after he had basically about a month on the mat after recovering from a late summer injury.

Lawson was a backup at St. Paris Graham as a freshman to multiple star wrestlers, and has finished top three each of the last two years at Olentangy Liberty. In the state final as a sophomore, he lost 7-5 to Joseph Terry, whom he beat the week before in the district final; while in last year's state semifinal it was a 3-1 loss to Soehnlén.

Ohio's Mr. Football after an excellent senior year in football as a quarterback, Baughman is a three-time state placer on the wrestling mat. Advancing to the state semifinal as a freshman, he took fifth at 145. As a sophomore, he lost 6-0 in the state final as Kyle Lawson took home a third state title; while last year it was a 3-1 overtime loss to Soehnlén, a wrestler he had pinned in the previous week's district semifinal.

The ranking order among these three is a simple transitive: Marcelli pinned Lawson in the consolation semifinal at the Ironman, who beat Baughman 3-0 in the final at Wadsworth. Marcelli ended up third at the Ironman, and has four tournament titles on the season, including one at Green where he beat Division II state champion David Crawford 5-4 in the final. Lawson was fifth at the Ironman along with winning titles at Brecksville (3-0 over Crawford) and Wadsworth (also adding a 1-0 semifinal win over Division II state placer David Heath); while Baughman has three additional tournament titles, including an 8-3 finals victory over Heath at Medina.

Marcelli and Baughman exit the North Canton district, which means a district title carries the crucial advantage of almost assuredly being in the opposite half-bracket at state from Lawson. The two other

ranked wrestlers at this district are also returning state medalists. The junior Wokojance was sixth at 170 last year, while on this season has titles at Solon and his conference meet; while the senior Blackiston has twice placed eighth in this weight class. Blackiston recently placed third at Delaware Hayes, and has dual meet losses to both Marcelli and Lawson on the season.

Three other ranked wrestlers join Lawson at the Hilliard Darby district, led by the junior Wolak, a returning state qualifier. On the season, Wolak has a runner-up finish at Delaware Hayes to Marcelli, was third at North Canton, and a champion at the GMVWA. The sophomore Pulliam was champion at Olentangy and fourth at Marion Harding; while the senior McRitchie finished runner-up at Olentnagy and Olentangy Liberty, fifth at Medina, and champion at New Lexington.

The deepest of the districts is the one at Kettering Fairmont, which features five ranked wrestlers, including a pair of returning state placers in Wilson and Sanders; Sanders did beat Wilson 7-3 in a recent dual meet. Wilson this season missed placing at the Ironman by one match, and has since placed fourth at the Dvorak and fifth at Escape the Rock; while Sanders placed third at SWOWCA down at 170 before finishing sixth at Brecksville, champion at CIT, and fifth at Delaware Hayes in this weight.

The senior Love has yet to make a state tournament, but is in excellent position to earn a debut; he has titles at SWOWCA and Central Crossing this season. The junior Beachler has three tournament titles, including one at Fairfield, and a third place finish at the GMVWA; while the senior Beamer placed fourth at SWOWCA up at 195 before dropping to this weight and winning his preliminary pool at Delaware Hayes.

Rounding it out is the Perrysburg district, which again is shallow in this weight class with just three ranked wrestlers. Leading that group are a pair of returning state alternates in seniors Begin and Mendeluk. Begin was runner-up at Solon and fifth at Brecksville, while Mendeluk was runner-up up a weight class at Olentangy Liberty and third at Medina in this weight class. Rounding it out is the sophomore Meek, who was third at Solon and Maumee Bay, second at Fairfield, and fourth at North Canton.

#### *195 pounds*

1. Jared Ball, Hilliard Darby, senior (Hilliard Darby)
2. Cody Howard, St. Edward, senior (Perrysburg)
3. Jake Thompson, Cincinnati Moeller, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
4. Michael Baker, Cincinnati LaSalle, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
5. Michael Drobnick, St. Ignatius, senior (Perrysburg)
6. Ashton Spurgeon, Mt. Vernon, senior (Hilliard Darby)
7. Ben Smith, North Canton Hoover, senior (North Canton)
8. Max Boyle, Harrison, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
9. Breyton Douglas, Austintown Fitch, senior (North Canton)
10. Caleb Wood, Fremont Ross, junior (Perrysburg)
11. Seth Frambach, Midview, senior (Perrysburg)
12. Brady Garren, Logan, senior (Hilliard Darby)
13. Zach Bryant, Findlay, senior (Perrysburg)
14. Dylan Moran, Northmont, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
15. Adam Goldfuss, Oak Hills, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
16. Micah Clemson, Canton McKinley, junior (North Canton)

HDAR – Ball, Spurgeon, Garren, Issa Khalil (Hilliard Bradley, senior); Levi McKee (Newark, senior)  
KF – Thompson, Baker, Boyle, Moran; Goldfuss  
NC – Smith, Douglas, Clemson, Jarin Curtis (Massillon Perry, junior); Dominic Frisone (Walsh Jesuit, senior)  
PBG – Howard, Drobnick, Wood, Frambach; Bryant

Another weight class where there is an abundance of top end talent in this year's big-school division. Three nationally ranked wrestlers are present in this weight class, all of whom carry with them separation criteria for the state tournament bracket. Twice third at the state tournament, Ball came into this season coming off a title at the Super 32, where he beat a national top five wrestler Davison of Indiana in the final. However, the Ironman was not so kind, as Ball had to default via injury in an early round match; since missing around a month, Ball was champion at Central Crossing and the Brooke Classic.

Howard is the returning runner-up in this weight class, and was a Junior National freestyle All-American this past summer. He placed third at the Walsh Ironman, losing to defending tournament champion Beard from Pennsylvania in the semifinal. Since that tournament, he is 2-2 in matches against nationally ranked opposition (wins over Cardenas and Sharp, losses to Whitman and Cooley); key wins at the Ironman came against fellow state runner-up Braun and nationally ranked Cooley.

Thompson is a three-time state qualifier and runner-up last year at 182 pounds. He also placed fourth last spring at the NHSCA Junior Nationals. On the season he has titles at SWOWCA and the CIT to go with a runner-up finish at the Powerade that included an upset victory over nationally ranked Reyes from California in the semifinal.

Each will exit a different district with Ball exiting the one at Hilliard Darby that features just two other ranked wrestlers in fellow seniors Spurgeon and Garren. Returning state qualifier Spurgeon has three titles on the season, including one at Maumee Bay, while finishing third at SWOWCA. Garren placed at district last year, and this season finished runner-up at Central Crossing while missing on a top six finish at North Canton by one match.

Howard exits a Perrysburg district that features four other ranked wrestlers, three of whom have state tournament experience: Drobnick, Frambach, and Bryant (all are also seniors). Drobnick missed placing at Ironman by one match before finishing third at Brecksville and runner-up at CIT; Frambach failed to place at Brecksville, has a dual meet loss to Wood, and was third at West Holmes; while Bryant was fourth at Defiance, third at Maumee Bay, and second at Wadsworth. The other ranked wrestler is the junior Wood who was fourth at Delaware Hayes, seventh at Brecksville, and runner-up at the Gorman.

Thompson exits a Kettering Fairmont district that also has four other ranked wrestlers, where his primary challenger will be two-time state qualifier Baker. The junior finished runner-up at Franklin (losing in the tiebreaker to nationally ranked Day), eighth at the Ironman, runner-up at the Dvorak, and fourth at Escape the Rock. Fellow junior Boyle has a title at Delaware Hayes along with runner-up finishes at Medina and Fairfield. The senior Moran beat Boyle to win at Fairfield and was runner-up at the GMVWA, while fellow senior Goldfuss was fifth at SWOWCA and the GMVWA with a title at Middletown.

Rounding it out is a North Canton district that features three ranked wrestlers and no state experience, though seniors Smith and Douglas are among the state's most improved wrestlers this season. They

were the contestants in a Top Gun final won 6-2 by Smith. Smith has two additional tournament titles on the season plus a third place finish at North Canton, where he lost 5-2 to Marcelli in the quarterfinal. Douglas has titles at the Hephner and EOWL, beat two-time Division III state placer Jump on the way to that Top Gun runner-up finish, and placed third at Medina. Rounding it out is the junior Clemson, who was runner-up at Mapleton to Wood.

### *220 pounds*

1. Joe Cochran, Springfield, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
2. Antonio McCloud, Cincinnati Elder, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
3. Cameron Sauerwein, Harrison, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
4. Josh Bever, Ashland, junior (Perrysburg)
5. Clay McComas, Wadsworth, senior (North Canton)
6. Seamus O'Malley/Omar Fattah, St. Edward, junior/senior (Perrysburg)
7. Parker Meaney, Ashtabula Lakeside, senior (North Canton)
8. Garrett Bledsoe, Cincinnati LaSalle, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
9. Trevor Hankins, Cincinnati Moeller, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
10. Jack Roesch, Avon, junior (Perrysburg)
11. Jake Snider, Midview, senior (Perrysburg)
12. Zach D'Anna, Brecksville, senior (Perrysburg)
13. Adam Luster, Massillon Perry, sophomore (North Canton)
14. Michael Shaw, Columbus West, senior (Hilliard Darby)
15. Derick Bowman, Lancaster, senior (Hilliard Darby)
16. Daveon Parker, Solon, senior (North Canton)

HDAR – Shaw, Bowman, Ethan Smeagal (Marysville, junior), Nick Derosé (Westerville Central, junior)

KF – Cochran, McCloud, Sauerwein, Bledsoe; Hankins

NC – McComas, Meaney, Luster, Parker; Riley Warner (Dover, senior)

PBG – Bever, O'Malley/Fattah, Roesch, Snider; D'Anna

Eleven wrestlers in this weight class return with state tournament experience, four of whom were on the podium last year. For an upper-weight, that is pretty good. As has been the case with every back half weight class so far, there are more ranked wrestlers than state tournament spots at the Kettering Fairmont district. In fact, there are more wrestlers with state tournament experience (five) than available state qualification spots (four) at this district.

Leading the way here is the senior Cochran, who is the highest returning placer, after finishing fourth at 195 pounds. The signature moment of his season that gives him this top ranking is an 8-2 win over McCloud in the SWOWCA final. Fellow senior McCloud qualified for state last year, was expected to be the runner-up to Jared Campbell, but failed to place losing 9-8 in the quarterfinal and then getting pinned in consolation. In the off-season McCloud would earn fourth place in Junior freestyle; while this season has also seen him finish runner-up at Brecksville, fourth at the Ironman, along with winning titles at the CIT and Delaware Hayes.

Third at this district, and third on the state ladder, is fellow senior Sauerwein. He has titles at Medina (over McKiernan from Michigan) and Fairfield to go with a runner-up at Delaware Hayes (losing 15-5 to McCloud), and a third at SWOWCA (losing 10-8 to Cochran). Placing eighth at state as a sophomore despite losing the consolation final at district to Sauerwein, Bledsoe has wrestled well in his junior season: champion at Franklin, missed placing at the Ironman by a match, third at the Dvorak, and sixth

at Escape the Rock. Rounding out the group is 2016 state qualifier Hankins, who was victimized by a rather deep district weight class last year as a junior; this season he was sixth at Powerade and third at the CIT.

The two other returning state medalists in this weight class exit the Perrysburg district. Bever placed sixth at 195 in Division II last year as a sophomore, and this season placed third at Brecksville before winning two tournaments in January. The senior D'Anna was an unexpected eighth last year at 285, but has dropped down in weight this season; he struggled out of the gate going 2-6 between Ironman, Beast, and Brecksville but has found his form as of late including winning his conference title. A third state qualifier joins at Perrysburg in senior Aidan Gill (St. Ignatius); he went 1-2 at the Ironman, but has missed out on some key competitions since then.

Three other ranked wrestlers make this Perrysburg district a very tough out. The St. Edward starter, whether it's the junior O'Malley or senior Fattah, will be very talented; O'Malley placed seventh at the Ironman and picked up a major decision over a Michigan state placer this season, while Fattah has a 3-2 win over a New Jersey state qualifier. The junior Roesch was fifth at North Canton and Wadsworth, along with a runner-up finish at Perry; while the senior Snider was runner-up at West Holmes.

The other three with state tournament experience are at the North Canton district. The senior McComas qualified for state in 2016, and this season has runner-up finishes at North Canton and Wadsworth to go with a third at Medina; fellow senior Meaney has finished runner-up to Division III state champion Willis in three different tournaments, along with a 3-1 victory over returning state placer Matlock in the EOWL semi, and has a title at Solon; while sophomore Luster placed fifth at Medina and third at Delaware Hayes. Rounding out the ranked group at this district is the senior Parker, who was champion at the North Coast Classic and seventh at Maumee Bay.

Last among the districts is the one at Hilliard Darby that features just two ranked wrestlers, and no state tournament experience. The senior Shaw was champion at Olentangy Liberty and Central Crossing; while fellow senior Bowman is a returning district placer, this year third at Olentangy Liberty and fourth at Medina.

### *285 pounds*

1. Jordan Earnest, Wadsworth, senior (North Canton)
2. Matt Lee, Amherst, senior (Perrysburg)
3. Alec Moore-Nash, Cincinnati Elder, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
4. Jack Heyob, Cincinnati St. Xavier, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
5. Michael Mather, Uniontown Lake, junior (North Canton)
6. Tyler Connolly, Marysville, junior (Hilliard Darby)
7. Jacob Charette, Centerville, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
8. Jacob Padilla, Huber Hts Wayne, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
9. Jacob Cover, Hilliard Darby, senior (Hilliard Darby)
10. Nick Daly, Oregon Clay, senior (Perrysburg)
11. Davin Lambert, Olentangy Liberty, senior (Hilliard Darby)
12. Luca Santillo, St. Edward, senior (Perrysburg)
13. Tyjuan Hill, Bedford, senior (North Canton)
14. Paul McKnight, Winton Woods, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
15. Max Wittman, Avon Lake, senior (Perrysburg)
16. Dawson Shaw, Columbus West, senior (Hilliard Darby)

HDAR – Connolly, Cover, Lambert, Shaw; Jaden Smith (Teays Valley, junior)

KF – Moore-Nash Heyob, Charette, Padilla; McKnight

NC – Earnest, Mather, Hill, Luciano Cunningham (Ashtabula Lakeside, senior); Alefosio Saipaia (Canton McKinley, senior)

PBG – Lee, Daly, Santillo, Whitman; Daniel Bucknavich (Midview, sophomore)

Three returning state placers feature among the field at this weight class, none with separation criteria, and all are seniors that exit different district tournaments. Leading the way is Earnest, who started his junior season as the backup 220 pound wrestler; however, he came on the scene with an unexpected eighth place finish at the Ironman and propelled that into an awesome season that ended with a fourth place finish at state. It continued in the off-season where he was a UWW Cadet National champion at the “unofficial” 125 kilogram (275 pound) weight class and then going 4-2 in Junior freestyle in Fargo.

The 2017-18 season has continued to that form, where his lone loss came 5-3 in the Ironman semi to Schultz of Colorado, who is the best overall junior in the country. He has titles in four tournaments to his credit as well. Earnest’s most direct challenger will be Lee, who placed fifth in last year’s state tournament, and is an absolute pinning machine. It seems that almost every match for Lee ends with a pin, most of them coming in the first period.

On the season Lee has one loss, that coming 5-2 to two-time Pennsylvania state placer DeBoe in the Perry final. He has at least three tournament wins, most notably at Maumee Bay, where he upset nationally ranked Emerson from Michigan with a second period pin; Emerson was a Junior double All-American in Fargo this past summer. When Earnest and Lee met in last year’s state tournament, Earnest earned a fall at the 5:42 mark of the quarterfinal bout.

The other returning state placer is Moore-Nash, who took seventh, losing to Lee 9-8 in the consolation quarterfinal. This year he missed placement at the Ironman by one match, losing 7-6 and in the tiebreaker. He was runner-up at SWOWCA and Brecksville, losing in both finals to the top two ranked wrestlers in Division III. Moore-Nash will anchor the deepest district, one at Kettering Fairmont that features four other ranked wrestlers.

Next in line at that district is Northwestern commit Heyob, who was in line to contend for a state spot at 220 last year, but quit at mid-season. On this season he has three tournament titles and placed third at SWOWCA, where he picked up wins over returning state qualifiers Padilla and Charette. Those two are the other projected state qualifiers at Kettering Fairmont. Charette was fifth at SWOWCA and runner-up at the GMVWA, while Padilla was fourth at SWOWCA, third at the GMVWA, and sixth at Top Gun. Also ranked is the senior McKnight, who was seventh at SWOWCA and sixth at Fairfield.

Earnest heads the weakest of the four districts, the one at North Canton, which features just two other ranked wrestlers. The junior Mather is a returning state alternate; this season he was fourth at North Canton, third at Brecksville and Maumee Bay, and runner-up at the Hephner. Highlighting the season for the senior Hill is a tiebreaker victory over Division II state placer Mitchell in December.

Lee leads the way at Perrysburg, where he is joined by returning state qualifier Daly and two other ranked wrestlers. The senior Daly placed fourth at Solon and Maumee Bay, third at Fairfield, and eighth at Brecksville. Fellow senior Santillo was first at the Mike Lewis Invitational and had a pin over High from

New Jersey, who placed at the Beast and the Doc Buchanan earlier this season; while another senior Wittman was runner-up at Avon Lake and third at Hudson.

Rounding it out is the Hilliard Darby district, which features a pair of returning state qualifiers and four ranked wrestlers. The junior Connolly has finished fifth at the Ironman, Brecksville, and Top Gun; while the senior Cover was seventh at Ironman, second at Medina, and champion at Central Crossing. Returning state alternate Lambert missed much of his senior season, but returned to take third at Wadsworth; while fellow senior Shaw was champion at Olentangy Liberty, runner-up at Central Crossing, and third at Marion Pleasant (losing to Connolly in the semis).

## DIVISION II

### *106 pounds*

1. Jacob Decatur, CVCA, junior (Alliance)
2. Kyle Rowan, Perry, sophomore (Alliance)
3. Payton Burgdorf, Firelands, sophomore (Norwalk)
4. Garrett Lautzenheiser, Louisville, freshman (Alliance)
5. Cael Woods, West Holmes, sophomore (Claymont)
6. Peyton Kellar, Vincent Warren, freshman (Claymont)
7. Jake Manley, Otsego, sophomore (Norwalk)
8. Caleb Greenlee, Gallia Academy, senior (Claymont)
9. Howard Williams, East Liverpool, freshman (Claymont)
10. Dierre Clayton, Akron SVSM, freshman (Alliance)
11. Blake Sheppard, New Lexington, sophomore (Claymont)
12. Jason Mayes, Jefferson, junior (Alliance)
13. Chase Huff, Goshen, sophomore (Wilmington)
14. Ethan Fletcher, Canfield, freshman (Alliance)
15. Caleb Hernandez, Napoleon, junior (Norwalk)
16. Trace Braun, St. Paris Graham, freshman (Wilmington)

ALL – Decatur, Rowan, Lautzenheiser, Clayton; Mayes, Fletcher

CLMT – Woods, Kellar, Greenlee, Williams; Sheppard

NOR – Burgdorf, Manley, Hernandez, Max Orpzadek (Sandusky Perkins, freshman); Rico Cunningham (Sandusky, sophomore)

WIL – Huff, Braun, Ethan Mayo (Valley View, senior), Caleb Thomas (Lemon Monroe, freshman); Jarman Hargrove (Cincinnati Aiken, freshman)

Why not start out our Division II analysis with a discussion of the absolutely loaded and cannibalistic district tournament at Alliance. Last year the tournament featured four teams among the top eight at the state tournament (Canfield, CVCA, Lake Catholic, and SVSM). From a statistical standpoint, it had the most placers among the Division II districts, and by a significant margin had the highest winning percentage and least wrestlers go two-and-out. So, for this year, it adds a pair of very solid teams in Aurora and Louisville from Division I.

This opening weight is illustrative of said landscape at Alliance with three of the top four wrestlers in the rankings, and six in total (as we all know only four can make state). Leading the way here is returning state champion Jacob Decatur, who is also the top ranked wrestler in the country at this weight class. The Ohio State commit has four tournament titles on the season, including those at Ironman and Brecksville. Also here is Cadet freestyle All-American Rowan, who was a state alternate last year as a freshman, as he fell victim to this district's quality depth and being an undersized 106. This season he has three losses, two being to Decatur (semifinal at Brecksville, final at Wadsworth) and one to Moon (final at Maumee Bay), along with four tournament titles.

The third top four wrestler in this weight at Alliance is the freshman Lautzenheiser; he has titles at North Canton, Top Gun, and the Hephner while his lone loss came 9-4 to Burgdorf in the Medina final. Fellow freshman Clayton leads the group of three wrestlers seeking that last state spot; on the season he missed placement at Medina by a match, was third at the Top Gun, fourth at Wadsworth, and has a dual meet win over state placer Woods. The junior Mayes was second at Perry and champion at the EOWL,

and has two wins over the freshman Fletcher; Fletcher was third at Solon, missed placing at Brecksville by a match, fourth at Perry, and second at the EOWL.

Finishing fourth in this state weight last year, the sophomore Burgdorf is ranked second to Decatur. On the season he has titles at Medina and Perrysburg in this weight class. At the Norwalk district, he is joined by just two other ranked wrestlers, both of who qualified for state last year. The sophomore Manley has three tournament titles, and was runner-up to Burgdorf at Perrysburg; while the junior Hernandez has two tournament titles, placed fifth at Perrysburg and sixth at Medina.

Leading the way among five ranked wrestlers at the Claymont district is the sophomore Woods, who placed eighth at state last year. This season he has three tournament titles. Next in line is the freshman Kellar, last year's junior high state champion at 102 pounds; he has spent most of the season up at 113, but will be here for the state series, where he went two-and-out at the Ironman (losing narrowly to fellow freshman Steen from Pennsylvania 2-1 in consolation). The senior Greenlee has four tournament titles, and has split matches with returning state placer Collin Yinger this season (Athens final win, Nelsonville-York finals loss). The freshman Williams placed third at 96 at junior high state last year; while this season he was runner-up at Barnesville and first at the OVAC.

Wrapping it up is the district at Wilmington, which is the shallowest here with just two ranked wrestlers. Despite the presence of St. Paris Graham at this site, that is going to be something of a trend. In the recent past, Wilmington has been a shallow district (last year seeing 21 qualifiers go two-and-out at state is a clear indicator of that), but it is exacerbated this year with Western Brown moving up to Division I. The sophomore Huff was a district placer last year, and this year was runner-up at both SWOWCA and Western Brown; while the freshman Braun was fourth at the GMVWA and champion at Valley View.

#### *113 pounds*

1. Tanner Jordan, St. Paris Graham, junior (Wilmington)
2. Christian Wayt, West Branch, junior (Alliance)
3. Cole McComas, Beaver Local, sophomore (Claymont)
4. Gavin Ritter, Wauseon, junior (Norwalk)
5. Trey Finnerty, Circleville, sophomore (Wilmington)
6. Jarrett Warrington, Claymont, junior (Claymont)
7. Ryan Jakubiak, Louisville, senior (Alliance)
8. Peyton Blasko, Steubenville, junior (Claymont)
9. Sean Neff, Streetsboro, junior (Alliance)
10. Nick Began, Orange, senior (Alliance)
11. Jimmy Balazy, Padua, junior (Norwalk)
12. Jake Hamulak, Chardon, sophomore (Alliance)
13. Josh Dunn, Goshen, sophomore (Wilmington)
14. Matthew Williams, CVCA, sophomore (Alliance)
15. Koen Kish, St. Clairsville, freshman (Claymont)
16. Jordan Crist, Amanda-Clearcreek, senior (Claymont)

ALL – Waty, Jakubiak, Neff, Began; Hamulak, Williams

CLMT – McComas, Warrington, Blasko, Kish; Crist

NOR – Ritter, Balazy, Noah Alda (Bellevue, sophomore), Tristan Villarreal (Defiance, sophomore); Ty Spencer (Ontario, sophomore)

WIL – Jordan, Finnerty, Dunn, Joey Dima (Valley View, junior); Cameron Smart (Wilmington, senior)

Think back to March 10, 1979 on a Saturday at St. John Arena in Columbus. Back then, St. Paris Graham had never had an individual state champion in wrestling. On that day, Jim Jordan beat Scott Keil of Aurora 5-4 in the 98 pound state final to become the first state champion. Now a full 29 years later on March 10, 2018 ... the first state title won by the Falcons will be state title number NINETY-ONE for this dynasty.

This report suggests that it will come from the junior Tanner Jordan in this weight class. Last year he placed third at 106 pounds, losing 6-4 to Wayt in the quarterfinal; Wayt would lose 4-3 to eventual runner-up McComas in the semifinal before placing fifth. Should Jordan and McComas win district titles, they will be in opposite half brackets at the state tournament, with it being 50-50 as to which one draws Wyatt in a likely semifinal.

On the season Jordan placed fourth at the Ironman and beat a very talented wrestler from Georgia to win the GMVWA. His district at Wilmington features just two other state ranked wrestlers plus returning state qualifier Dima. The sophomore Finnerty placed eighth at state last year; this season he has three tournament titles at 120 pounds, including the Brooke Classic, but will come down here to accommodate returning state champion Keaton. Fellow sophomore Dunn was third at Western Brown and champion at Wapakoneta.

The junior Wayt is the lone wrestler with state experience at the Alliance district, but it is a tournament that features five other ranked wrestlers. During this season, Wayt was champion at the Top Gun and beat McComas 8-1 to win at Cambridge during December; those both came at 120, but he will be at this weight class. The senior Jakubiak leads that group of five, as he has three runner-up finishes on the season (Hephner, EOWL losing 5-4 to McComas, and North Canton) along with a fourth at Medina.

Returning district placer Neff is a junior, who was champion at Hudson. That was where he beat the senior Began, who has titles at Solon and North Coast to his credit. The sophomore Hamulak is next, and was champion at Kenston to go with third place finishes at Solon and North Coast, plus a seventh at Top Gun where he beat Jakubiak. Rounding it out is the sophomore Williams, who was fourth at Maumee Bay and third at Wadsworth.

McComas is joined by three additional state tournament participants at Claymont plus another ranked wrestler. He has three tournament titles in this weight class, including a win over Blasko in the OVAC final, and also placed fourth up a weight class at Medina. Both Warrington and Blasko won state tournament matches as sophomores at 106 last year, while Crist won a state match in Division III last year as a junior.

Warrington placed sixth at Top Gun, and has a 3-2 dual meet victory over Blasko; while Blasko has titles at two tournaments, was runner-up at the OVAC, and missed a top six finish at North Canton by one bout. Crist won a title at Logan Elm early, but there are questions as to his availability. The freshman Kish was fifth at North Canton and third at the OVAC.

Rounding it out is a Norwalk district that features just two ranked wrestlers, both of whom are juniors and returning state qualifiers. Ritter placed sixth at Brecksville, won the title at Perrysburg over state champion Oscar Sanchez, and was runner-up at Maumee Bay; plus he has a major decision dual meet

victory over Balazy, who was runner-up at North Coast before missing placement by a match at Brecksville, and then winning titles at the CIT and his conference meet.

### *120 pounds*

1. Matthew Cardello, CVCA, senior (Alliance)
2. Alek Martin, St. Paris Graham, freshman (Wilmington)
3. Nate Keaton, Circleville, senior (Wilmington)
4. Hunter Ryan, Lake Catholic, senior (Alliance)
5. Dominic Carone, Streetsboro, senior (Alliance)
6. Jake Gentry, Hamilton Ross, senior (Wilmington)
7. Joe Wright, Coventry, senior (Alliance)
8. Kyle Petersen, Aurora, junior (Alliance)
9. Brady O'Connor, Indian Valley, junior (Claymont)
10. Jacob Johnson, Jonathan Alder, senior (Claymont)
11. Alex Slattman, Wauseon, senior (Norwalk)
12. Davin Rhoads, Louisville, freshman (Alliance)
13. Sam VanSickle, Akron SVSM, freshman (Alliance)
14. Bryce Davis, Kenton Ridge, senior (Wilmington)
15. Thayne Kaufman, West Holmes, senior (Claymont)
16. Crae Muzykowski, Licking Valley, freshman (Claymont)

ALL – Cardello, Ryan, Carone, Wright; Petersen, Rhoads, Van Sickle

CLMT – O'Connor, Johnson, Kaufman, Muzykowski; Terry Gatrell (Meadowbrook, junior)

NOR – Slattman, Josh Lyons (Mansfield, sophomore), Matt Kaufmann (Fairview, sophomore), Jimmy Pelland (Napoleon, senior); David Ocasio (Brookside, junior)

WIL – Martin, Keaton, Gentry, Davis; Sean Conway (Dayton Carroll, junior)

Seniors Keaton and Cardello have been in common state tournament weight classes twice, with Keaton placing higher on both occasions. As freshmen, Keaton placed fourth at 106 to Cardello's eight, while last year Keaton beat Cardello 4-2 in the 113 pound semifinal on the way to his state title (Cardello bouncing back to place third). Interestingly on both occasions I had ranked Cardello higher in the state tournament forecast (2017: Cardello champ, Keaton third; 2015: Cardello third, Keaton 14<sup>th</sup>).

Stupid old me, and I'm going to fall prey to it again. Cardello, a three-time state placer headed to the Naval Academy has been excellent this season but for basically one match. That was in the consolation round of 12 at the Ironman where he was pinned by Pacheco from Colorado, which came one round after losing in the tiebreaker to Melendez from Illinois, who is currently ranked third nationally in this weight class. Since then Cardello beat two-time state placers McCrone and Mattin to win the title at North Canton (at 126), was third at Brecksville losing late in the bout to nationally ranked Kamali, and picked up a title at Wadsworth.

His district tournament at Alliance is – stop me where you've heard it before – absolutely brutal in this weight class presently composted. Four OTHER wrestlers possess state tournament experience, plus there are two high caliber freshmen in the weight; in addition returning state qualifier Kelley has spent time in this weight, though I am projecting him to find a landing spot at 126.

Ryan is a three-time state qualifier, placing at state the last two years; he placed third at Solon and North Canton, fifth at Brecksville, and won the CIT. Fellow senior Carone is last year's state runner-up,

having upset McCrone in the semifinal; this season he has titles at Clear Fork and Hudson. Another senior Wright placed eighth in this state weight last year, winning the Hephner in this weight class after winning titles at North Coast and Defiance up at 126. The junior Petersen qualified for state at 106 in Division I last year, and this season was runner-up at Wadsworth and the Suburban League in this weight while missing out on placing at Brecksville by one match up at 126.

Now to the freshmen. Rhoads placed fifth at North Canton up a weight class before finishing fourth at Top Gun, second at the Hephner, and champion of the EOWL. Van Sickle went 2-2 at both the Ironman and the Beast, missed placement at Medina by a match (like Rhoads did at 126), was third at Top Gun, and seventh at Wadsworth; however, in the Top Gun consolation final Rhoads was winning late prior to losing by defensive fall.

Both the freshman Martin (a junior high state champion last year) and returning state champion Keaton exit the district at Wilmington, where they are joined by two other ranked wrestlers. Martin placed eighth at the Ironman, most notably beating returning state placer Josh Heil 5-3 in the match to place. He missed the GMVWA due to injury but did win at Valley View. Keaton finished third in this weight at Olentangy Liberty, while he has three tournament titles at 126, most notably at the Brooke Classic where he majored returning state placer Fogle in the semifinal; at the Ironman, he went 1-2 competing up at 126, losing both matches by a point.

Those other two ranked wrestlers are two-time state seventh Gentry and returning state qualifier Davis, both seniors. Gentry was runner-up at both Franklin and SWOWCA before winning titles at Fairfield and Eaton, while Davis has two tournament titles to go with a second at Tippecanoe and a third at Delaware Hayes.

Four state ranked wrestlers exit the district at Claymont, including three that won a match at last year's state tournament. The junior O'Connor was fifth at Wadsworth in this weight, and has a pair of tournament titles up a weight class; the senior Johnson is down at this weight class, though he has been at 126 for most of the year; while fellow senior Kaufman finished third at Cambridge and second at West Holmes on the season. Rounding it out is the freshman Muzykowski who split matches with Keaton in taking fourth at Olentangy Liberty, and placed third in two other tournaments on the season.

As is an emerging pattern, the Norwalk district is underwhelming with its lower-weights, only one wrestler is even ranked in the top 16. That would be the senior Slattman, who went 2-2 at district last year in the 126 weight class; he finished runner-up at Maumee Bay in this weight after spending December up at 126.

#### *126 pounds*

\*\*Jordan Decatur, CVCA, junior (Alliance)

1. Caleb Brooks, Circleville, senior (Wilmington)
2. Addison Fogle, Licking Valley, senior (Claymont)
3. David Massey, Woodridge, senior (Alliance)
4. Connor McCrone, Lake Catholic, junior (Alliance)
5. Hunter Olson, Akron SVSM, junior (Alliance)
6. Dalton Burcher, Indian Valley, junior (Claymont)
7. Nick Moore, St. Paris Graham, freshman (Wilmington)
8. Jake Bartinelli, Medina Buckeye, senior (Norwalk)
9. Douglas Terry, Granville, freshman (Claymont)

10. Isaiah Wortham, Dayton C-J, sophomore (Wilmington)
11. Brian Shaw, Padua, senior (Norwalk)
12. Damani Williams, Mansfield, senior (Norwalk)
13. Luke Hewitt, Akron Hoban, senior (Alliance)
14. Nolan Ray, Wauseon, sophomore (Norwalk)  
*Mason Downs, Circleville, senior (Wilmington)*
15. Zane Minella, Steubenville, junior (Claymont)
16. Isaiah Smith, Field, junior (Alliance)

ALL – **\*\*Decatur\*\***, Massey, McCrone, Olson, Hewitt; Smith

CLMT – Fogle, Burcher, Terry, Minella; Jonathan Potts (East Liverpool, freshman)

NOR – Bartinelli, Shaw, Williams, Ray; Andrew Branson (Tiffin Columbian, junior)

WIL – Brooks, Moore, Wortham, *Downs*, Sam Price (Lemon Monroe, junior); Kody Beal (Fairfield Union, freshman)

The next two weights will end up being shaped by the decision of returning state champion Jordan Decatur, one of the nation's best overall juniors, and a Cadet World team member this past offseason. Decatur has spent time at both 126 and 132, though those events at 126 came in December (4<sup>th</sup> at Ironman, champion at Brecksville). It is not clear which weight class Decatur will pick, though these rankings are anticipating that 132 is his choice; I would project him as the clear favorite in either weight class.

There is one individual who would really like to know where Decatur is going to end up, and that is three-time state placer Brooks. His intention is to "mirror" Decatur and pick the opposite weight class. Should Decatur choose 132, Brooks would be the favorite in this weight. While at 126, Brooks was champion at Olentangy Liberty with an overtime win over returning state placer Fogle; while at 132, he went 2-2 at the Ironman (eliminated in overtime by Gabe Tagg) and won a pair of tournaments.

Brooks leads the way at Wilmington, a district that features two additional ranked wrestlers in the freshman Nick Moore and returning state qualifier Wortham. Moore is the younger brother of three-time state champion Mitch Moore and Virginia Tech starting 141 Brent Moore, a two-time state champion. Last year a junior high state champion, Nick was champion at Valley View in this weight class, while failing to place at the GMVWA up at 132. The sophomore Wortham was seventh at the GMVWA and champion at Bellbrook up at 132, while finishing runner-up at CIT and champion at Eaton in this weight class.

The 126 pound weight class sans Decatur at Alliance is certainly a relatively open one, with just three placement contenders among the five ranked wrestlers. Leading the way would be returning state placer Massey and two-time state placer McCrone. The senior Massey was champion at Hudson and Central Crossing and fifth at Brecksville, while the junior McCrone won titles at Solon and the CIT to go with a third place at North Canton, and missing out on placement at Brecksville by a match (losing to Poynter 9-8, whom Massey beat for fifth). Also a placement contender is the junior Olson, a returning state qualifier; he placed seventh at Medina, third at Top Gun, and first at Wadsworth (McCrone pinned Olson in a January dual meet).

Also here are returning state qualifier Hewitt - though he has competed at 120 – and the junior Smith, who was runner-up at Kenston and seventh at Top Gun. If this weight is known to be without Decatur, I

could see another one of the 120 pound contenders move up and try to pounce on the fourth state spot here.

Two wrestlers that have previously placed at the state tournament are among the four ranked wrestlers at Claymont. The senior Fogle placed fifth in this weight last year, and has two tournament titles to go with a pair of runner-up finishes this year (one title and runner-up finish each at 126 and 132). The junior Burcher placed two years ago when competing at 106, while this season he has a pair of tournament titles up at 132; in this weight he was fourth at Wadsworth and missed out on placement at Brecksville by one round. The freshman Terry entered high school as a junior high state runner-up; this season he was champion at Big Walnut and runner-up at Defiance, while also finishing second up a weight class at New Lexington. Rounding it out is the junior Minella, who was fourth at Nelsonville-York and third at the OVAC.

Lastly among the districts is the one at Norwalk, which features four ranked wrestlers, with 2016 state qualifier Bartinelli leading the way in eighth. On the season he was champion at Milan Edison and (at 132) the Mike Lewis Invitational, while placing eighth at Medina and second at West Holmes. Fellow senior Shaw is a returning state qualifier and was fifth at the CIT and North Coast Classic. Another senior Williams placed sixth at the Top Gun while finishing fourth at the Gorman and West Holmes; with the sophomore Ray placing third at Maumee Bay. Also here is returning state qualifier Branson.

#### *132 pounds*

1. Jordan Decatur, CVCA, junior (Alliance)
2. Hunter Yackee, Wauseon, senior (Norwalk)
- \*\*Caleb Brooks, Circleville, senior (Wilmington)\*\*
3. Wade Monebrake, Eaton, junior (Wilmington)
4. Skyler Lasure, Beaver Local, sophomore (Claymont)
5. Jack Gorman, Aurora, junior (Alliance)
6. Edward Suber, Akron SVSM, junior (Alliance)
7. Caden Blust, Tiffin Columbian, junior (Norwalk)
8. Jackson Muldrew, Steubenville, junior (Claymont)
9. Casey Ragle, Norwood, senior (Wilmington)
10. Gabe Steyer, Van Wert, sophomore (Norwalk)
11. Isaiah Stickley, St. Paris Graham, sophomore (Wilmington)
12. James Davis, West Carrollton, senior (Wilmington)
13. Adam Lenhoff, Indian Valley, junior (Claymont)
14. Josh Baitt, Jefferson, senior (Alliance)
15. Carter Mickley, Louisville, sophomore (Alliance)
16. Isaac Bennett, Logan Elm, senior (Wilmington)

ALL – Decatur, Gorman, Suber, Baitt; Mickley, Miles Knuckles (Coventry, junior)

CLMT – Lasure, Muldrew, Lenhoff, Jerome Tucker (Claymont, senior); Landin Price (New Lexington, senior)

NOR – Yackee, Blust, Steyer, Logan Schoen (Sandusky Perkins, junior); Angel Granados (Napoleon, junior)

WIL - \*\*Brooks\*\* Monebrake, Ragle, Stickley, Davis; Bennett

Since this is Decatur's more likely destination, let's discuss his season to date here. Decatur placed fourth at the Ironman losing narrow overtime/tiebreaker matches to fellow state champion Jordan

Crace (who has since left the Graham program) and National Prep champion Bartlett from Pennsylvania, who is ranked second nationally; also at 126 pounds, he was champion at Brecksville dominating 2016 Indiana state champ Garcia 14-5 in the final. Up at 132, he has titles at North Canton, Maumee Bay (over Breeding), and Wadsworth. Last year's state champion is likely failing to make weight at the sectional two years ago from being on track for four state titles.

The district tournament at Alliance has four ranked wrestlers in addition to Decatur, including a pair that have previously placed at the state tournament. The junior Gorman placed eighth at 106 two years ago in Division I, while this season he was fourth at Wadsworth (beating Suber 6-5) and runner-up at the Suburban League. Fellow junior Suber placed seventh at 106 last year, and since missing the first half of the season due to transfer finished second at Top Gun and fifth at Wadsworth. The senior Baitt was a state alternate last year, and in the present season was champion at Riverside to go with runner-up finishes at Perry and the EOWL; while the sophomore Mickley was fifth at North Canton, seventh at Medina and Top Gun, third at the EOWL, and champ at the Hephner.

Returning to the 132 pound weight class for a fourth straight year is Yackee, who placed third last year at state after qualifying the previous two years. He made the drop late in the season after winning titles at Maumee Bay and Perrysburg, along with placing fifth at Brecksville, in order to make his team's overall lineup stronger. Two other ranked wrestlers feature at Norwalk, along with 2016 state qualifier Granados. The junior Blust is a returning state placer, and has three tournament titles on the season (132/138) along with a fourth place finish at Maumee Bay; while Steyer was a state alternate last year as a freshman and this season was champion at Marion Harding.

Even without Brooks, the Wilmington district is very deep in this weight class with five ranked wrestlers, three of whom have state tournament experience. Leading the way is Monebrake, who made state in 2016 as a freshman; this season he was fourth at the GMVWA to go with titles at Top Gun and Eaton. Next is fellow 2016 state qualifier Ragle, who also was a state alternate last year; the senior has titles at Franklin and Norwood to go with a fourth at SWOWCA this season. The sophomore Stickley was runner-up at Valley View and registered a high quality win in beating Messer 8-7 in a recent dual meet. Another returning state alternate is the senior Davis, who competed in Division I last year; this year he has two tournament titles to go with a fourth place finish at Fairfield. Returning state qualifier rounds out this group, as the senior has runner-up finishes at Logan Elm and Central Crossing to his credit.

The Claymont district features three ranked wrestlers, each a returning state qualifier, including returning placers Lasure and Muldrew. The sophomore Lasure has titles at Cambridge and the EOWL, third place finishes at Top Gun and the OVAC, along with a fourth at Medina (two losses to Messer there); while the junior Muldrew placed in Division III last year for Shadyside, fifth at 120, and this year was champion at Nelsonville-York. Fellow junior Lenhoff was sixth at Wadsworth and missed placement by a bout at Brecksville in this weight class; while placing in three tournaments up at 138 (runner-up at West Holmes and third at Barnesville, both losses coming to state qualifiers).

#### *138 pounds*

1. J.D. Stickley, St. Paris Graham, senior (Wilmington)
2. Andrew Garr, Aurora, junior (Alliance)
3. Luke Wymer, Akron SVSM, senior (Alliance)
4. Maxx Peters, Claymont, senior (Claymont)
5. Anthony Rice, Steubenville, junior (Claymont)
6. Ben Sherrill, Bellbrook, senior (Wilmington)

7. Mike Clark, Medina Buckeye, senior (Norwalk)
8. Mauricio Barajas, Wauseon, senior (Norwalk)
9. Cole Bailey, Ravenna Southeast, senior (Alliance)
10. Skyler Curry, Alliance, senior (Alliance)
11. Dylan Dodson, Licking Valley, freshman (Claymont)
12. Ryan Wolf, New Richmond, senior (Wilmington)
13. Cole Houser, Benjamin Logan, senior (Wilmington)
14. Austin Pownall, CVCA, freshman (Alliance)
15. Tim Tusick, Padua, senior (Norwalk)
16. Louis Dytko, Columbus DeSales, senior (Claymont)

ALL – Garr, Wymer, Bailey, Curry; Pownall

CLMT – Peters, Rice, Dodson, Dytko; Noah Smith (Beaver Local, senior)

NOR – Clark, Barajas, Tusick, Mason Haas (Maumee, senior); Muhammed Mahdi (Toledo Central Catholic, senior)

WIL – Stickley, Sherrill, Wolf, Houser; Brayden Ploehs (Hamilton Ross, junior)

After being closed out of the lineup as a freshman and sophomore, J.D. Stickley used the 2016 Ironman as a launching point to become known to everyone in the Buckeye State. He placed seventh at 138 in that event, and would go on to win the state title in said weight class with decisive wins over returning state runner-up Jake Martinez (9-1) and returning state third Grunden (8-1) in the semifinal and final.

This year's Ironman served as a different type of launching point for Stickley. Coming off a Super 32 where he missed placement by a match, an accomplishment in and of itself, he won the title at the Ironman. Along the way he knocked off three-time National Prep placer Robinson from New Jersey, Elan Heard, and then it was an 11-7 victory over national top five wrestler Abas from California in the final. Stickley has subsequently missed some time due to injury, and did lose to Andonian in last month's dual meet, but it's still been a breakthrough senior season for him.

Behind Stickley there's a group of four wrestlers that have not necessarily separated themselves in any true fashion. Ranked second is the junior Garr, who qualified for state as a freshman in Division I at 120, but injury precluded him from a state series run last year. On the season he was 2-2 at the Ironman losing to a pair of nationally ranked wrestlers, placed fourth at Brecksville, and finished runner-up to Baughman at both Wadsworth and the Suburban League (semifinal wins over state placers Wymer and Regalbutto on those occasions).

Next in line is the senior Wymer, a returning state placer and three-time state qualifier. Like Garr, he'll exit the district at Alliance. He went 3-2 at the Ironman and placed seventh at the Beast before finishing third at Medina, champion at Top Gun, and fourth at Wadsworth. Three other ranked wrestlers will exit the Alliance district.

The senior Bailey was champion at Smithville beating state placer Baker in the 145 weight class before coming to this weight to make the semis at the Top Gun and then win the Hephner. Fellow senior Curry has two tournament titles, a fourth at the Top Gun, and missed placing at Brecksville by one match; while the freshman Pownall was a junior high state champion last year and this year has placed at North Canton, Maumee Bay, and Wadsworth.

The other two members of the four person challenge group exit from the district at Claymont. Two-time state qualifier Peters beat returning state placer Rice 6-5 in a regional semifinal dual meet. This season Peters was champion at Barnesville, runner-up at Brecksville, and fifth at the Top Gun (losing to Wymer in the semi). Rice has titles in three tournaments, including the OVAC over Powerade placer Martin from West Virginia; while up at 145, he went 1-2 at the Ironman, with his win coming in overtime over two-time National Prep placer Crane from Pennsylvania.

Two other ranked wrestlers exit the Claymont district. The freshman Dodson was champion at Cambridge and Heath, runner-up at Olentangy Liberty, and missed placing at Brecksville by a match; while the senior Dytko was third at Olentangy Liberty and New Lexington and second at Marion Harding.

Three ranked wrestlers will join Stickley at the Wilmington district, returning state qualifiers Sherrill and Wolf along with 2016 state qualifier Houser, while 2016 state qualifier Ploehs is also present for a relatively deep district weight class. The senior Sherrill was third at the GMVWA, while winning titles at Eaton and (at 145) Bellbrook; Wolf was champion at Milford; and Houser has tournament titles at Sidney and Benjamin Logan to go with a pair of tournament runner-up finishes and a seventh at the GMVWA.

Closing it out is a Norwalk district that features just three ranked wrestlers, with only seniors Clark and Barajas possessing state tournament experience. Clark has four tournament titles, including finals victories over state qualifiers at the Gorman and West Holmes, along with a seventh place finish at Medina; while 2015 state qualifier Barajas has spent most of the season at 145 where he was champion at Perrysburg and seventh at Maumee Bay. Fellow senior Tusick was runner-up at North Coast and champion of his conference meet.

#### *145 pounds*

1. Mitch Moore, St. Paris Graham, senior (Wilmington)
2. Gage Grunden, Wauseon, senior (Norwalk)
3. Ben Pasiuk, Carrollton, junior (Claymont)
4. Jax Leonard, Louisville, sophomore (Alliance)
5. Dakota Bunting, Claymont, senior (Claymont)
6. Micah Marshall, Dayton C-J, senior (Wilmington)
7. Beau Smith, Beaver Local, junior (Claymont)
8. Caleb Blake, Tippecanoe, senior (Wilmington)
9. Jake Potok, Akron SVSM, junior (Alliance)
10. Collin Mell, Lima Bath, senior (Norwalk)
11. Noah Barnett, Sheridan, senior (Claymont)
12. Bret Baker, Norton, senior (Alliance)
13. Justin Schneider, Maumee, senior (Norwalk)
14. Zach Dunn, Goshen, junior (Wilmington)
15. Hayden Danals, Caledonia River Valley, freshman (Claymont)
16. Michael Gray, Steubenville, senior (Claymont)

ALL – Leonard, Potok, Baker, Sean O’Dwyer (University School, junior); Justin West/Dalton Duvall (CVCA, senior/freshman)

CLMT – Pasiuk, Bunting, Smith, Barnett; Danals, Gray

NOR – Grunden, Mell, Schneider, Calvin Brown (Elida, senior); Sam LoFaso (Padua, junior)

WIL – Moore, Marshall, Blake, Dunn; Jonas Proffitt (Westfall, senior)

Winning state titles in 1976-1979, Mark Zimmer from Columbus DeSales became the first in Ohio history to win four state titles. In total that number is now 29. Should Tommy Hoskins win the Division III title at 126 pounds, that number would be 30 by the time Mitch Moore is possibly in position to win his fourth state title on Saturday night, March 10<sup>th</sup>. Out of that group, six wrestlers have won all four in a Graham singlet, while Dustin and C.P. Schlatter each won two of their titles in the Black & Gold.

Along with Moore, this weight class features a pair of returning state runners-up in Grunden (who lost to Stickley last year) and Pasiuk (who lost 2-0 to Moore in last year's 132 final and 2-0 to Josh Venia in 2016 at 106). Each wrestler exits a different district, so it would theoretically yield a Grunden vs. Pasiuk semifinal with Moore in the opposite half bracket.

Along with those four possible state titles, Moore is also a four-time placer at the Super 32 Challenge (something that's pretty rare in and of itself) and a four-time placer at the Ironman. He did sputter a bit in placing eighth at the Ironman this year; his round of 16 win came in overtime against a nationally ranked wrestler, his two losses in consolation came in overtime to nationally ranked opposition, while the quarterfinal loss was on a defensive fall rather late in a tight bout. However, Moore came through in a big way for his team to beat Dover 4-2 in a winner take all match during the St. Edward dual; he did lose the subsequent week 5-4 to North in a dual meet.

Three ranked wrestlers will join Moore at the Wilmington district, a group led by fellow seniors Blake and Marshall, both returning state qualifiers. Blake has been runner-up in three tournaments this season, including losses to Marshall in two of those finals; while Marshall was runner-up at the GMVWA losing to Moore by fall, runner-up at two other tournaments (Bellbrook and CIT), and beat Blake in the final at both Tippecanoe and Eaton. The other ranked wrestler is the junior Dunn, who was champion at Western Brown. Also present is returning Division III state qualifier Proffitt.

Two-time state runner-up Pasiuk – only a junior – went 2-2 at the Ironman before winning tournament titles at Licking Valley, Top Gun (three wins over returning state qualifiers/placers), and West Holmes. Five other ranked wrestlers join him at Claymont to make this a very deep and congested district. Next in line is the senior Bunting, a returning state placer who was champion at Barnesville, sixth at Brecksville, and missed placing at the Top Gun by one match (loss to Leonard in consolation). Two-time state qualifier Smith is a junior with runner-up finishes at the OVAC and EOWL in this weight class, placing eighth at the Top Gun.

The senior Barnett is a returning state alternate, and has titles in four tournaments this season. The freshman Danals was champion at Nelsonville-York, beating Gray in the final, and was one match from placing at Medina; while the senior Gray was fourth at North Canton, runner-up at Nelsonville-York, and fifth at the OVAC.

Grunden has placed third and second at the state tournament, while competing for Defiance, and the senior made a later than expected return to the lineup. He's joined by two other ranked wrestlers at Norwalk, both seniors, returning state qualifier Mell and district placer Schneider; also here is returning state qualifier Brown. Mell was champion at Allen County and Lima Senior, where he beat two returning state placers to earn gold, and third at Defiance; while Schneider has titles in two tournaments, placed fourth at Defiance, third at Perrysburg, and sixth at Maumee Bay.

Rounding it out is an Alliance district with just three ranked wrestlers, but two of them are returning state placers and all three made the state tournament last year. The sophomore Leonard was runner-up

at North Canton and champion at Medina in the 152 weight class before dropping into this weight, where he placed third at the Top Gun before winning titles at the Hephner and EOWL meet. The senior Baker placed seventh at state last year and was runner-up at Smithville and the Gorman this year, while the junior Potok was seventh at the Top Gun and third at Wadsworth after missing the first half of the season due to his transfer from Tallmadge.

### *152 pounds*

1. Sandro Ramirez, Wauseon, senior (Norwalk)
2. Jashon Hubbard, Steubenville, senior (Claymont)
3. Joey Sanchez, St. Paris Graham, senior (Wilmington)
4. Justin Shaw, Carrollton, senior (Claymont)
5. Jarrett Munyan, Sheridan, senior (Claymont)
6. Dylan Miller, West Branch, senior (Alliance)
7. Briar Cadle, Claymont, senior (Claymont)
8. Jared Musci, Akron SVSM, senior (Alliance)
9. Will McGhee, Aurora, junior (Alliance)
10. Chris Anderson, Streetsboro, junior (Alliance)
11. Isaac Yoho, Woodridge, senior (Alliance)
12. Luke McKeon, Lake Catholic, senior (Alliance)
13. J.D. McNett, Defiance, senior (Norwalk)
14. David Frederick, Dayton C-J, freshman (Wilmington)
15. Zach Altman, Napoleon, senior (Norwalk)
16. Jacob Armstrong, Indian Valley, sophomore (Claymont)

ALL – Miller, Musci, McGhee, Anderson; Yoho, McKeon

CLMT – Hubbard, Shaw, Munyan, Cadle; Armstrong

NOR – Ramirez, McNett, Altman, Nick Smythe (Bellevue, senior); John McNulty (Padua, junior)

WIL – Sanchez, Frederick, Damion Williams (Urbana, senior), Zane Nelson (Washington C.H., senior); Keegan Rawlins (McClain, senior)

Three wrestlers stand out as the class of this field, all were in the 145 pound weight class last year at the state tournament from which Kevon Freeman won his second state title. Each is also a multi-time state placer, and seeks that elusive state title in their senior season. Ramirez placed third as a freshman before finishing second the last two years (losses to Rocky Jordan and Freeman in the 145 final); Hubbard is also a three-time state placer (third at 106 as a freshman, fourth at 132 as a sophomore, and third last year after losing 1-0 to Ramirez in the semifinal); while Sanchez has placed fifth at 152 and fourth at 145 the previous two years.

Notre Dame College bound Ramirez was one match from placing at the Ironman down at 145 before placing fourth at Brecksville in this weight class and winning the title at Maumee Bay; Hubbard has titles in three tournaments this year, and was runner-up at the OVAC meet, losing 3-0 to the nationally ranked Humphreys from West Virginia; while Sanchez placed eighth at the Ironman and picked up a second win over Gallagher in the dual meet.

Ramirez exits a district at Norwalk with just two other ranked wrestlers, returning Division III state placer McNett another senior in Altman. McNett was runner-up at Defiance and a semifinalist at Perrysburg, while Altman was third at Perrysburg and runner-up at Wapakoneta.

Hubbard exits a relatively strong district at Claymont with four additional ranked wrestlers, including another returning state placer in fellow senior Shaw, who has titles at two tournaments this year (including a win over state qualifier Plank in the West Holmes final) to go with a runner-up finish at Top Gun. Fellow senior Munyan qualified for state two years ago, and finished runner-up at Watkins in this weight; while up a weight class he won three tournament titles, including a finals victory over Miller at Cambridge, and was runner-up at Marion Harding. Another ranked senior is returning district placer Cadle, who was champion at Barnesville, sixth at Top Gun, and missed placement at Brecksville by a match. Rounding it out is the sophomore Armstrong, who was fifth at Wadsworth in this weight, while placing top three in three tournaments up at 160.

Sanchez exits a weakish Wilmington district with just the freshman Frederick among the top 16 ranked wrestlers. He was runner-up at Eaton in this weight class, while winning a title at Tippecanoe up at 160, along with third place finishes at Bellbrook and the CIT.

The remaining district is a rather deep one at Alliance that features six ranked wrestlers, including four with state tournament experience. Two-time state qualifier Miller was runner-up to open the season at Cambridge in the 160 weight class and fifth at the Top Gun in this weight class before suffering a head-scratcher of a loss in the EOWL final. Fellow senior and returning state qualifier Musci placed fifth at Medina and second at Wadsworth, but failed to place at Top Gun (including a loss to Miller). Last among those that made state last year is two-time qualifier McKeon, also a senior, who missed the first half of the season due to injury; since return he was runner-up at the CIT and his league meet while placing fourth at Wadsworth.

The other with state experience is fellow senior Yoho, who made it in 2016 before deciding to stop wrestling prior to last year's state series. This season he was runner-up at Hudson and Central Crossing, while placing eighth at Brecksville. Returning state alternate McGhee is a junior, who placed eighth in the 160 weight at Brecksville, while in this weight he was 2-2 at the Ironman and third at Wadsworth. Finally among the ranked wrestlers is the sophomore Anderson, who was champion at Clear Fork and Hudson.

#### *160 pounds*

1. Ryan Thomas, St. Paris Graham, senior (Wilmington)
2. Kevon Freeman, Lake Catholic, senior (Alliance)
3. David Johnson, Akron SVSM, senior (Alliance)
4. Caleb Cass, Cloverleaf, senior (Alliance)
5. Xavier Torres, Wauseon, senior (Norwalk)
6. Brandon Daniels, Carrollton, junior (Claymont)
7. Quentin Kelley, Akron Hoban, senior (Alliance)
8. Ethan Hernandez, Norwalk, sophomore (Norwalk)
9. Brahm Ginter, Shelby, senior (Norwalk)
10. Kaden Bunting, Claymont, senior (Claymont)
11. Hayden McGee, Maysville, junior (Claymont)
12. Blake Wickline, Bloom-Carroll, senior (Claymont)
13. Austin Hinzman, Coventry, junior (Alliance)
14. Justin Mayes, Bellevue, freshman (Norwalk)
15. Isaac Allen, Wilmington, senior (Wilmington)
16. Trevor Boyd, Vermillion, senior (Norwalk)

ALL – Freeman, Johnson, Cass, Kelley; Hinzman

CLMT – Daniels, Bunting, McGee, Wickline; Brady Oberdier (Vincent Warren, sophomore)

NOR – Torres, Hernandez, Ginter, Mayes; Boyd

WIL – Thomas, Allen, Seth Hodapp (Eaton, senior), Ross Lennon (Clinton-Massie, senior); Caleb Linton (Logan Elm, senior)

Like in Division I at 120 pounds, this weight class features a two-time state champion and a returning state champion. Also like in that scenario, the two-time state champion is not projected to win the state title. While Freeman did outplace Thomas to win his 2016 state title at 132 pounds, Thomas out-placed Freeman in winning the Walsh Ironman at the beginning of the season.

Further, Thomas was a Super 32 champion prior to the start of this season; while Freeman fell short of that standard in placing fifth at the Ironman and sixth at the Beast. In other action this season, Thomas was champion at the GMVWA, though he did suffer one slip up, losing 3-1 to Marsh in an early December dual meet; while Freeman has titles at Solon, Brecksville, and Wadsworth to his credit.

Thomas exits what is by far the weakest district in this weight class, the one at Wilmington that features just one other ranked wrestler. The senior Allen is a returning state alternate; this season he has runner-up finishes in three tournaments, a third at Eaton, and a seventh at the GMVWA.

Freeman exits a relatively robust Alliance district at this weight class with four other ranked wrestlers, two returning as state placers. The senior Johnson had a disappointing district tournament last year at Division I Walsh Jesuit to miss out on state after a regular season that projected him to a mid-placement finish; while he missed the first half due to transfer, and most of January due to some sort of injury, he did beat returning state placer Cass 12-5 in a regional semifinal dual meet. Cleveland State commit Cass placed sixth at state last year, and this season has three tournament titles to go with a second at Wadsworth and a fifth at Medina; while returning state third place winner Kelley, also a senior, has spent most of his season at 170 (Hudson 2<sup>nd</sup> and Hephner 5<sup>th</sup>) before coming down to this weight and winning his conference title. Also ranked here is the junior Hinzman, who was third at the Hephner in this weight class.

Three returning state qualifiers are among the five ranked wrestlers coming from the Norwalk district. The junior Torres was fourth at Brecksville and runner-up at Perrysburg in this weight class, while placing fifth at Maumee Bay up at 170. The sophomore Hernandez does not have a loss this season from what I can tell, and have five tournament titles, including those at Kenston and the Gorman. The senior Ginter is the lone returning state placer of the group; he was runner-up at Clear Fork at 170 before dropping to this weight, placing fourth at the Gorman and missing out on placement at the Top Gun by a match.

The pair after a fourth state spot is led by the freshman Mayes, who won a pair of tournaments up at 170 along with finishing second at Tiffin Columbian, while losing to Hernandez 1-0 in the final at Clyde in this weight. The senior Boyd was champion at Clear Fork and runner-up at the Gorman, but missed out on placement at Maumee Bay by one match.

Last is a group of four ranked wrestlers at Claymont, from which the junior Daniels and the senior Wickline each won a state tournament bout last year. Daniels has two tournament titles to go with a fourth at North Canton and a fifth at Top Gun, while Wickline has runner-up finishes at Nelsonville-York and (at 170 to McGee) West Holmes, while placing fifth at Defiance and going 1-2 at the Top Gun. The junior McGee is a returning state alternate, winning up a weight at West Holmes as just mentioned;

while in this weight class it was failing to place at Defiance and losing to Wickline in the semi at Nelsonville-York. Rounding it out is the senior Bunting, last year a district placer, who placed fourth at the Top Gun this season.

#### *170 pounds*

1. Rocky Jordan, St. Paris Graham, senior (Wilmington)
2. Ashton Eyler, Claymont, senior (Claymont)
3. Anthony D'Alesio, Canfield, sophomore (Alliance)
4. Hank Carey, Streetsboro, junior (Alliance)
5. Keegan Vanmeter, Granville, junior (Claymont)
6. Spencer Robinson, Woodridge, senior (Alliance)
7. Wesley Pauley, McConnellsville Morgan, junior (Claymont)
8. Cole Hivnor, Lake Catholic, freshman (Alliance)
9. David Tuttle, Steubenville, sophomore (Claymont)
10. Lucas Salmon, Sandusky Perkins, junior (Norwalk)
11. Jack Rogan, Akron Springfield, senior (Alliance)
12. Jarrod Setliff, Medina Buckeye, senior (Norwalk)
13. Gabe Phillips, Norwalk, sophomore (Norwalk)
14. Bryce Hart, Cloverleaf, senior (Alliance)
15. Brent Paulus, Louisville, sophomore (Alliance)
16. Sean Netherton, Westfall, senior (Wilmington)

ALL – D'Alesio, Carey, Robinson, Hivnor; Rogan, Hart, Paulus

CLMT – Eyler, Vanmeter, Pauley, Tuttle; John Mautz (New Lexington, senior)

NOR – Salmon, Setliff, Phillips, Noah Pasquinelli (Maumee, senior); Johnny Witschi (Clear Fork, senior)

WIL – Jordan, Netherton, Chris Conger (Washington C.H., senior), Blake Coy (Dayton Carroll, junior); Gage Johnson (Franklin, sophomore)

The Jordan name is synonymous with wrestling in the Buckeye State. They have become the first family for wrestling no matter what anyone says. Jim (1979-1982) and Jeff (1980-1983) Jordan each won four state titles at St. Paris Graham, while during Jim's senior year the Falcons won their first of 19 state titles via the individual tournament. Jim was a three-time All-American at Wisconsin, winning national titles in 1985 and 1986; while Jeff was a two-time All-American, also at Wisconsin, placing fourth in 1987 and 1988.

Jim's sons Ben and Isaac each won three titles at St. Paris Graham. Ben's titles came in 2005, 2006, and 2008 with a finals loss in 2007 to Jeff Pelton (2-1); Isaac won titles in 2010-2012, with an 11-4 loss in the 2009 semifinal to Ty Mitch. Ben would earn one All-American finish at Wisconsin, seventh as a senior; while Isaac would All-American three times (seventh in 2014 and 2015, runner-up in 2016).

Jeff's two oldest sons each won four titles at St. Paris Graham, Bo doing so from 2010-2013 and Micah from 2011-2014. Bo is already a three-time All-American, placing third in 2015 and 2016 before finishing runner-up last year; Micah earned All-American honors for the first time last year, finishing fourth. His third and final son Rocky is a senior this year, winning state as a sophomore and junior, but losing to Cameron Kelly 3-0 in the state final as a freshman.

Summed together the brothers Jeff and Jim, along with their five sons, are a combined 106-3 at the OHSAA state wrestling tournament; with Rocky a senior this year that number is likely to jump up to

110-3! Between them there are 24 state titles right now, should Rocky win this year that would make 25. That hypothetical total would make those seven wrestlers rank joint 12<sup>th</sup> (with Cleveland West Tech) among any school in OHSAA history; a total that is one less than the formerly great Chanel program, from which J. Jagers is an alum. So far the six Jordan's over two generations to compete in college have combined for 13 All-American finishes.

During his senior season, Ohio State commit Rocky won the Ironman and was named its Outstanding Wrestler. Just one other ranked wrestler joins him at the Wilmington district, returning Division III state qualifier Netherton, a senior who has runner-up finishes at Logan Elm and Athens this season.

The primary contender to dethroning Rocky Jordan would be two-time state placer Eyler, who views the task as something of a "Vision Quest". Eyler placed seventh up at 182 in the Super 32 Challenge during the preseason, while winning a title at Barnesville in that weight class during the regular season. He dropped down to 170 for Brecksville, where he placed third after losing by fall to state champion Lagoa in the semifinal. Three other ranked wrestlers join Eyler at the Claymont district, including a pair of returning state qualifiers.

The junior Vanmeter won a state tournament match last year at 160, while this season he has runner-up finishes at Defiance and New Lexington to his credit. Fellow junior Pauley went two-and-out last year in the 160 weight class at state, while this year he has three tournament titles at 182 before dropping to this weight class and winning at Watkins. Rounding out the ranked group is the sophomore Tuttle, last year a state alternate; this year he was third at the OVAC, and while competing at 182 placed sixth at North Canton.

In what does not qualify as breaking news, the Alliance district is absolutely loaded with seven ranked wrestlers, including three with state experience, led by returning state placer D'Alesio. The sophomore was fifth at Brecksville and runner-up at the EOWL. The junior Carey and senior Robinson return after winning a state tournament bout last year. Carey was champion at Clear Fork and Hudson, where he beat three state tournament participants along the way; while Robinson was third at Hudson and champion at Central Crossing.

The freshman Hivnor was a junior high state champ last year, who has three tournament titles to his credit (North Canton beating state placer Reicosky in the final, CIT and his conference meet). He also was third at Wadsworth, a semifinalist at Solon, and 2-2 at Brecksville. The senior Rogan has runner-up finishes at the Hephner and Mapleton; fellow senior Hart has placed in five tournaments, including fifth at Medina; while the sophomore Paulus has placed in four tournaments, including fifth at North Canton and Top Gun.

Rounding it out is a Norwalk district that features three ranked wrestlers, but none with state experience. The group is led by the junior Salmon, last year a state alternate; this year he has a title at Lorain to go with a fifth at North Coast and seventh at Medina. Next is the senior Setliff, who has two titles to go with a fourth at Medina and runner-up at the Gorman; while the sophomore Phillips was champion at Kenston and runner-up at the Gorman up a weight class before dropping here to pick up a title at Clyde.

#### *182 pounds*

1. David Crawford, Canfield, senior (Alliance)
2. David Heath, Akron SVSM, senior (Alliance)

3. Duce Johnson, Alliance, senior (Alliance)
4. Noah Clary, Upper Sandusky, senior (Norwalk)
5. Cody Neece, Sheridan, junior (Claymont)
6. Hunter Johns, Dayton C-J, junior (Wilmington)
7. Eliot Clark, Bexley, senior (Claymont)
8. Sam Hunter, Sandusky, sophomore (Norwalk)
9. David McCullough, Keystone, senior (Norwalk)
10. Rocco Pearce, Cloverleaf, senior (Alliance)
11. Daniel Greiner, Batavia, senior (Wilmington)
12. Ryan Buckley, New Richmond, senior (Wilmington)
13. Josh Baldrige, West Holmes, junior (Claymont)
14. Andrew Shaffer, St. Paris Graham, sophomore (Wilmington)
15. Spencer Reynolds, Eaton, senior (Wilmington)
16. Kenny Marra, West Branch, freshman (Alliance)
17. Alex Carrothers, Carrollton, sophomore (Claymont)

ALL – Crawford, Heath, Johnson, Pearce; Marra, *Marcus Davis (Alliance, senior)*

CLMT – Neece, Clark, Baldrige, Carrothers; Dalton Cunningham (Warsaw River View, sophomore)

NOR – Clary, Hunter, McCullough, Ryan Haas (Maumee, senior); Matt Abraham (Padua, junior)

WIL – Johns, Greiner, Buckley, Shaffer; Reynolds

The top three ranked wrestlers will exit the Alliance district, stop me where you've heard that before. Crawford joined Georgio Poullas from Canfield in recently winning state as a junior. Poullas won his state title at 152 in 2016, while falling to Ryan Thomas in last year's 160 state final, 6-4 in overtime. Crawford, the Pitt signee, was a key member of Canfield's run to the regional final in football this fall; in addition to his obvious role as a three-time state placer in the resurgence of their wrestling program (runners-up the last two years in the individual tournament and making a debut appearance in the dual team event this weekend).

During this season, Crawford was champion at Perry winning by major decision over a Pennsylvania state placer in the final, and also at the EOWL. He has lost in two finals bouts to nationally ranked wrestlers from Division I here in Ohio, 3-0 to Lawson in the Brecksville final and 5-4 to Marcelli in the final at Green. His most direct challenger comes close to home in a potential district showdown against fellow senior Heath, a Brown signee. Heath lost to Crawford in the district final last year in the tiebreakers, while his state tournament loss came 12-4 to eventual runner-up Williams in the quarterfinal. In this season, Heath missed placing at the Ironman by one match, finished fourth at the Beast, was runner-up Baughman at Medina (8-3), champion at Top Gun, and third at Wadsworth (1-0 semifinal loss to Lawson). Third at state last year in the 182 weight class, Johnson had a record setting fall as a tailback at Alliance, while in wrestling he was runner-up at Beaver Local during early December; however, I haven't seen a result for him since, so his availability is in question.

Two other ranked wrestlers are present at Alliance, the senior Pearce and the freshman Marra. Pearce has a pair of tournament titles to his credit before placing third at Hudson, fourth at Medina, and fifth at Wadsworth. Junior high state champion Marra has split time between 182 and 195, where he won a title at Cambridge; while in this weight it's a third place finish at the EOWL and missing placement by one bout at the GMVWA and Top Gun.

Outside of the Alliance trio, two-time state qualifier Clary is next in line. For the season, he has titles at four tournaments, including a 7-4 victory over two-time state placer Stoll at Marion County; he also was runner-up at the GMVWA. Just two other ranked wrestlers join him at Norwalk, fellow seniors McCullough and Hunter. Returning state alternate McCullough was eighth at Brecksville, runner-up at West Holmes, and champion at Willoughby South; while Hunter was fourth at Defiance and Maumee Bay, and third at the Gorman.

Two other returning state qualifiers will exit the Claymont district, the junior Neece and the senior Clark. Neece transferred in from Fairfield Union so he missed the first half of the season, but since return he has a runner-up finish to his teammate Loughman at Watkins in the 195 weight class; while Clark was champion at Marion Harding. Two other ranked wrestlers also are in this district, the junior Baldrige and the sophomore Carrothers; Baldrige was runner-up at Smithville, while Carrothers was runner-up at Licking Valley and fifth at the Top Gun.

Rounding it out is a solid group of five ranked wrestlers at the Wilmington district. Leading the way here is the sophomore Johns, who is up three weights from last year; this year he has three tournament titles, while placing third at CIT and fourth at GMVWA. Next is the senior Greiner, a returning state qualifier, who has runner-up finishes in three tournaments this season. Fellow senior Buckley is a returning state alternate, finishing third at Milford this season with a 13-12 semifinal loss to Grenier. Next is the sophomore Shaffer, who placed fourth at the GMVWA down at 170 before winning the title at Valley View in this weight class; while rounding out the group is the senior Reynolds, who was runner-up at Eaton.

#### *195 pounds*

1. Stone Day, Valley View, senior (Wilmington)
2. Gage Braun, St. Paris Graham, senior (Wilmington)
3. Jud Ramage, Meadowbrook, senior (Claymont)
4. Matthew Cover, Bay Village, junior (Norwalk)
5. Jackson Gear, Cincinnati McNicholas, senior (Wilmington)
6. Nick Crawford, Canfield, sophomore (Alliance)
7. Justin Ocheltree, Keystone, senior (Norwalk)
8. Noah Arnett, Defiance, senior (Norwalk)
9. C.J. Williams, Norton, senior (Alliance)
10. Owen Loughman, Sheridan, junior (Claymont)
11. Alec Maloney, Norwalk, sophomore (Norwalk)
12. Colin McNamara, Aurora, junior (Alliance)
13. Cory Stallings, Cloverleaf, senior (Alliance)
14. Sam McNulty, Sandusky Perkins, sophomore (Norwalk)
15. Keith Bodnar, Steubenville, sophomore (Claymont)
16. Zach Miller, Wapakoneta, senior (Norwalk)

ALL – Crawford, Williams, McNamara, Stallings

CLMT – Ramage, Loughman, Bodnar, Griffin Rathburn (Bishop Hartley, junior); Dylan Boysel (Jonathan Alder, senior)

NOR – Cover, Ocheltree, Arnett, Maloney; McNulty, Miller

WIL – Day, Braun, Gear, C.J. Cook (Bellefontaine, senior); Deegan Borris (Hillsboro, senior)

For the second straight year, Valley View's Stone Day will have to clear a Graham rival in order to get his school's first ever state title. Last year he became the school's first state finalist, but lost 3-2 in the ultimate tiebreaker to Kavan Sarver at the Schott; Day had three previous wins against Sarver (regular season, sectional, district) to one defeat (regional dual) in that season. Day already beat fellow senior, and returning state runner-up Braun 5-4 in the Valley View final this season; both wrestlers have also committed to wrestle at MAC schools, Day at Kent State, Braun at Northern Illinois.

Day also has titles at five other events, including a tiebreaker victory over Baker in the final at Franklin; while Braun was fourth at the Ironman and champion at the GMVWA. Just one other ranked wrestler joins them at the Wilmington district, and that would be two-time state qualifier Gear, who this season has two tournament titles to go with a runner-up at SWOWCA and third at the CIT.

Just one other state placer features in this weight class, and that would be three-time state qualifier Ramage, who was fifth in this weight last year. On the season he was champion at Beaver Local in this weight and at Barnesville up a weight. Joining him for district at Claymont are just two other ranked wrestlers, 2016 state qualifier Loughman and Bodnar. Loughman qualified for state on that occasion as a freshman, while this year he has third place finishes at Marion Harding and Sheridan to go with a title at Watkins; while the sophomore Bodnar was champion at Nelsonville-York and fifth at the OVAC meet.

Returning state qualifiers Cover and Ocheltree anchor a group of six ranked wrestlers at Norwalk. The junior Cover was a Cadet National double All-American over the summer, including a runner-up finish in freestyle; this season he's been champion at five tournaments, including Medina, Avon Lake (where he pinned Ocheltree), and Green (where he pinned Crawford). His lone loss is 4-3 in a dual meet to Ben Smith. The senior Ocheltree was third at Avon Lake, champion at Willoughby South and West Holmes, while finishing fifth at Brecksville.

The senior Arnett finished third at Defiance and Perrysburg. The sophomore Maloney was champion at Kenston and Clyde, while placing fifth at the Gorman. Fellow sophomore McNulty was runner-up at Lorain and fourth at the North Coast, while missing out on placement at Medina by a match; while the senior Miller was champion at Wapakoneta.

While there are no returning state qualifiers at Alliance, the field does feature four ranked wrestlers, though there is a clear drop off down to a hypothetical fifth option. Leading the way is the sophomore Crawford, who was closed out by two state placers last year. This season he was runner-up at Perry, fourth at Brecksville, and third at Green and the EOWL. Next in line is the senior Williams, a returning district placer; this season he won a title at Smithville down at 182 before finishing third at the Gorman and second at Green in this weight. The junior McNamara placed third at both Wadsworth and the Suburban League meet, while the senior Stallings is a returning state alternate with three tournament titles on the season but placed fourth at Wadsworth.

### *220 pounds*

1. Johnny Shafer, St. Paris Graham, junior (Wilmington)
2. Tyler Stein, Canfield, junior (Alliance)
3. Breslin Walker, CVCA, sophomore (Alliance)
4. Brandon Phillips, Maumee, senior (Norwalk)
5. Brandon Matlock, Warren Howland, senior (Alliance)
6. Mikey Addis, Norwalk, senior (Wilmington)
7. Austin Smith, Amanda-Clearcreek, senior (Claymont)

8. Connor Johnston, Upper Sandusky, senior (Norwalk)
9. Evan Kaeck, Wapakoneta, sophomore (Norwalk)
10. Tyler Bath, Vermillion, senior (Norwalk)
11. Luke Shively, New Lexington, senior (Claymont)
12. Ben Davis, Circleville, junior (Wilmington)
13. Chavion Young, Alliance, senior (Alliance)
14. Skylar Wooley, East Liverpool, sophomore (Claymont)
15. Kole Aubiel, Claymont, junior (Claymont)
16. Deontae Williams, Canton South, junior (Alliance)

ALL – Stein, Walker, Matlock, Young; Williams

CLMT – Smith, Shively, Aubiel, Wooley; Mason Cox (Fairland, senior)

NOR – Phillips, Johnston, Kaeck, Bath; Sebastian Chavez (Napoleon, junior)

WIL – Shafer, Addis, Davis, Sam Brothers (Clinton-Massie, senior); Nathaniel Armstrong (Kettering Alter, junior)

After a string of weight classes where there was some semblance and direction of order at the top, this weight class represents anything but. For a second straight year, the now junior Shafer will enter the tournament as the projected state champion. However, last year that meant absolutely nothing as he ended up finishing seventh; when combined with a fifth place finish as a freshman, he is now a two-time state placer. On the season, Shafer placed sixth at the Ironman before winning titles at the GMVWA and Valley; recently he lost a dual meet match to two-time Michigan state placer McKiernan.

His district at Wilmington is again shallow with just two other wrestlers ranked. The senior Addis is a returning state qualifier, who placed fifth at SWOWCA. The other ranked wrestler is the junior Davis, who was runner-up at Olentangy Liberty and Logan Elm while finishing third at Athens and the Brooke Classic. Also in this weight is returning state qualifier Brothers.

The two wrestlers directly behind Shafer exit the Alliance district. The junior Stein qualified for state last year at 195, but went 1-2; however, he subsequently placed at the Flo Nationals and the UWW Cadet Nationals in the off-season. This season he was fifth at Brecksville (beating Walker 5-2 in the consolation quarterfinal), champion at Perry, and third at the EOWL meet losing only to Willis 3-1 in overtime. The sophomore Walker qualified for state in this weight, also going 1-2. This season he placed third at North Canton and seventh at Brecksville before winning titles at Maumee Bay (beating returning state runner-up Phillips in overtime along the way) and Wadsworth.

Three other ranked contenders will challenge at the Alliance district, including the senior Matlock, who placed fourth up at 285 last year. On this season he won a title at Hudson, lost to Stein in a dual meet, and was fourth at the EOWL meet (also losing to Stein in the consolation final). Fellow senior Young was runner-up at Beaver Local, fourth at the Top Gun, and fifth at the EOWL meet; while it's round out by the junior Williams, who was third at Beaver Local and champion at Benjamin Logan.

Returning state runner-up Phillips has four tournament titles on the season, including one at Bellevue where he beat returning Division III state qualifier Kuhn (he also won at Defiance at Perrysburg). His losses came in the semifinal and consolation semifinal at the Maumee Bay Classic. Three others join Phillips in the rankings at the Norwalk district. Returning state alternate Johnston is a fellow senior, who has third place finishes at the GMVWA, Gorman, and Marion Pleasant to his credit on the season. The fellow sophomore Kaeck was champion at Wapakoneta after placing third at Maumee Bay and fifth at

the GMVWA. While the group is rounded out by the senior Bath, who qualified for state at 195 last year; this season he has two tournament titles to go with fourth place finishes at the Gorman and Maumee Bay.

The Claymont district features four ranked wrestlers, led by returning Division III state qualifier Smith, who has titles at Logan Elm and New Lexington on the season. Fellow senior Shively has four tournament titles on the season, including a win at Athens over returning state qualifier McCollister, along with a runner-up finish at New Lexington and missing placement at Medina by one match. The sophomore Wooley was third at the OVAC and seventh at New Lexington; while the junior Aubiel was third at Barnesville, sixth at Top Gun, and has a 3-2 dual meet win over Shively.

#### *285 pounds*

1. Jack Delgarbino, Girard, junior (Alliance)
2. Sam Mitchell, Warsaw River View, senior (Claymont)
3. Tyler Ely, Steubenville, senior (Claymont)
4. Lane Cluff, Hillsboro, junior (Wilmington)
5. Sean Lipscomb, Firelands, senior (Norwalk)
6. Travis Kuttler, Minerva, senior (Claymont)
7. Alex Leasure, Alliance, senior (Alliance)
8. Daniel Kapalko, Canfield, senior (Alliance)
9. Matt Holman, CVCA, sophomore (Alliance)
10. Mason Weldon, Galion, senior (Norwalk)
11. Lyle Clark, Claymont, senior (Claymont)
12. Grant Robinson, Bexley, senior (Claymont)
13. Alex Sosa, Wauseon, senior (Norwalk)
14. Chris Julian, Warren Howland, senior (Alliance)
15. Ambrose Adams, Lexington, senior (Norwalk)
16. Alex Coleman, Hamilton Ross, sophomore (Wilmington)

ALL – Delgarbino, Leasure, Kapalko, Holman; Julian

CLMT – Mitchell, Ely, Kuttler, Clark; Robinson

NOR – Lipscomb, Weldon, Sosa, Adams; Jacob Jackson (Toledo Central Catholic, sophomore)

WIL – Cluff, Coleman, Seth Bowman (Eaton, junior), Trent Wilson (Valley View, senior); Connor Barton (Wilmington, senior)

Just a junior, DelGarbino has the chance to be the next elite heavyweight in this state. He placed fourth last year at 220, and spent the off-season just continuing to get better; finished as runner-up to Earnest in the unofficial UWW Cadet freestyle tournament at 125 kilos then participating in both styles at the Junior Nationals in Fargo, including a run to the quarterfinals in Greco-Roman. It's paid off this season as he is undefeated and mostly dominant with notable titles at Solon, Top Gun, and the EOWL.

There is only one other returning state place-winner in this weight class, and that would be the senior Mitchell who finished sixth last year after making the state semifinal in this weight class. On the season he has titles at four tournaments, but picked up a dual meet loss in December to Hill of Bedford. At the Claymont district, Mitchell will be joined by returning state qualifier Ely, runner-up at North Canton and the OVAC this season, along with titles at two tournaments. In a dual meet, Mitchell did pin Ely. Three other ranked wrestlers are present in the field, all of whom are seniors.

A district placer two years ago, this season Kuttler placed third at Cambridge and Coshocton, while finishing runner-up at the Top Gun and fifth at North Canton. Clark was sixth at Barnesville, seventh at Brecksville, and eighth at the Top Gun; while Robinson was champion at Marion Harding. Also here is the sophomore Potts from DeSales, who is not ranked, but does have a pin of Division III #2 Bodkin at New Lexington.

Delgarbino is joined by four other ranked wrestlers at the Alliance district, with only the senior Leasure a returning state qualifier. During this season he was champion at Beaver Local, runner-up at the EOWL, fourth at Top Gun, and missed placing at Brecksville by a match. Next is the senior Kapalko, who was closed out last year by state runner-up Mason Giordano; this season he was fourth at Brecksville and third at the EOWL, losing 3-2 to Leasure in the semifinal. The sophomore Holman was a state alternate in this weight last year, but just returned after missing the bulk of the season due to injury. Finally ranked here is the senior Julian, champion at Hudson and fourth at the EOWL.

Two of the remaining three state qualifiers exit the Wilmington district, a group that is led by the junior Cluff, who has wins at three tournaments this year. The other ranked wrestler at this district is the sophomore Coleman, who was champion at Franklin before placing fifth at Fairfield and third at Eaton. Also in this district is returning state qualifier Wilson.

Rounding it out is the group at Norwalk with four ranked wrestlers, including returning Division III state qualifier Weldon, who this season was third at the Gorman, runner-up at Van Buren, and champion at Tiffin Calvert. The top ranked among the group in this district is fellow senior Lipscomb, who was champion at Milan Edison and Perrysburg along with third at Medina. Another senior is the returning state alternate Sosa, who went 2-2 at both Ironman and Brecksville before placing third at Perrysburg and missing out on placing at Maumee Bay by one match. Last is another senior Adams, who won titles at the Kilted Classic and Clyde, along with taking fourth at the Gorman.

### DIVISION III

#### *106 pounds*

1. Cole Skinner, Middletown Madison, freshman (Troy)
2. Wyatt Riddle, East Clinton, sophomore (Troy)
3. Casey Barnett, Milan Edison, freshman (Defiance)
4. Lucian Brink, Coshocton, sophomore (Heath)
5. Collin Yinger, Nelsonville-York, junior (Heath)
6. Jacob (Boots) Kuhlins, Tuslaw, senior (Garfield Hts)
7. Zack Mattin, Delta, freshman (Defiance)
8. Wilber Compress, Reading, senior (Troy)
9. Brett Szuhay, Crestwood, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
10. Caleb Schroer, Troy Christian, sophomore (Troy)
11. Olivia Shore, Miami East, freshman (Troy)
12. Tyler Davis, Oak Harbor, freshman (Defiance)
13. Luke Stroud, Mechanicsburg, freshman (Troy)
14. Kellan Anderson, Covington, freshman (Troy)
15. Gabe Sutton, Wayne Trace, freshman (Troy)
16. Deagan Foster, Waterloo, sophomore (Garfield Hts)

DEF – Barnett, Mattin, Davis, Kole Freeman (Hopewell-Loudon, freshman); Will Blevins (Sandusky SMCC, sophomore)

GHTS – Kuhlins, Szuhay, Foster, Michael Pikryl (Roostown, freshman); Brandt Virden (Columbiana, junior)

HEA – Brink, Yinger, Manny Hielman (Galion Northmor, senior), Jon Polley (Marion Pleasant, sophomore)

TROY – Skinner, Riddle, Compress, Schroer; Shore, Stroud, Anderson, Sutton

A talent known to Ohio through his success up to high school, and known to the country through is freestyle exploits, the freshman Skinner is the favorite to open his state tournament career on top of the podium. Skinner qualified on the Cadet World team in freestyle this past off-season at 46 kilos (92.5 pounds), and it seems that he's been spending his winter focused on world level freestyle goals as much as winning high school gold. For regular season results, I can find a title at Bellbrook, but not too much else.

He exits a district tournament at Troy that is absolutely loaded with eight ranked wrestlers, including last year's runner-up in this weight class Riddle; the sophomore was at Legacy Christian last year, so he had to sit out the first half after transferring to East Clinton, where he has since won a title at Milford. The senior Compress went 2-2 in a Division II district last year, while this season he has two tournament runner-up finishes to go with a title at Sycamore.

The next two wrestlers on the ladder are the sophomore Schroer and the freshman Shore. Schroer was runner-up at Lima CC, upsetting Yinger in overtime in the quarterfinal (a wrestler he lost 6-0 to two weeks prior) before losing 7-5 to Shore in the final; however, he beat Shore 6-2 three days before in the regional duals. Olivia Shore seeks to become the second girl to qualify for the OHSAA state wrestling tournament, where she would join Paige Nemec, who went 1-2 at the 2010 state tournament.

Shore is the younger sister of three-time state placer Graham, an Air Force Academy signee. She also qualified for the Cadet World team in women's freestyle at 46 kilos this past spring/summer. Placing eighth at Medina made her the first female to ever place at that tournament, while she was named Outstanding Wrestler after winning the title at Lima CC.

The three other ranked wrestlers at Troy are fellow freshmen: Stroud, who won a title at Milton Union before taking fifth at Lima CC; Anderson who was runner-up at the GMVWA, champion over Shore at Troy, and eighth at Lima CC (losing 1-0 to Shore in the quarters); and Sutton who took fourth at Troy, second at Van Buren, and seventh at Lima CC.

Outside the Troy district, the freshman Barnett is the lead challenger. Placing fourth last year at 102 in the junior high state tournament, this season he already placed fourth at Brecksville with a win over state placer Yinger in the consolation semifinal. Two other freshmen join him among the ranked wrestlers at Defiance: junior high state champion Mattin is rather undersized but has fought through that to finish third at Perrysburg, sixth at Maumee Bay, and fourth at Delaware Hayes; while Davis was champion at Bellevue, third at LCC, and sixth at Perrysburg.

Two of the four wrestlers in this weight class that made state last year come from the Heath district, the junior Yinger who took fourth and the sophomore Brink who went 1-2. Yinger placed sixth at Brecksville, has a title at Nelsonville-York, and placed fourth at Lima CC; while Brink has titles in three tournaments this season. Those are the lone ranked wrestlers in this district, the lack of depth at Heath will end up being something of a trend.

Lastly it's the district at Garfield Hts, which features just three ranked wrestlers, led by returning state placer Kuhlins; the senior was runner-up at Top Gun after missing out on placement at North Canton (top six) and Brecksville by one bout. Also ranked here are sophomore Szuhay and Foster. Szuhay finished top six at Solon, was runner-up at Willoughby South, and champion at Kenston; while Foster was fourth at the EOWL meet.

### *113 pounds*

1. Oscar Sanchez, Genoa, junior (Defiance)
2. Ray Adams, Milan Edison, junior (Defiance)
3. Austin Guthrie, Coshocton, junior (Heath)
4. Brandon Hahn, Eastwood, freshman (Defiance)
5. Chase Caprella, Allen East, sophomore (Troy)
6. Gavin Weaver, Newcomerstown, sophomore (Heath)
7. Cael Vanderhorst, Covington, freshman (Troy)
8. Jake Edelman, Pymatuning Valley, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
9. Caleb Edwards, Rootstown, freshman (Garfield Hts)
10. Dominic Savoca, Crestwood, junior (Garfield Hts)
11. Antonio Lecki, Milbury Lake, sophomore (Defiance)
12. Kyle Keenan, South Range, junior (Garfield Hts)
13. Marshall Niswonger, Caldwell, junior (Heath)
14. Brayden Reynolds, Barnesville, senior (Heath)
15. Brian Chmielewski, Coldwater, junior (Troy)
16. Tyler Sandwisch, Woodmore, senior (Defiance)

DEF – Sanchez, Adams, Hahn, Lecki; Sandwisch

GHTS – Edelman, Edwards, Savoca, Keenan; Zach LaHood (Black River, junior)  
HEA – Guthrie, Weaver, Niswonger, Reynolds; Brayden Rittenhouse (West Muskingum, sophomore)  
TROY – Caprella, Vanderhorst, Chmielewski, Brayden Clinton (East Clinton, sophomore); Joseph Burns (Bidwell River Valley, junior)

Last year Genoa brought five wrestlers to the state tournament, had four of them win a match, and all four of them wrestled on the raised mat Saturday night; all five of those wrestlers return this season, and also next season. That included Sanchez, who won gold at 106 a year after being closed out of the lineup by Dylan D’Emilio. This season, expect more of the same type of dominance, as they are prohibitively favored to win the state title one year after they finished second to Mechanicsburg.

Sanchez went 2-2 at the Ironman losing to a pair of place-winners, before finishing second at Perrysburg and first in his conference meet. Four other ranked wrestlers join him at the Defiance district, including projected state runner-up Adams. The fellow junior placed seventh last year at 106 and is the lone other returning placer in this state weight class. On the season he was runner-up at Milan Edison, eighth at Brecksville, and champion at Marion County.

The freshman Hahn has been most excellent winning titles at three tournaments, including Van Buren, before finishing runner-up to Sanchez at his league meet. The sophomore Lecki was runner-up at Northwood and champion at Marion Pleasant; while the senior Sandwisch was third at Northwood and his league meet (semfinal loss to Hahn), along with a runner-up finish at the Kilted Classic.

From the four other returning state qualifiers at this weight class, the lone one to actually win a match was the junior Guthrie. During this season he has titles at Coshocton and River View in this weight class, while finishing second at Barnesville and Heath up a weight. Three other ranked wrestler join him at the Heath district. The sophomore Weaver did beat Guthrie to win gold up a weight class at Heath; however, he was runner-up to Guthrie at Cosyocton. Additional tournaments include a runner-up finish at Smithville and third place finishes a Nelsonville-York and New Lexington. The junior Niswonger is a returning state alternate, this season he won at Barnesville and was third at the OVAC; while the senior Reynolds placed fifth at the OVAC.

The district at Garfield Hts feature a pair of state qualifiers among its four ranked wrestlers. Leading the way is Edelman, who went 0-2 at state last year despite winning district as a freshman; he has titles this season at Riverside and Jackson Milton, while finishing second at Kenston and fourth at the EOWL. Also a returning state qualifier is the junior Keenan, who was runner-up to Edelman at Jackson Milton before placing sixth at the Hephner and fifth at the EOWL. The other two ranked wrestlers are the freshman Edwards and the junior Savoca who went 1-2 at a Division II district last year. Edwards this season won the title at Jackson Milton up a weight class, and has a narrow 9-8 loss to Adams in a dual meet; while Savoca was fourth at Solon, champion at Willoughby South, and third at Kenston.

Rounding it out is a Troy district led by returning state qualifier Caprella, who has titles at four tournaments (including a win over Vanderhorst in the Lima CC final, while finishing runner-up to Hahn at Van Buren. Just two other ranked wrestlers exit this district, the freshman Vanderhorst and the senior Chmielewski. Vanderhorst was champion at Troy, runner-up at Lima CC, and seventh at the GMVWA; while Chmielewski was champion at Middletown Madison, runner-up at Troy, and third at Lima CC.

### *120 pounds*

1. Graham Shore, Miami East, senior (Troy)

2. Dylan Burns, Milan Edison, senior (Defiance)
3. Ethan Turner, Troy Christian, sophomore (Troy)
4. Carter Wolf, Marion Pleasant, senior (Heath)
5. Cameron Dickman, Oak Harbor, junior (Defiance)
6. Kaleb Patterson, Ridgedale, senior (Heath)
7. Clayton Eagle, Ashland Crestview, senior (Defiance)
8. Jacob Poling, Versailles, junior (Troy)
9. Skylar Davis, Fredericktown, senior (Heath)
10. Darion Tracy, Defiance Ayersville, senior (Defiance)
11. Jacob Edwards, Bidwell River Valley, junior (Troy)
12. Robert Pinkie, Lutheran West, junior (Garfield Hts)
13. Lane McCombs, South Charleston Southeastern, junior (Troy)
14. Zach Schaller, Swanton, junior (Defiance)
15. J.P. Hlfika, Hawken, senior (Garfield Hts)
16. Drake Carmean, Allen East, freshman (Troy)

DEF – Burns, Dickman, Eagle, Tracy; Schaller

GHTS – Pinkie, Hlfika, Jake White (Manchester, sophomore), Josh Ondash (Crestwood, sophomore); William Campbell (Pymatuning Valley, sophomore)

HEA – Wolf, Patterson, Davis, Austin Amens (Galion Northmor, sophomore); Hayden Johnson (Richmond Edison, sophomore)

TROY – Shore, Turner, Poling, Edwards; McCombs, Carmean

As mentioned earlier, the Air Force commit Shore is a three-time state placer, finishing seventh as a freshman and third each of the last two years. He is well positioned to earn that elusive state title, as it's been a most excellent senior season without a loss that I can find. It includes wins over a pair of state placers each in winning titles at Medina and Lima CC, with all of those wins coming via bonus points.

His district tournament at Troy will include five other state ranked wrestlers, but only the sophomore Turner is state experienced, placing third last year at 106 pounds. On the season he was runner-up at GMVWA and Lima CC, while winning a title at Licking Valley. The junior Poling is next, winning a title at Sidney to go with placement at four other tournaments including fifth at the GMVWA and seventh at Maumee Bay; he also came through with a big pin over state qualifier Nickels in the regional duals final. Fellow junior Edwards follows, and the returning district placer finished third at Nelsonville-York in this weight while winning two tournaments up at 126. Another junior and district placer is McCombs, who has a pair of tournament titles on the season; while the ranked group is rounded out by the freshman Carmean, champion at two tournaments, runner-up at two others, and seventh at Lima CC.

Ranked second in this state weight class is two-time state placer Burns, a senior who was runner-up at Milan Edison, champion at Marion County, and one match from placing at Brecksville; he also has a 7-2 dual meet win over a bumped up in weight Oscar Sanchez. Four other ranked wrestlers exit the district at Defiance, including returning state placer Dickman; a junior who was champion at Bellevue, second at Perrysburg, and third at both Medina and Lima CC. Also ranked here is the senior Eagle, who placed at district two years ago while competing in Division II at Ashland; this season he was champion at the Gorman. Fellow senior Tracy was fourth at Lima CC and placed seventh up a weight class at Defiance; while the junior Schaller was champion at Northwood, third at Van Buren, and fifth at Lima CC.

The two other state placers in this weight class, seniors Wolf and Patterson both exit the Heath district; it should be noted that Wolf beat Patterson 7-6 at the Marion County tournament after being him 4-3 to place seventh last year in this state tournament weight class. On the season Wolf has titles in four events, while Patterson also placed third at Marion Harding. The lone other ranked wrestler at this district is fellow senior Davis, a returning district placer, who has won a title at Mount Vernon before placing second in three tournaments and fourth at the Gorman.

Rounding it out is a Garfield Hts district that continues its trend of not being strong in the lower weights this year, similar to last year. Just three wrestlers here with state experience, all went two-and-out at the Schott, while only two of them are ranked. The junior Pinkie was fourth at Lorain and second at Perry, while the senior Hlifka was fifth at the North Coast Classic and a CVC champion. Also qualifying for state last year was the sophomore White.

### *126 pounds*

1. Tommy Hoskins, Legacy Christian, senior (Troy)
2. Julian Sanchez, Genoa, junior (Defiance)
3. Cole Mattin, Delta, junior (Defiance)
4. Zack Larue, Manchester, junior (Garfield Hts)
5. Logan Hursey, Newcomerstown, freshman (Heath)
6. Klay Reeves, Johnstown Northridge, junior (Heath)
7. Trevor Schaller, Swanton, senior (Defiance)
8. Dakota Blanton, Ashland Crestview, senior (Defiance)
9. Tyler Bauer, Wayne Trace, junior (Troy)
10. Isaac Hernandez, Ottawa Glandorf, junior (Troy)
11. Kaleb Nickels, Miami East, sophomore (Troy)
12. Seth Majewski, Brooklyn, junior (Garfield Hts)
13. Devan Hendricks, Greeneview, junior (Troy)
14. Jordan Bowers, Defiance Tinora, senior (Defiance)
15. Jackson Hugentobler, Madeira, junior (Troy)
16. Matthew Dewitz, Oak Harbor, sophomore (Defiance)

DEF – Sanchez, Mattin, Schaller, Blanton; Bowers, Dewitz

GHTS – Larue, Majewski, Derik Houser (Columbia Crestview, junior), Noah Campbell (Pymatuning Valley, junior); Michael Kucera (Independence, junior)

HEA – Hursey, Reeves, Gavin Ramos (Galion Northmor, sophomore), Levi Pemberton (Caldwell, senior); Ryley Crall (Union Local, junior)

TROY – Hoskins, Bauer, Hernandez, Nickels; Hendricks, Hugentobler

As previously noted, should Hoskins win this state title, he would become the 30<sup>th</sup> to be a four-time state champion in Ohio. He would have also won a pair of titles at Dayton Christian and a pair at Legacy Christian. In so doing he would join Ken Ramsey (Lancaster Fisher Catholic/Bishop Ready), C.P. Schlatter (Columbus DeSales/St. Paris Graham), and Dustin Schlatter (St. Paris Graham/Massillon Perry) as wrestlers to win those four titles at two different schools.

The Oklahoma signee has a sparkling overall resume that includes a pair of All-American finishes in Junior freestyle. During the preseason Super 32, Hoskins sustained an injury that took away the first two thirds of his season, but since returning he has titles at both the JVH Memorial and Delaware Hayes tournaments; at Delaware Hayes he beat two-time state placer Mattin 5-2 in the final.

His two direct challengers to a state title both exit the district at Defiance, two-time state placers Sanchez and Mattin, both of whom are juniors. As a result, Hoskins will have to beat both foes in order to win state gold. Sanchez placed eighth at the Super 32 this fall in the 120 pound weight class, while this season he went 3-2 at the Ironman before winning titles at Perrysburg (beating Mattin in OT) and at his conference meet. Mattin placed third at Norrth Canton, runner-up at both Perrysburg and Delaware Hayes, and champion at Maumee Bay (beating DI title contender Burnett in that final).

Four additional ranked wrestlers join Sanchez and Mattin and Defiance, a group led by 2016 state qualifier Schaller and two-time state qualifier Blanton. The senior Schaller has titles at Northwood and Van Buren on the season, while the junior Blanton was sixth at the Gorman and fifth at New Lexington. Also a returning state qualifier is the senior Bowers, which means someone with state experience won't get to make the trip to Columbus this year; while on the season he was third at Defiance and fifth at Perrysburg. Also here is the sophomore Dewitz, who was champion at Bellevue before finishing fourth at Perrysburg and fifth at Lima CC.

Hoskins anchors the other deep district in this weight class, the one at Troy that feature five other ranked wrestlers, three of them returning state qualifiers. The junior Bauer jumps up three weights from his district placement finish of last year, and has been most excellent, winning a title at Lima CC after placing in four other tournaments (including a third at Van Buren). Fellow junior Hernandez finished fourth at Van Buren and third at Lima CC. Nickels – state qualifier last year as a freshman – has two tournament titles, a runner-up at Lima CC, along with missing placement at Medina by one bout. The junior Hugentobler went two-and-out in this state weight last year, and placed fourth at Lima CC this year; while the junior Hendricks placed sixth at 106 last year, and this year had runner-up finishes at GMVWA and Beavercreek before losing in the quarterfinals 5-4 to Hernandez at Lima CC.

Another pair of two-time state placers reside in this weight class, juniors Larue and Reeves. They've been in the same state weight classes both years, with Larue finishing sixth and Reeves eighth on each occasions. Both wrestlers anchor weak district tournaments that feature just one other ranked wrestler.

Larue was champion at the Gorman earlier this season and qualifies through Garfield Hts where fellow junior Majewski also qualified for state last year, and has two tournament titles to go with a fourth at Kenston. Reeves was chamion at Mount Vernon and has placed in four other tournaments this season, including fourth at Medina and fifth at Maumee Bay. He exits the district at Heath, whose only other ranked wrestler is the freshman Hursey, who was third at junior high state last year. On the season Hursey upset Reeves on the way to a runner-up finish at New Lexington; while has two other tournament runner-up finish to go with titles at Coshocton and Smithville.

### *132 pounds*

1. Dylan D'Emilio, Genoa, junior (Defiance)
2. Niko Chilson, Rootstown, junior (Garfield Hts)
3. Jacob Edwards, Troy Christian, senior (Troy)
4. Mason Kuneff, Bridgeport, junior (Heath)
5. Noah Inboden, Nelsonville-York, sophomore (Heath)
6. Deuce Brown, Legacy Christian, freshman (Troy)
7. Aaron Kitts, Galion Northmor, senior (Heath)
8. Peyton Lane, National Trail, sophomore (Troy)
9. Daniel Price, Mohawk, senior (Defiance)

10. Preston Platfoot, Versailles, senior (Troy)
11. Connor Brennan, Tuslaw, senior (Garfield Hts)
12. Parker Watson, Lutheran West, junior (Garfield Hts)
13. Andrew Zarins, Brooklyn, senior (Garfield Hts)
14. Andrew Knaup, West Muskingum, sophomore (Heath)
15. David Patterson North Baltimore, senior (Defiance)
16. Wil Roth, Sandusky SMCC, junior (Defiance)

DEF – D’Emilio, Price, Patterson, Roth; Zach Rocha (Archbold, junior)

GHTS – Chilson, Brennan, Watson, Zarins; Nick Ciancola (Canton Central Catholic, junior)

HEA – Kuneff, Inboden, Kitts, Knaup; Blake Barrick (Coshocton, junior)

TROY – Edwards, Brown, Lane, Platfoot; Johnny Schirmer (Blanchester, sophomore)

While there will not be multiple potential four-time state champions come 2019, in order for there to be any potential four time state champion, the junior D’Emilio has to come through with a title in this weight class. In the 17 years from 2001 to last year, there were four-time champions in fourteen of those years; this year would likely make it 15 in 18 for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This Class of 2019 wrestler has a robust resume of his own to augment the two state titles: two placement finishes at the Super 32, three Fargo freestyle All-American finishes, and a Cadet world team appearance in 2015.

Though D’Emilio missed the Ironman this year due to injury, he returned to pick up another Medina title, beating fellow state champion Fields in overtime. He also was champion at Perrysburg and in his conference meet. Three other ranked wrestlers are present at the Defiance district, led by 2016 state qualifier Price, who made the late drop to this weight class after a season at 138 that included a runner-up finish at Van Buren. The senior Patterson was champion at Arcadia and champion at Van Buren, while the junior Roth has two tournament titles to go with a runner-up at Van Buren and a fifth at the Gorman.

Ranked second in this weight is fellow junior Chilson, who placed fifth at 126 last year after finishing runner-up the previous year in Delaware. This season Chilson was 2-2 at the Beast of the East and placed sixth at Brecksville, while picking up a pair of wins over state qualifiers in dual meets. Three other ranked wrestlers are present at the Garfield Hts district. It starts with returning state qualifier Brennan, a senior, who placed sixth at Top Gun and has a 2-0 dual meet loss to Chilson. The junior Watson was a state alternate last year in this weight class, and this season he has a title up a weight class at Lorain before placing third at Perry in this weight class. Another returning state qualifier is the senior Zarins, who was runner-up at Kenston and Avon Lake, while winning a title at Howland and placing fourth at North Coast. Also in this weight class is another returning state qualifier in Ciancola, who also went two-and-out at the Schott.

A third state placer in this weight class is the senior Edwards, who has placed second at 106 and third at 113 the last two years at state. This season he was runner-up at the GMVWA before winning titles at Licking Valley and Lima CC. He’ll be joined by three other ranked wrestlers at Troy, most notably the freshman Brown, whose title at Delaware Hayes was preceded by runner-up finishes at Olentangy Liberty and Perrysburg. The sophomore Lane missed the second half of last year due to injury, but has been most excellent this season in winning at Valley View and finishing third at Eaton; while the senior Platfoot is a returning state alternate, and has placed in five tournaments on the season (sixth at GMVWA and Maumee Bay most notably).

The fourth state placer from last year leads the fourth district tournament, Inboden placed eighth last year at 126 and leads the group at Heath. On the present season, he has three tournament runner-up finishes (including the one at Lima CC), and missed out on placing at Brecksville by a match. Three other ranked wrestlers feature in this district tournament, including returning state qualifiers Kuneff and Kitts; while returning state qualifier Barrick is not among the top 16. The junior Kuneff placed seventh at Brecksville and fourth at the OVAC; while the senior Kitts was eighth at Medina, fourth at the Gorman, and champion at Marion Pleasant. Last among the ranked wrestlers is the sophomore Knaup, who was third at Barnesville (beating Barrick along the way) and fifth at Athens.

### *138 pounds*

1. Alex Isbrandt, Miami East, senior (Troy)
2. Jared Ford, Troy Christian, senior (Troy)
3. Nick Burgard, Ashtabula St. John, junior (Garfield Hts)
4. Dustin Morgillo, Genoa, sophomore (Defiance)
5. Jordan Keegan, Milan Edison, junior (Defiance)
6. Jacob Hahn, Eastwood, senior (Defiance)
7. Noah Saunders, Swanton, senior (Defiance)
8. Max Neiling, Patrick Henry, senior (Defiance)
9. Travis Howard, Preble Shawnee, freshman (Troy)
10. Dallas Scott, Centerburg, senior (Heath)
11. Drew Price, Middletown Madison, senior (Troy)
12. Brier Marthey, Tuslaw, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
13. Cael Rowland, West Salem Northwestern, junior (Garfield Hts)
14. Lucas Freeman, Allen East, senior (Troy)
15. Darry Endicott, Lakota, senior (Defiance)
16. Jordan Hinegardner, Lima Central Catholic, senior (Troy)

DEF – Morgillo, Keegan, Hahn, Saunders; Neiling, Endicott

GHTS – Burgard, Marthey, Rowland, Duvall (Rootstown, junior); Evan Hostetler (Waynedale, senior)

HEA – Scott, Brian Heller (Nelsonville-York, senior), Brady Crum (Union Local, freshman), Colin Wiley (Caldwell, sophomore); Carter Winegardner (West Muskingum, sophomore)

TROY – Isbrandt, Ford, Howard, Price; Freeman, Hinegardner

While Miami East lost to Versailles in the regional final on the dual team side, they have created a nice group for the individual state series and could creep towards the top five of the standings. Along with Shore, Isbrandt is also a three-time state placer finishing seventh as a freshman and sophomore before losing in overtime in the state final last year. On this season, he was runner-up at Medina losing by pin in the tiebreaker to nationally ranked Baughman, and has two wins over direct title challenger Ford (including a 3-1 victory in the final at Lima CC). Fellow senior Ford placed fifth in this state weight class last year, and has titles at the GMVWA and Licking Valley on the season.

Isbrandt and Ford are joined by four other ranked wrestlers to make for a deep district tournament at Troy, though it's really the latter four seeking two state spots. The freshman Howard was champion at Valley View and fifth at Lima CC, while also picking up a dual meet victory over the senior Price, whose season includes runner-up finishes at two tournaments along with titles at Middletown Madison and Ballbrook. Fellow senior Freeman finished second at Allen County, fifth at Van Buren, and sixth at Lima CC; while fellow senior Hinegardner won the title at Allen County, was champion at the CIT, third at Tiffin Calvert, and eighth at Lima CC.

The other deep district at his weight class is the one at Defiance, which again typifies the trend overall (Troy and Defiance being the deeper and more talented district tournaments). A group of six ranked wrestlers is led by Morgillo, who qualified for state last year as a freshman, and this season has a fourth at Medina to go with a runner-up at Perrysburg. The junior Keegan is a transfer in from Elyria, and missed the first half of the season; since his return he has lost 12-6 to Ford and by major decision to Morgillo. Next up is the senior Hahn, a district placer last season; he has titles at Lima senior, Van Buren, and Utica before losing to Morgillo in his conference tournament final.

Another senior Saunders is next on the ladder at Defiance with third place finishes at both Defiance and Van Buren on the season. 2015 state qualifier Neiling finished fifth at Defiance and Maumee Bay before placing fourth at Lima CC, while fellow senior Endicott finished fourth at Van Buren and seventh at Lima CC.

Burgard went 1-2 at this weight class at state last year as a sophomore and has been most excellent splitting time between this and the 145 weight class. He finished third at Solon and fifth at the Top Gun up a weight class, while in this weight class missed placement at Brecksville by a match and took third at Lima CC. He is joined by just two ranked wrestlers at Garfield Hts, returning state qualifier Marthey and returning district placer Rowland. The sophomore Marthey was fourth at North Canton, while the junior Rowland was runner-up at Milan Edison and Nelsonville-York.

Lastly the Heath district features just one ranked wrestler in 2016 state qualifier Scott, a senior who has three tournament titles on the season to go with a runner-up at Benjamin Logan and a fifth at Marion Harding. Also present in this weight class is returning state qualifier Heller.

#### *145 pounds*

1. Logan Kissell, Garrettsville Garfield, senior (Garfield Hts)
2. Conan Becker, Galion Northmor, senior (Heath)
3. Gavin Grime, Archbold, senior (Defiance)
4. Hugo Villarreal, Gibsonburg, senior (Defiance)
5. Joey Caprella, Lima Central Catholic, junior (Troy)
6. Chase Sumner, Ada, senior (Troy)
7. Austin Eick, Rossford, senior (Defiance)
8. Henry Danishek, Dayton Christian, senior (Troy)
9. Nate Vasquez, Fremont SJCC, senior (Defiance)
10. Zane Strubler, Miami East, senior (Troy)
11. Dylan Schenck, Milton Union, junior (Troy)
12. Andrew Hardenbrook, Columbiana Crestview, senior (Garfield Hts)
13. Brennan Shirley, Tuslaw, junior (Garfield Hts)
14. Gage Pachlhofer, Swanton, senior (Defiance)
15. Mason Wright, Wellington, senior (Garfield Hts)
16. Justin Anderson, Wellston, junior (Heath)

DEF – Grime, Villarreal, Eick, Vasquez; Pachlhofer

GHTS – Kissell, Hardenbrook, Shirley, Wright; Tyler Jenkins (Rootstown, senior)

HEA – Becker, Anderson, Hunter Gilbert (Belpre, junior), Zon Corbett (Coshocton, senior); Anthony Sanders (Newcomerstown, senior)

TROY – Caprella, Sumner, Danishek, Strubler; Schenck

Three-time state placer Kissell has finished seventh, sixth, and third at the state tournament and seeks to cap off what has been an excellent career to date with a state title. Last year he was my projected state champion at 132, but was derailed by a 4-1 quarterfinal defeat against Isbrandt. During the current season he was champion at Solon and placed eighth at the Beast.

His district at Garfield Hts should be relatively straight forward with three other ranked wrestlers present, all in the double digits. Leading the way is the senior Hardenbrook, who placed third at the EOWL and fourth at the OVAC. The junior Shirley was fifth at North Canton before failing to place at Brecksville and the Top Gun, while the senior Wright was champion at Avon Lake and third at Bellevue.

Two of the challengers to Kissell each placed sixth in last year's state tournament, seniors Villarreal and Becker, for each of whom it was a second state tournament podium finish. Becker is the number two ranked wrestler in this weight class, and on the season was fourth at Medina before winning titles at the Gorman and Marion Pleasant. Only one other ranked wrestler joins him at the Heath district, and that would be the junior Anderson, who has a pair of tournament titles on the season.

Villarreal is one of five ranked wrestlers at the Defiance district, three of whom are returning state qualifiers. Villarreal was runner-up at Perrysburg with titles at Van Buren and Wapakoneta on the season. However, it is fellow senior and returning state placer Grime who is the top ranked wrestler at this district; on the season he was champion at Maumee Bay in this weight class, while finishing third at Defiance up one weight class. Also a returning state qualifier is fellow senior Eick, who has titles at Marion Harding and his conference, along with a 3-2 dual meet win over two-time state qualifier Strubler. Another senior Vasquez is next on the ladder, and he was champion at Northwood, runner-up at Lima CC, and eighth at Maumee Bay; while 2015 state qualifier Pachthofer rounds out the group with runner-up finishes at Northwood and Van Buren, missing placement by a match at Defiance, and a semifinal appearance at Lima CC.

The Troy district is also deep with five ranked wrestlers, including three possessing state tournament experience. However, the top ranked wrestler here is the junior Caprella, a returning state alternate. It's been an excellent season as he has titles at five tournaments to his credit: Allen County up at 152; Defiance, CIT, Lima CC, and Tiffin Calvert in this weight. Two-time state placer Sumner was third at Lima Senior and champion of his conference tournament; 2016 state qualifier Danishek has three tournament titles to his credit, including one at Milton Union, while finishing runner-up twice competing at 152. Fellow senior Strubler, a two-time state qualifier was champion at Tippecanoe and Troy, while finishing eighth at Medina and third at Lima CC. Rounding it out is the junior Schenck, runner-up to Danishek at Milton Union, third at Eaton, and champion in two tournaments.

### *152 pounds*

1. Gavin Stika, Norwayne, senior (Garfield Hts)
2. Kevin Contos, Genoa, sophomore (Defiance)
3. Chase Moore, Swanton, senior (Defiance)
4. David Cumberledge, Ashtabula St. John, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
5. Conor Becker, Galion Northmor, sophomore (Heath)
6. Dillon Walker, Legacy Christian, freshman (Troy)
7. Wyatt Lefker, Williamsburg, senior (Troy)
8. Billy Luft, Newark Catholic, junior (Heath)
9. Kyle Ryder, Tuslaw, junior (Garfield Hts)

10. Trenton Matthew, Smithville, senior (Garfield Hts)
11. Beau Lefever, Mapleton, junior (Garfield Hts)
12. Hayden Pummel, Indian Lake, freshman (Troy)
13. Ryan Finney, Garrettsville Garfield, senior (Garfield Hts)
14. Trevor Franks, Lakota, sophomore (Defiance)
15. Tyler Ludwig, Van Buren, senior (Defiance)
16. Seth Cade, Richmond Edison, senior (Heath)

DEF – Contos, Moore, Franks, Ludwig; Carlton Roberts (Rossford, sophomore)

GHTS – Stika, Cumberledge, Ryder, Matthew; Lefever, Finney

HEA – Becker, Luft, Cade, Mark Woodard (West Jefferson, senior); Braden Robinson (Union Local, senior)

TROY – Walker, Lefker, Pummel, Kerington Martin (Covington, junior); James Badial-Luna (Bluffton, senior)

After a pair of runner-up finishes in 2013 and 2014, Kollin Moore became Norwayne's first state champion in a 2015 campaign that will be remembered for its absolute dominance. From there he redshirted at Ohio State, and finished third at 197 in 2017; currently he is ranked first nationally. The Bobcats would earn state titles in 2016 and 2017 through Zach Steiner, including last year's state final victory over two-time state champion James Handwerk.

They now have another state title candidate in Stika, who has finished eighth at 106, qualified at 120, and finished third at 138 in three previous state tournament appearances. On the season, he was champion at Smithville, while finishing third at Medina with his only loss coming 1-0 to McIntosh in the opening round. The road to a state title won't be easy, and it starts with a deep district at Garfield Hts that features five other ranked wrestlers.

Leading that pack is the talented sophomore Cumberledge who was upset in the district semifinal last year and then could not bounce back in the consolation semifinal. He would bounce back with a third place finish almost a month later at the NHSCA Freshman Nationals. This season he finished fifth at Brecksville, won the title at Perry, was third at Top Gun, and runner-up at Lima CC. The lone wrestler joining Stika as a returning state qualifier at Garfield Hts is the junior Ryder, who missed the first two-thirds of the season with a football injury. Another returning state alternate is the senior Matthew who was sixth at Medina. Also ranked here are the junior Lefever and the senior Finney; Lefever was runner-up at the Mike Lewis Inviational along with placing third at the Gorman and Marion Harding, while Finney placed third at Solon.

The two other most direct threats to Stika come from returning state placers Contos and Moore at the Defiance district. Contos placed sixth in this weight last year at Division I Oregon Clay, and had to sit out the first half due to transferring, but then had a slight further delay in stepping on the mat; he recently won a title at his conference meet. The senior Moore is a two-time state placer, and this season has titles in four tournaments: Northwood, Defiance, Van Buren, and Lima CC where he beat Cumberledge 3-2. Another pair of wrestlers are ranked at this district, the sophomore Franks and the senior Ludwig, a returning state alternate. Franks was runner-up at Van Buren and seventh at Lima CC, while Ludwig has a pair of tournament titles before placing third at both Van Buren and Tiffin Calvert.

A fourth returning state placer in this weight is the senior Lefker, who placed eighth at this weight last year. On the current season he was champion at Williamsburg, fifth at the GMVWA, and missed placement by one bout at SWOWCA. Only two other wrestlers join him in the rankings at the Troy

district, both being freshmen, Walker and Pummel; on the season Pummel won a title at Mount Vernon before placing sixth at Defiance and eighth at Maumee Bay.

The Heat district features a pair of returning state qualifiers in the sophomore Becker and the junior Luft. Becker placed fourth at Medina in this weight before moving up to 160, where he finished third at the Gorman and won a title at Marion Pleasant; while Luft was runner-up at Licking Valley, fifth at the CIT, and third at Lima CC. The other ranked wrestler from this district is the senior Cade, a returning district placer; this season he was third at the OVAC and prior to that was runner-up at Beaver Local up one weight class.

### *160 pounds*

1. Colt Yinger, Nelsonville-York, senior (Heath)
2. James Limongi, Genoa, junior (Defiance)
3. Forrest Belli, Johnstown Northridge, senior (Heath)
4. Grant Goecke, Ottawa Glandorf, senior (Troy)
5. Santino Kusic, Bridgeport, junior (Heath)
6. Brylan Clouse, Barnesville, junior (Heath)
7. Ryan Marvin, Swanton, junior (Defiance)
8. Dylan Knotts, Indian Lake, senior (Troy)
9. Parker Brown, Mohawk, senior (Defiance)
10. Chris Anderson, Rootstown, freshman (Garfield Hts)
11. Jesse Mitchell, South Charleston Southeastern, senior (Troy)
12. Seth Obringer, Coldwater, senior (Troy)
13. Christian Blank, Ashtabula St. John, junior (Garfield Hts)
14. Brady Jaso, Gibsonburg, junior (Defiance)
15. Stephen Skeens, Tuslaw, senior (Garfield Hts)
16. Derek Duvall, West Salem Northwestern, senior (Garfield Hts)

DEF – Limongi, Marvin, Brown, Jaso; Austn Grubb (Montpelier, senior)

GHTS – Anderson, Blank, Skeens, Duvall; Gavin Davis (Loudonville, sophomore)

HEA – Yinger, Belli, Kusic, Clouse; Charles Smith (Buckeye Local, sophomore)

TROY – Goecke, Knotts, Mitchell, Obringer; Eric Weber (Bidwell River Valley, junior)

The top two contenders in this weight class each were involved in a surprise last year at the state tournament, one to the good, the other not so much. For Yinger, runner-up at state in 2016 as a sophomore, he was expected to win state at 152 pounds; however, Lagoa had other ideas, earning a 6-3 upset victory in the finals. For Limongi, who was a state alternate at 138 as a freshman, he was in and out of the lineup during his sophomore season before getting hot in the back end of the season and winning the state title in this weight class.

Each has wrestled most excellently during this season, losing only to national caliber opposition. Two-time state runner-up Yinger is an Ohio University signee, and his lone loss came to two-time state champion Freeman in the Brecksville final; it was a third runner-up finish for Yinger in that event. During that tournament he pinned Torres and majored Michigan state champion Orrison; since then he has dominated to three titles, including one at Lima CC. The junior Limongi finished seventh at the Ironman losing only to two-time National Prep champion Merola from New Jersey and Freeman, while his other loss came in the Medina final to Carr; notable wins came over Hightower at the Ironman, Ferree in the Medina semi, and Torres in overtime during the final at Perrysburg.

Projected champion Yinger has the stronger challenge pack at his district, as two others at Heath are returning state qualifiers with a third additional wrestler in the rankings. Returning state placer Belli has titles at three tournaments, including one at 170 at New Lexington where he beat two state qualifiers; while he finished fourth at Medina and third at Maumee Bay. The junior Kusic also made state last year, and this season went 3-2 at Brecksville in this weight, while placing fourth at the OVAC up at 170. Also ranked at this district is fellow junior Clouse, a returning state alternate, who was runner-up at Barnesville before placing third at the OVAC and New Lexington.

Returning champion Limongi also has three other ranked wrestlers at Defiance, with only the senior Brown having state experience, making the tournament in 2016 before being an alternate last year. This year Brown was third at Van Buren. Also ranked here are a pair of juniors, Marvin and Jaso. Marvin was champion at Northwood, runner-up at Van Buren, and third at Lima CC while advancing to the quarterfinals at Defiance. Jaso was third at Perrysburg, fifth at Van Buren, and champion at Wapakoneta.

The sixth wrestler in this weight with state experience, and fifth returning state qualifier is the junior Blank; this season he placed fourth at Perry, was in the fifth place bout at Lima CC, and missed placing at the Top Gun by one match. Joining Blank at Garfield Hts are three other ranked wrestlers, the leader of the pack being the freshman Anderson, a junior high state runner-up who missed placement at Brecksville by one match before winning the title at Jackson Milton. Seniors Skeens and Duvall are also ranked in this weight class. Skeens competed at 152 while Ryder was out of the lineup, where he missed a top six finish at North Canton by one match and won two matches at Brecksville; while Duvall was runner-up at Nelsonville-York in the 170 weight class before dropping down here.

Rounding out the weight class is the four ranked wrestlers from the Troy district, including a pair of seniors in Goecke and Knotts who both were state alternates last year. Goecke finished runner-up at both Defiance and Lima CC, along with winning the title at Van Buren; while Knotts was runner-up at Mount Vernon, champion at Bellbrook, and seventh at Maumee Bay. Fellow senior Mitchell was a district placer last year, and this season has titles in three tournaments; while another senior Obringer was champion at Middletown Madison, runner-up at Troy, and fourth at Lima CC.

#### *170 pounds*

1. Jacob Lagoa, Ashtabula St. John, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
2. Riley Smucker, Smithville, senior (Garfield Hts)
3. Brad Mendoza, Gibsonburg, junior (Defiance)
4. Tyler Speelman, Nelsonville-York, senior (Heath)
5. Connor Kwiat, Tiffin Calvert, senior (Defiance)
6. Seth Henderson, Miami Valley Christian Academy, junior (Troy)
7. Sevi Garza, Rittman, freshman (Garfield Hts)
8. Danny Rosales, Ottawa Glandorf, junior (Troy)
9. Dustin Knapp, Mechanicsburg, senior (Troy)
10. Richie Stalnaker, Newark Catholic, senior (Heath)
11. Jackson Dunn, Tuscarawas Valley, senior (Heath)
12. Owen Holtke, Bethel-Tate, senior (Troy)
13. Nick Mroczynski, Independence, senior (Garfield Hts)
14. Ethan Pappas, Richmond Edison, freshman (Heath)
15. Jacob Brewer, Milan Edison, sophomore (Defiance)

16. Seth Moore, Genoa, senior (Defiance)

DEF – Mendoza, Kwait, Brewer, Moore; J.D. Osborn (Delta, junior)  
GHTS – Lagoa, Smucker, Garza, Mroczynski; Kaden Kidd (Norwayne, freshman)  
HEA – Speelman, Stalnaker, Dunn, Pappas; Richard McFarland (Martins Ferry, sophomore)  
TROY – Henderson, Rosales, Knapp, Holtke; Hunter Showalter (Wayne Trace, senior)

Though Lagoa entered high school as a highly known commodity, he really burst on the scene last season when he placed fourth at Brecksville and third at the Top Gun. Then it was the state finals victory over Yinger, after advancing to that point with two technical falls and a fall in earlier matches. This season he reached the quarterfinal at the Ironman with a win over two-time Illinois state placer Jimenez before losing to a nationally ranked wrestler from Missouri (Shannon) and a returning California state placer. He would finish runner-up at Brecksville with a pin over Eyer in the semifinals before winning three tournaments, including the Top Gun and Lima CC.

Ranked second at this weight class is the senior Smucker, who was runner-up at district last year to Lagoa and fourth at state. Also a two-time state placer and NHSCA Junior Nationals placer, he missed the first half-plus of the season due to a football injury; since returning he advanced to the semifinals at Wadsworth. Two other ranked wrestlers are present at Garfield Hts: the freshman Garza, a junior high state runner-up last year, and the senior Mroczynski. Garza has titles at Smithville and Berkshire, while Mroczynski was sixth at the North Coast Classic.

Two other returning state placers reside in this weight class, the junior Mendoza and the senior Speelman. Mendoza leads a group of four ranked wrestlers at Defiance that includes a returning state qualifier in Kwait. On the season Mendoza has tournament titles at Perrysburg, Van Buren, and Wapakoneta; while the senior Kwait has titles at Tiffin Columbian and Tiffin Calvert to go with a runner-up finish at Van Buren and third at Lima CC. Also ranked here are the sophomore Broewer and the senior Moore. Brewer was third at Milan Edison plus has dual meet wins over Knapp and Moore; while Moore was runner-up at Bellevue and third at Perrysburg, along with missing placement at Medina by one match.

Speelman is joined by 2016 state qualifiers Stalnaker and Dunn, who each missed last season due to injury. On the current season Speelman was champion at Nelsonville York and Athens, along with finishing second at Lima CC; fellow senior Stalnaker has a title at Licking Valley and missed top six at the CIT by one match; while Dunn is also a senior. The fourth ranked wrestler at this district tournament is the freshman Pappas, who was champion at Beaver Local and sixth at the OVAC.

Rounding out the district tournaments is one at Troy that features four ranked wrestlers led by the junior Henderson, a returning state qualifier who won titles at North College Hill and Sycamore this season. The other returning state qualifier in this weight class is the junior Rosales, who was seventh at Defiance, third at Van Buren, and fourth at Lima CC. Also ranked here are seniors Knapp and Holtke, who both were district placers last year; Knapp won a title at Milton Union before taking fifth at Lima CC, while Holtke was sixth at SWOWCA up at 182 before dropping down here.

*182 pounds*

1. Logan Stanley, Waynedale, senior (Garfield Hts)
2. Daniel Beemer, Ottawa Glandorf, senior (Troy)
3. Chris Langguth, Rootstown, junior (Garfield Hts)

4. Sam Stoll, Milan Edison, senior (Defiance)
5. Tanner May, Carey, sophomore (Defiance)
6. Will Morrow, Patrick Henry, sophomore (Defiance)
7. Connor Dixon, Indian Lake, senior (Troy)
8. Jake Loar, Tuslaw, junior (Garfield Hts)
9. Garrett Neth, Allen East, sophomore (Troy)
10. Damon Beatty, Troy Christian, senior (Troy)
11. Xavier Beach, Genoa, senior (Defiance)
12. Cameron Vanbrunt, Orrville, senior (Garfield Hts)
13. Aidan Loveridge, Riverdale, senior (Defiance)
14. Matthew Welker, Miami East, junior (Troy)
15. Garrett Duncan, Bridgeport, senior (Heath)
16. Chris Cox-Wilson, North Union, junior (Heath)

DEF – Stoll, May, Morrow, Beach; Loveridge

GHTS – Stanley, Langguth, Loar, Vanbrunt; Anthony Czap (South Range, sophomore)

HEA – Duncan, Cox-Wilson, Brice Berger (Danville, senior), Drake Dobson (Martins Ferry, junior); Korey Pytlarz (Marion Pleasant, senior)

TROY – Beemer, Dixon, Neth, Beatty; Welker

Before Beemer stepped onto the mats at Ottawa Glandorf, the school more known for its prowess in basketball had one state placer in program history, a wrestler that placed seventh. The previous two years saw Beemer fifth in this weight as a sophomore and fourth up at 195 last season. Now he is in position to become the school's first state finalist and/or champion.

Beemer leads the way at a very strong Troy district that features four other ranked wrestlers, two of whom advanced to the state tournament last year. Fellow senior Dixon qualified at 160 in Division II, and this season won titles at Mount Vernon and Maumee Bay, with a third place at Defiance and a second at Bellbrook. The other returning state qualifier is another senior In Beatty, who was sixth at the GMVWA, champion at Licking Valley, and fourth at Lima CC. Also ranked here are the sophomore Neth and the junior Welker, a returning state alternate. Neth has been most excellent winning two tournaments, while finishing runner-up at Sidney and Marion Harding, with third place finishes at Van Buren and Lima CC losing to May on both occasions. Welker was runner-up at Troy and sixth at Lima CC.

However, the projected state champion is another senior in Stanley, who placed third at 170 last year. If that name is familiar, it's because the Waynedale head coach Louie Stanley is his uncle. On the season, Stanley has multiple tournament titles, including one at Cuyahoga Hts where he majored state placer Wokojance in the final. His district at Garfield Hts features three other ranked wrestlers, including returning state placer Langguth, who has placed at both the Beast of the East (sixth at 195) and Brecksville (third) this season; Langguth is 2-1 against two-time state placer Stoll, winning a pair at Brecksville before losing 3-2 in a dual meet at SMCC. Also ranked here is fellow junior Loar, a returning district placer, along with the senior Vanbrunt. Loar spent most of the season at 195 where he was fourth at North Canton and fifth at the Top Gun, while Vanbrunt was champion at Coshocton and seventh at the Gorman.

Wrestlers ranked fourth through sixth exit the Defiance district. Two-time state placer Stoll was champion at Milan Edison up a weight class and fourth at Brecksville in this weight class; the sophomore May placed sixth at state in this weight class last year, and this season was champion at Bellevue before

finishing runner-up to Beemer at Van Buren and Lima CC; while Morrow also qualified for state in this weight last year as a freshman, and this season finished runner-up at Defiance and fourth at Maumee Bay up at 195 before making the drop.

Two other wrestlers are ranked at Defiance, and they'll be after the fourth state spot, with both being seniors. Retuning state alternate Beach was sixth at Medina and fifth at Perrysburg, while Loveridge was champion at Northwood.

Rounding it out is a Heath district that features just two ranked wrestlers: the senior Duncan, a returning state qualifier; along with the junior Cox-Wilson, who was champion at North Union and runner-up at Marion Pleasant.

### *195 pounds*

1. Dalton Hoover, Martins Ferry, senior (Heath)
2. Hudson Jump, Grandview Hts, junior (Heath)
3. Ryan Boyle, Rootstown, junior (Garfield Hts)
4. Dylan Hinton, Elmwood, senior (Defiance)
5. Dylan Rogers, Delta, senior (Defiance)
6. Deandre Nassar, Bluffton, junior (Troy)
7. Josh Pearson, Columbus Academy, senior (Heath)
8. Nick Shepard, Fairless, senior (Garfield Hts)
9. Jacob Campbell, Black River, senior (Garfield Hts)
10. Zach Banks, Middletown Madison, senior (Troy)
11. Gage DeHart, Versailles, senior (Troy)
12. Ty Straits, Waynedale, senior (Garfield Hts)
13. Cole Mefford, Indian Lake, senior (Troy)
14. Colton Campbell, Ashland Crestview, senior (Defiance)
15. Landon Talbert, Columbiana Crestview, senior (Garfield Hts)
16. Crew Oberheim, Swanton, senior (Defiance)

DEF – Hinton, Rogers, Campbell, Oberheim; Micah Ritter (Edgerton, junior)

GHTS – Boyle, Shepard, Campbell, Straits; Talbert

HEA – Hoover, Jump, Pearson, Mason Wiley (Caldwell, junior); Colton Snyder (Nelsonville-York, freshman)

TROY – Nassar, Banks, DeHart, Mefford; Craig Montgomery (Troy Christian, sophomore)

Martins Ferry last saw state gold in 2004 when Clay Tucker won gold at 130 pounds as part of a career that saw him place at state four times. Two-time state placer Hoover, a signee at Northern Illinois seeks to get them off that schneid. In 2016 he lost 3-2 to Will Bolanz in the state final at this weight class, while last year it was a 4-3 loss in the ultimate tiebreaker in the semifinal to Logan Hall that derailed his title run. This season the all-state football player is undefeated with titles at Brecksville, the OVAC, and New Lexington.

His most direct threat will come from a fellow two-time state placer in the junior Jump, who also exits the district at Heath. On the season Jump has tournament at titles at Olentangy Liberty and Marion Pleasant, while finishing third at the Top Gun. The other ranked wrestler at this district is 2016 state qualifier Pearson, a senior who was champion at East Knox and runner-up at Marion Harding this season, along with losing by fall to Jump in a dual meet.

Wrestlers ranked third and fourth are both seniors and exit the district at Defiance. Returning state placer Hinton placed fourth at Medina, and also bumped up to 220 to beat returning state placer Bever; while 2016 state qualifier Rogers had to bow out in his go-to-state match last year due to injury. This season the senior Rogers has runner-up finishes at North Canton, Perrysburg (3-1 to Hinton) and Maumee Bay to go with a third at Delaware Hayes. Two other ranked wrestlers are present at this district, in fellow seniors Campbell of Ashland Crestview and Oberheim. Campbell was third at Kenston and sixth at the Gorman, while returning state qualifier Oberheim was champion at Northwood and missed placement at Defiance by a single match.

Three returning state qualifiers will exit the district at Garfield Hts, including the junior Boyle, who placed fourth last year at 220 pounds. He has spent most the season at 220, where he placed sixth at the Beast and fourth at Brecksville before making the drop into this weight class. Also here are seniors Campbell of Black River and Shepard, who each won a state tournament bout last year. Campbell was fourth at the Gorman this year, while Shepard was champion at Smithville. Two other ranked wrestlers are in the hunt for a fourth state spot at this district, both seniors, Straits and Talbert. On the season Talbert has runner-up finishes at the OVAC and EOWL meets. Look for some others to possibly find a home up or down in weight, where picking up that fourth state spot is more realistic.

Rounding it out is a district at Troy that features two returning state qualifiers among four ranked wrestlers. Seniors Nassar and Banks both qualified for state last year in this weight, though Banks did so in Division II. Nassar has three tournament titles this year, including a win over Morrow in the Defiance final, along with a runner-up finish at Van Buren; Banks counters with two tournament titles, a runner-up finish at Bellbrook, and a third at Middletown. Also ranked here are seniors DeHart and returning district placer Mefford; DeHart most notably has a fifth place finish at Maumee Bay, where Mefford placed eighth, while Mefford also won a tournament title at Bellbrook up in the 220 weight class.

#### *220 pounds*

1. Gaige Willis, Pymatuning Valley, senior (Garfield Hts)
2. Paul Skye, Mogadore, senior (Garfield Hts)
3. Chris Kuhn, Sandusky SMCC, senior (Defiance)
4. Noah Price, Fremont SJCC, junior (Defiance)
5. Donovan McCollister, Nelsonville-York, junior (Heath)
6. Crawford Hamrick, Tuslaw, senior (Garfield Hts)
7. Brenden Dalton, Miami East, junior (Troy)
8. Caleb Carpenter, Liberty Center, junior (Defiance)
9. C.J. Novotny, Crestwood, senior (Garfield Hts)
10. River Pappas, Richmond Edison, junior (Heath)
11. Seth Bailey, Plymouth, senior (Defiance)
12. Dalton Richard, junior (Defiance)
13. Jake Sage, Oak Harbor, junior (Defiance)
14. Bradley Lewis, Bethel-Tate, senior (Troy)
15. Jarrett Palmer, West Muskingum, sophomore (Heath)
16. Nick Baker, Troy Christian, junior (Troy)

DEF – Kuhn, Price, Carpenter, Bailey; Richard, Sage

GHTS – Willis, Skye, Hamrick, Novotny; Sam Auble (Orrville, senior)

HEA – McCollister, Pappas, Palmer, Jamie Baisden (Marion Pleasant, senior); Seth Johnson (Tuscarawas Valley, senior)

TROY – Dalton, Lewis, Baker, Dylan Sargeant (Columbus Grove, sophomore); Ty Steveson (Preble Shawnee, sophomore)

Prior to the Edinboro signee Willis starting his high school career, Pymatuning Valley never had a placer at the state wrestling tournament. He placed eighth as a freshman at 170 in 2015 before losing 7-1 to Handwerk in the 2016 state final. Since that loss, Willis was an undefeated 46-0 to win state at 195 last year, and remains undefeated in this season. He has three shutout victories in tournament finals over returning state qualifier Meaney (Riverside, Kenston, and the EOWL), while picking up a 3-1 overtime victory over Stein in the EOWL semifinal.

The only other state placer in this weight is the senior Skye, who placed eighth last year after finishing sixth in 2016. He'll be at the Garfield Hts district along with Willis; on the season he has titles at Coshocton and the Hephner, and has a dual meet win over Boyle. Also ranked in this district weight class are fellow seniors Hamrick and Novotny. Returning state alternate Hamrick was sixth at Brecksville and third at the Top Gun. Novotny placed third at Solon and Kenston in this weight class, before making a drop down to 195; however, the smart money suggests a move back up to this weight with Boyle making the drop down.

The next two wrestlers in the rankings are returning state qualifeirs Kuhn and Price, who both exit the Defiance district. The senior Kuhn was runner-up at Bellevue and the Gorman, along with winning titles at Toledo St. John and Van Buren; while the junior Price was runner-up at Maumee Bay and Lima CC, along with a runner-up finish at Northwood in the 285 pound class.

Four additional ranked wrestlers exit this district tournament, including the junior Carpenter, a returning state qualifier. The senior Bailey has tournament titles at Arcadia and Plymouth; the junior Richard placed sixth at North Canton, fifth at Perrysburg, and fourth at Delaware Hayes this season; while fellow junior Sage is a returning state alternate, with a third at Bellevue and sixth at Lima CC on the resume.

The sixth contender with state tournament experience is the junior McCollister, who this season has tournament titles at Nelsonville-York and Lima CC, along with a runner-up finish at Athens and missing placement by a match at Brecksville. He exits a Heath district that features just two other ranked wrestlers in returning district placers Pappas and Palmer, both of whom are also underclassmen. On the season, the junior Pappas was champion at Beaver Local.

There are only three ranked wrestlers, none with state experience at the Troy district. The group is led by the junior Dalton, a returning state alternate who finished seventh at Medina and third at Lima CC along with picking up titles at Tippecanoe and Troy. The senior Lewis placed eighth at SWOWCA; while the junior Baker was eighth at the GMVWA and fourth at both Licking Valley and Lima CC.

#### *285 pounds*

1. Brian Stearns, Williamsburg, senior (Troy)
2. Hunter Bodkin, Martins Ferry, senior (Heath)
3. Derrick Elrod, Ashtabula St. John, senior (Garfield Hts)
4. Brayden Phillips, Tuslaw, senior (Garfield Hts)
5. Thomas Lytle, Swanton, senior (Defiance)
6. Ben Farrar, Waynedale, senior (Garfield Hts)

7. Lane Fry, Ashland Crestview, senior (Defiance)
8. Pat Sheridan, VASJ, senior (Garfield Hts)
9. Joe Warren, Smithville, junior (Garfield Hts)
10. Josh Robinson, Shadyside, senior (Heath)
11. Jeffrey Ware, Versailles, senior (Troy)
12. Thomas Schweiterman, Coldwater, senior (Troy)
13. Mitchell Hurlbut, Fredericktown, senior (Heath)
14. Kade Clark, Union Local, senior (Heath)
15. Dylan Thompson, North Union, junior (Heath)
16. Noah Koch, Genoa, junior (Defiance)

DEF – Lytle, Fry, Koch, C.J. McCrimmon (Sandusky SMCC, senior); Kain Brossic (Elmwood, junior)

GHTS – Elrod, Phillips, Farrar, Sheridan; Warren

HEA – Bodkin, Robinson, Hurlbut, Clark; Thompson

TROY – Stearns, Ware, Schweiterman, Joey Groeber (Clermont Northeastern, senior); Jeff Meyer (Ottawa Glandorf, freshman)

The last of the 42 weight classes to be written with commentary, as is almost always the case, is Division III heavyweight. This may also be one of the easiest weight classes from which to pick a projected state champion, and it's interesting that the big guys in both Division II and Division III will arguably be high point value picks for those that do confidence-based contests.

The senior Stearns placed fourth in this state weight last year, losing in overtime in the consolation final after suffering a loss by fall to eventual state runner-up Derek Smith in the opening round. On this season, he has titles at both SWOWCA and the GMVWA, with a win over a pair of Division I projected state placers in each tournament.

Just two other ranked wrestlers join him at the Troy district in fellow seniors Ware and Schweiterman. Ware has tournament titles at Sidney and Valley to go with a fourth at the GMVWA and a seventh at Maumee Bay. Schweiterman won gold at Middletown Madison, while finishing second at Troy and third at Lima CC.

Ranked second in this state weight is three-time state qualifier Bodkin, who had competed all three prior years at 220, including an eighth place finish in 2016. This season has seen him win titles at Barnesville, Brecksville, and the OVAC; he has a pair of wins over state placers and another one over a returning state qualifier. Four other ranked wrestlers are present at the Heath district, which is something of a rarity for the tournament. Leading the group is the senior Robinson, who was fifth at Barnesville and fourth at the OVAC. Fellow senior Hurlbut has three tournament titles, including one at North Union over Thompson, to go with a third at East Knox and a runner-up at the Gorman.

Another senior in Clark is a returning district placer, and was runner-up at Barnesville and Coshocton before missing placement by one match at the OVAC. A fifth ranked wrestler is the junior Thompson, who has runner-up finishes at North Union and Marion Pleasant to go with a third at Tiptecanoe.

Five ranked wrestlers also exit the Garfield Hts district, where there will truly be an open competition for each of the four state spots. Presently top of the ladder is the senior Elrod, a returning district placer, who recently won the title at Lima CC; before that he was third at Top Gun and missed placement at Brecksville by one match. Next up is returning state placer Phillips, who was third at North Canton

following that up with a 2-2 mark at Brecksville and missing placement at Top Gun by one match. Returning district champion Sheridan is another senior, who this season was third at the North Coast Classic and CIT before winning a pair of tournaments. The junior Warren qualified for state last year from the alternate position; this season was champion at Smithville, runner-up at Washington C.H. and Wadsworth, along with placing fourth at Medina.

Finally, it's the district tournament at Defiance that features three ranked wrestlers, with the senior Lytle the only one to previously qualify for state. This season he has three tournament titles, including those at Northwood and Van Buren, before placing second at Lima CC. Fellow senior Fry has also been excellent this season placing second at Kenston, winning the Gorman, and finishing fifth at New Lexington. The junior Koch is our last ranked wrestler to write about, and his season includes a third at Bellevue, and eighth at Medina, and a runner-up finish at Perrysburg.