

Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to read the *State Tournament Predictions Report*. As I embark on year number sixteen – 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 fifteen years have went in predictions, as well as the current landscape in Ohio high school wrestling.

Unlike the previous three years, there is only one wrestler seeking to win their fourth state title at the upcoming state tournament. That would be Dylan D'Emilio (Genoa) in Division II. There are three additional Class of 2019 wrestlers seeking a third state title, Bryce Andonian (St. Edward) as well as Jacob and Jordan Decatur (CVCA).

Prior to 2016, 27 wrestlers in all had reached the state tournament with three state titles in hand, all 27 took home a fourth. However, in each of the last three years, there has been a wrestler seeking a fourth state title to be denied that feat at the state tournament. In 2016, Tyler Warner (Claymont) was upset in the state semifinal 6-4 at 120 pounds in Division II; in 2017, Kyle Lawson (Olentangy Liberty) lost a 3-2 decision in the quarterfinals at 160 pounds in Division I; while in 2018 Tommy Hoskins (Legacy Christian) was upset by Cole Mattin (Delta), losing a 4-2 overtime decision in the state semifinal at 126 pounds in Division III.

It should be noted that in 2016, Alex Marinelli (St. Paris Graham) did win his fourth state title; while in 2017, Kaleb Romero (Mechanicsburg) earned a fourth state title; and in 2018, David Carr (Massillon Perry) and Mitch Moore (St. Paris Graham) were successful in their quests to earn a fourth state title.

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.

Sixteen returning state champions are slated to compete in the state tournament series this year, a number that increases to 19 if you count for titles won in a year prior to 2018. In the last twelve years, the 16 defending state champions is joint third lowest (2011 also had 16, while 2009 and 2015 had 15 each); while the 19 defending and/or previous state champions is also joint third lowest (2009 had 17, 2013 had 8, 2011 and 2015 also had 19)

As of the rankings published on February 6th by InterMat, there are 26 Ohio wrestlers within the top 20 of their weight classes nationally. It includes at least one wrestler in 12 of the 14 weight classes, including each one from 106 through 182, while no wrestlers are ranked at either 195 or 220. Nine are ranked in the top five nationally, led by three ranked No. 1 at their respective weight classes: Jordan Decatur (CVCA) at 132, Connor Brady (Olentangy Liberty) at 160, and Carson Kharchla (Olentangy Liberty) at 170.

Unlike last year, two of the individual divisions actually have team title races present. Genoa is prohibitively favored to repeat as state champions in Division III, as they return six wrestlers that placed inside the top three at the state tournament last year as well as a seventh wrestler that placed at state in 2017. The only thing worth watching will be if the Comets can approach the Division III state meet points record of 162 set by Troy Christian in 2008.

While in Division II, St. Paris Graham will be seeking to extend their eighteen year streak of state titles another year, and make it a 21st individual tournament championship overall. Of interest is that the margin between first and second the last four years has been greater than 100 points, while only three time during Graham's streak the margin has been less than 40 (39 in 2001, 37.5 in 2002, and 38 in 2014). In addition, the two lowest point totals in this streak were 114.5 in 2001 and 139.5 in 2002. However, there will be a host of teams within contact of the Falcons this year, many of whom exit the Alliance district.

Division I features a clear two-team battle between St. Edward and Cincinnati LaSalle. The Eagles have won four consecutive individual state tournament titles, seven of eight, and 20 of the last 22. On the other hand, the last southwest district Division I team to finish as even state runner-up was Cincinnati Moeller in 2007. No southwest district team has won a state title in the big-school division or when the state tournament was single class, only four others even were runners-up (Xenia in 1986 Class AAA, Huber Hts. Wayne in 1999, then Cincinnati Moeller in 2000 and 2001).

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)

2018 – DI 9/14, DII 8/14, DIII 7/14 (TOTAL = 24)

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

2nd- 114, 3rd- 56, 4th- 21, 5th- 13, 6th- 5, 7th- 3, 8th- 3, 9th- 2, 10th- 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

accurate 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 2nd, with publication done on February 8th, 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. It is also important to note the impact of the JakesWrestling database, without which a report of this meticulous nature could not be done.

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 7th through 9th.

*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

With this being the second year of the enrollment cycle, there were mostly minor changes within the district compositions. The only significant change will come in Division I. The all-northeast district remains at North Canton Hoover, but there is a change in sectional composition (the Brecksville sectional returns to the all-district, which is how things were in 2017; while the Willoughby South sectional returns to the mixed district (hosted in the northeast, at Mentor).

Like last year, and unlike the previous couple of years, all northeast district teams are in the six northeast district sectionals, as opposed to some teams being moved to the two northwest sectionals. Like last year, 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 the Central district sectional that feeds to the mixed district hosted by the northeast.

The mixed district this year is at Mentor, and will feature two northeast district sectionals (those hosted by Westlake and Willoughby South), 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 are unchanged from last year. There is an all-northeast district (4 sectionals) and a mixed district hosted by the northwest (3 NW sectionals, 1 NE sectional). The southeast district remains with two sectionals, one that goes to the Wilmington district (SW) and one that goes to the Heath district (this year Central, previous year East). The Wilmington district features three SW district sectionals and one SE district sectional; while the district at Heath features one Central district sectional, two East district sectionals, and one SE district sectional.

Division III remains the same across the board as well. 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. The mixed central/east/southeast district (hosted by Buckeye Local in the East) features two central district sectionals, an all-East district sectional, and a mixed sectional in the East featuring teams from the East and Southeast. The mixed district hosted by the southwest features one NW district sectional, two SW district sectionals, and a mixed sectional in the SW featuring teams from the SW and SE.

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)

2018: 108-109, 49.8% (overall); 56-53, 51.4% (championship only); 10 (two-and-out)

2017: 126-105, 54.5%; 61-50, 55.0%; 8

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

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

DIV I - Combined Northeast (2)/Northwest (1)/Northwest & Central (1) <Mentor>

2018: 114-95, 54.5% (overall); 65-51, 56.0% (championship only); 14 (two-and-out)

2017: 96-100, 49.0%; 61-50, 55.0%; 18

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 similar composition to 2017, but are still different than any year from 2015-2018 because of the inclusion of a Central district sectional (2018/2019). The Wadsworth sectional is in the all-northeast district for a third straight year, while the Brecksville sectional returns to the all-northeast district as it was in 2015-2017, with the Willoughby South sectional back in the combined district as it was in 2017 after being in the all-northeast district for 2015/2016/2018

DIV I - All Southwest (Kettering Fairmont)

2018: 112-104, 51.9% (overall); 54-52, 50.9% (championship only); 12 (two-and-out)

2017: 101-110, 47.9%; 46-55, 45.5%; 13

2016: 88-112, 44.0%; 31-56, 35.6%; 18

2015: 77-118, 39.5%; 31-55, 36.0%; 21

DIV I - All Central (Hilliard Darby)

2018: 86-112, 43.4% (overall); 35-54, 39.3% (championship only); 20 (two-and-out)

2017: 97-105, 48.0%; 42-54, 43.8%; 17

2016: 100-103, 49.3%; 47-52, 47.5%; 17

2015: 111-105, 51.4%; 53-53, 50.0%; 9

DIV II - All Northeast (Alliance)

2018: 125-96, 56.6% (overall); 69-48, 59.0% (championship only); 7 (two-and-out)

2017: 128-97, 56.9%; 66-51, 56.4%; 8

2016: 104-114, 47.7%; 45-54, 45.5%; 11

2015: 115-111, 50.9%; 56-54 50.9%; 10

DIV II - Combined Central (1)/East (2)/Southeast (1) <now Heath>

2018: 99-109, 47.6% (overall); 43-56, 43.4% (championship only); 19 (two-and-out)

2017: 88-111, 44.2%; 42-55, 43.3%; 13

2016: 84-106, 44.2%; 46-54, 46.0%; 17

2015: 79-111, 41.6%; 33-53, 38.4%; 22

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

DIV II – primary Northwest district (Norwalk)

2018: 96-120, 44.4% (overall); 37-56, 39.8% (overall); 15 (two-and-out)

2017: 108-111, 49.3%; 51-55, 48.1%; 14

2016: 122-104, 54.0%; 64-53, 54.7%; 10

2015: 113-104, 52.1%; 55-53, 50.9%; 12

NOTE: 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)

2018: 100-95, 51.3% (overall); 61-50, 55.0% (championship only); 15 (two-and-out)

2017: 96-101, 48.7%; 51-49, 51.0%; 21

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

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

NOTE: 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)

2018: 98-109, 47.3% (overall); 53-52, 50.5% (championship only); 19 (two-and-out)

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

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

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

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

2018: 91-107, 46.0% (overall); 43-54, 44.3% (championship only); 19 (two-and-out)

2017: 77-113, 40.5%; 35-55, 38.9%; 23

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

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

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

Note: For 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 for 2018 and this year it is 3 SW and 1 NW sectional, though the third SW sectional will feature half of the SE district teams

2018: 106-105, 50.2% (overall); 49-52, 48.5% (championship only); 10 (two-and-out)

2017: 120-101, 54.3%; 65-52, 55.6%; 6

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

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

DIV III - All Northwest (now Kansas Lakota)

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

2018: 125-99, 55.8% (overall); 65-52, 55.6% (championship only); 8 (two-and-out)

2017: 119-98, 54.8%; 62-50, 55.4%; 9

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

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

DIVISION I

106 pounds

1. Cole Skinner, Cincinnati LaSalle, sophomore (K. Fairmont)
2. Pacey Nasdusak, Mason, junior (K. Fairmont)
3. Sean Seefeldt, St. Edward, sophomore (Mentor)
4. *Kollin Howard, Maple Hts., junior (Hoover)*
5. Peyton Fenton, Elyria, freshman (Mentor)
6. Mason Brugh, Wadsworth, freshman (Hoover)
7. Cael Saxton, Avon, sophomore (Mentor)
8. Johnny Novak, St. Ignatius, junior (Hoover)
9. Marlon Yarbrough, Copley, sophomore (Hoover)
10. Pito Castro, Brecksville, freshman (Hoover)
11. C.J. Bell, Solon, senior (Hoover)
12. Jake Vayo-Smith, Sycamore, senior (K. Fairmont)
13. Corey Haney, Medina Highland, freshman (Hoover)
14. Drew Dulcie, Massillon Perry, freshman (Hoover)
15. Dylan Le, Dublin Scioto, sophomore (H. Darby)
16. Thomas Cassetty, Uniontown Lake, freshman (Hoover)
17. Tony Pendergraff, Oregon Clay, junior (Mentor)

HDAR – Le, Jacob Hutsler (Lancaster, sophomore), Spencer Parker-Gordon (Worthington Kilbourne, sophomore), Sky Wisecarver (Tri-Valley, senior); Jake Thomas (Upper Arlington, sophomore)

HOOV – *Howard*, Brugh, Novak, Yarbrough, Castro; Bell, Haney, Dulcie, Cassetty

KF – Skinner, Nasdusak, Vayo-Smith, Nic Schul (Fairfield, senior); A.J. Hurt (Western Brown, sophomore)

MEN – Seefeldt, Fenton, Saxton, Pendergraff; Carlo Santoro (Mayfield, freshman)

Though there is a perception of the opening weight class being one for the freshmen, the last eight years in Division I have seen six non-freshmen win state titles. The lone freshmen to win were Bryce Andonian (St. Edward) in 2016 and Julian Tagg (Brecksville) in 2017. In fact, last year's champion was a senior, Zach Shupp (Fairfield). Most of the primary contenders this year are non-freshmen.

Leading the way is a clear favorite in Skinner, a sophomore who qualified for the Cadet World team in freestyle at 42 kilos (92.5) pounds in the summer before his ninth grade year. Said ninth grade year was rather circuitous with Skinner spending the first semester mostly training out of state, while participating in online classes. He competed in one mid-season event at Middletown Madison (a Division III school), but ended up unable to compete in the post-season due to ECOT going belly up.

Transferring to LaSalle in the spring before the new transfer bylaw went into effect, he sat out the first half of the Lancers' schedule before returning to win championships at the Escape the Rock and Grizzly Invitational tournaments, the latter of which came at 113 pounds. The second ranked wrestler is the junior Nasdusak, who placed seventh in this weight class last year and joins Skinner in exiting the Kettering Fairmont district.

On the season, Nasdusak was runner-up at the Grappler Gold Invitational losing to a nationally ranked wrestler from Michigan, fifth at the Powerade, and champion at Delaware Hayes. Just one other ranked wrestler exits this district, returning state alternate Vayo-Smith, who was runner-up at SWOWCA and has placed top four in three other tournaments.

With Division I being so much about the St. Edward vs. LaSalle battle for the title, turn our attention to the sophomore Seefeldt, a Cadet freestyle All-American this summer. Last year he was on the bench, while fellow Class of 2021 wrestler Delsanter placed fifth for the Eagles in this weight class. On the season he missed placement at the Ironman by one match and was eighth at the Powerade. At the Ironman, Seefeldt picked up a victory over the freshman Fenton, whom is ranked second among wrestlers at the Mentor district. On the season, Fenton failed to place at the Ironman before finishing third at both Brecksville and Maumee Bay.

Two other ranked wrestlers reside at this district, the sophomore Saxton and the junior Pendergraff, each of whom won one district tournament match last year. On the season, Saxton lost twice to Fenton in taking fourth at Brecksville, while winning titles at Bellevue (competing at 113) and the Bill Dies; Pendergraff placed fourth at Fairfield and sixth at Maumee Bay.

The deepest of the district tournaments in this weight class is at Hoover where either eight or nine ranked wrestlers will be present. Potentially leading the list is returning district champion Howard, who went 1-2 at state last year as a sophomore; however he has (almost) exclusively competed at 113 this season. Next on the ladder here is the freshman Brugh, who was one match away from placing at Ironman, was runner-up at North Canton, and finished third at both Medina and the Grizzly Invitational. Returning state alternate Novak won titles at Solon and the North Coast Classic before taking sixth at Brecksville and third at the CIT. Next up is the talented but markedly undersized Yarbrough, the sophomore placed fifth in Cadet freestyle at 88 pounds this past summer; on the season he was fifth at Medina.

Four freshmen – three of them junior high state placers – will be among those seeking to take a state spot away from the above at Hoover. Castro missed the first half of the year due to injury, but has taken second at the Bill Dies and fourth at the Brooke (WV) Classic since returning; Haney was third at Solon, fourth at Olentangy Liberty and Medina, and champion at West Holmes; while Dulcie won the Mike Lewis Invitational before taking third at Top Gun and Delaware Hayes. The senior Bell was runner-up at Solon and the North Coast Classic before taking seventh at Brecksville and (at 113) Maumee Bay, while another freshmen in Cassetty placed at North Canton, Maumee Bay, and the Hephner.

Last but not least is the Hilliard Darby district, which features just one ranked wrestler in this weight class; yes, the lack of depth at this district will be an apparent trend in these weight class overviews. That lone ranked wrestler is the sophomore Le, who went 2-2 at district last year, and this season was champion at Olentangy and Dublin Scioto while placing top four at three other tournaments.

113 pounds

1. Logan Agin, Lancaster, junior (H. Darby)
2. Dustin Norris, Cincinnati LaSalle, sophomore (K. Fairmont)
3. Jacob Moon, Oregon Clay, sophomore (Mentor)
4. Richard Delsanter, St. Edward, sophomore (Mentor)
5. Jack Stanley, Brecksville, senior (Hoover)
6. Pino Dipiero, Berea-Midpark, junior (Hoover)
7. William Doepker, Cincinnati Elder, junior (K. Fairmont)
8. Bailey Suddeth, Vandalia Butler, senior (K. Fairmont)
9. *Kollin Howard, Maple Hts., junior (Hoover)*
10. Colin Roberts, Austintown Fitch, sophomore (Hoover)

11. Mikey Lewarchik, Wadsworth, sophomore (Hoover)
12. Dominic Ditullio, Mason, sophomore (K. Fairmont)
13. Bryce Allison, Elyria, junior (Mentor)
14. Lucas Acuna, Centerville, freshman (K. Fairmont)
15. Cristian Salazar, Gahanna Lincoln, senior (H. Darby)
16. *James Baumann, Dublin Coffman, sophomore (H. Darby)*
17. Andrew Newkirk, Fairfield, junior (K. Fairmont)
18. Chris Rocha, Painesville Riverside, sophomore (Mentor)

HDAR – Agin, Salazar, *Baumann*, Gabe Ohle (Westerville North, sophomore), Zander Graham (Teays Valley, freshman); Muhammed Conteh (Groveport-Madison, junior)

HOOV – Stanley, Dipiero, *Howard*, Roberts, Lewarchik; Jacob Hamad (Nordononia, senior)

KF – Norris, Doepker, Suddeth, Ditullio; Acuna, Newkirk

MEN – Moon, Delsanter, Allison, Rocha; Jerome Scott (John Adams, junior)

The top three wrestlers in this weight class have all had meaningful success at national caliber events within the last eighteen months, and it's hard to differentiate between them. At the Super 32 Challenge this fall, Agin placed fifth with a pin over Moon and two wins over Junior National freestyle champion Cullan Schriever of Iowa; while Moon and Norris both missed placement by one bout (Moon was eliminated 3-0 by a nationally ranked wrestler from California, while Norris lost 3-2 and in overtime to out of state ranked opposition).

Agin is the pick to win here, though he lost 5-3 early on at the Ironman to the eventual fourth place finisher from California and then injury defaulting. He has not lost another match all season, while winning titles at four different tournaments, though there have been some closer than desired matches in terms of the margin. He placed fourth as a freshman and third last year as a sophomore at the state tournament, those both coming at 106, while also placing third at 106 in the 2017 Walsh Ironman.

Last year at the state tournament, it was Norris who upended Agin by a 1-0 score in the state quarterfinals. The Class of 2021 wrestler would finish at state runner-up, and this summer was a Junior National freestyle All-American, placing fourth at 113 pounds. He missed placement at the Ironman by one match losing to a pair of nationally ranked wrestlers, but would reverse one of those losses in the Dvorak final as he beat Colton Drousius 9-2 on that occasion. Norris is joined by five other ranked wrestlers at the Kettering Fairmont district, though none is a realistic threat.

Ranked third and fourth in this weight are sophomores Moon and Delsanter, who both exit the Mentor district. Moon was a semifinalist last year at the Ironman, and was well-positioned for state tournament success before sustaining an injury during practice the week of the sectional. This season has been a mixed bag with a couple of "bad" losses, by fall to Barnett in mid-December and 4-3 in consolation to Dipiero at Brecksville; while there have also been very narrow losses to nationally ranked opposition, 4-3 to Moran of Indiana in the Brecksville semi and 3-2 in the ultimate tiebreaker to Jacob Decatur in the Maumee Bay final. Delsanter was 1-2 at the Ironman, the first of those losses was 1-0 to Drousius, and eighth at the Powerade; however, he did beat Norris in the December dual meet.

Additional ranked wrestlers here at Mentor are Allison and returning state qualifier Rocha. Allison was a combined 4-4 at the Ironman and Beast, including a 1-0 loss to Norris and a 3-1 loss to a nationally ranked New Jersey wrestler, before missing placement by one match at Brecksville. Rocha was champion at Riverside before taking fifth at Kenston and fourth at the Top Gun.

Circling back to the Kettering Fairmont district, second on the ladder is returning state placer Doepker. He was champion at Delaware Hayes most recently, while beforehand finishing runner-up at SWOWCA and the CIT but failing to place at Brecksville. Returning state alternate Suddeth competed up two weight classes last season, while this season has won three tournament titles in this weight class (most notably at the GMVWA) and was third at SWOWCA losing 3-2 to Doepker. Returning state qualifier Ditullio was third at Grapppler Gold, runner-up at Delaware Hayes, and missed placing at the Powerade by one match. The freshman Acuna was champion at Delaware Hayes, runner-up at Perrysburg, and placed at both SWOWCA and GMVWA; while the senior Newkirk was closed out of Fairfield's lineup last year by state placers at 106 and 113, and this season was fourth at SWOWCA before taking second at Kenston and Fairfield.

Either four or five ranked wrestlers will feature at the Hoover district, led by returning state fourth placer Stanley, who did not wrestle well at either the Ironman or the Beast; however, he bounced back to take third at Brecksville before winning titles at the Bill Dies and Brooke Classic. The junior Dipiero went 1-2 in this state weight class last year, and picked up the above mentioned win over Moon on the way to a fourth place finish at Brecksville; other tournament placements were champion at the North Coast Classic and third at Maumee Bay. Howard, Lewarchik, and Roberts were the top three finishers last year at 106 here at Hoover. Lewarchik missed the first half of the year due to injury, but since returning lost to Stanley 4-1 in a dual meet, and was fourth at the Grizzly Invitational losing to Skinner and Decatur; while Roberts has tournament titles at Beaver Local and the EOWL, and has placed in three other tournaments.

Joining Agin at Hilliard Darby will be one or two other ranked wrestlers. Returning state qualifier Salazar has three tournament titles on the season and was runner-up at Olentangy Liberty to returning Division II state placer Petrella. Also here might be returning state alternate Baumann, though the sophomore has been at 120 exclusively season to date, where he was champion at Big Walnut, runner-up at Delaware Hayes, and fifth at Medina.

120 pounds

1. Lucas Byrd, Cincinnati LaSalle, senior (K. Fairmont)
2. Jake Canitano, Solon, senior (Hoover)
3. Mustapha Bal, Fairfield, senior (K. Fairmont)
4. *Jacob Sherman, Olentangy, senior (H. Darby)*
5. Landon Hacker, Wadsworth, sophomore (Hoover)
6. Nate Burnett, Elyria, freshman (Mentor)
7. Kyren Butler, Copley, sophomore (Hoover)
8. Nick Sabin, Mentor, junior (Mentor)
9. Damion Ryan, Centerville, freshman (K. Fairmont)
10. Gavin Sampsel, Massillon Perry, junior (Hoover)
11. Aiden Agin, Lancaster, freshman (H. Darby)
12. *Ricardo Oviedo, Toledo Waite, junior (Mentor)*
13. *James Baumann, Dublin Coffman, sophomore (H. Darby)*
14. Josue Dawson, Princeton, junior (K. Fairmont)
15. Shane Heil, Berea-Midpark, sophomore (Hoover)
16. Josh Suddeth, Vandalia Butler, senior (K. Fairmont)
17. Dante Ditullio, Mason, junior (K. Fairmont)
18. Kyah Patrick, Beavercreek, junior (K. Fairmont)

19. Bo Branson, Pickerington Central, junior (H. Darby)

HDAR – *Sherman*, Agin, *Baumann*, Branson, Cole Jackson (Olentangy Orange, senior); Edgar Cruz (Westland, junior)

HOOV – Canitano, Hacker, Butler, Sampsel; Heil

KF – Byrd, Bal, Ryan, Dawson; Suddeth, Ditullio, Patrick

MEN – Burnett, Sabin, *Oviedo*, Hudson Poole (St. Edward, junior), Case George (Ashland, sophomore); Adam Lough (Amherst, senior)

As the Maryland bound Byrd has matured into his body, the last three seasons have seen him demonstrate his true ability level (heck, one could argue placing seventh as an undersized 106 his freshman year demonstrated that as well). In the 2018-19 year, Byrd was champion of the preseason Super 32 Challenge, runner-up at the Ironman, reversed losses from last year to nationally ranked out of state opposition in the finals of the Dvorak (Surtin from Illinois) and Escape the Rock (Clark from New Jersey), and dominated his way to a Grizzly Invitational title. It would be a mass shock if he did not earn a repeat state gold medal.

Six other ranked wrestlers join Byrd at what is a rather deep Kettering Fairmont district in this weight class. They are essentially battling for three state tournament spots in all reality. Leading that group is returning state placer Byrd, who has earned tournament wins at SWOWCA, Kenston, and Fairfield during his senior season. The freshman Ryan is next, placing third at SWOWCA and GMVWA along with winning at Dublin Scioto before really bursting on the conscience of fans with a quarterfinal win over returning Division II state placer Burgdorf at Perrysburg (he would end up fourth at the tournament losing to Burgdorf in the consolation final). Next is the junior Dawson, who has been excellent this season, losing narrowly to Bal on two occasions (overtime in the SWOWCA final and 11-8 in the Fairfield semi) plus placing fifth at the GMVWA.

2016 state qualifier Suddeth was a go-to-state match loser last year at 113, and placed sixth this year at SWOWCA. Ditullio placed seventh at Grappler Gold and fifth at Delaware Hayes, while fellow junior Patrick was a state alternate in 2017, this season placing eighth at Medina and (at 126) second at Beaver creek.

The most direct threat to Byrd is likely to come from fellow senior Canitano, who finished fifth at 106 as a freshman and third in this weight class last year, mid-season injury cost him a post-season run during his sophomore season. This season includes no losses and tournament titles at Solon, the North Coast Classic, Brecksville, and Maumee Bay; it also features five-plus wins over returning state placers. Four ranked wrestlers will join Canitano at the Hoover district, led by the sophomore Hacker, who placed seventh in this weight class last year. It was an injury riddled start and middle to the season for Hacker, who has returned to place third at the Grizzly Invitational.

Going 1-2 at state last year as a freshman, Butler has been most excellent this year in placing fourth at Medina and winning titles at the Bill Dies and Hephner. Sampsel had been bit by misfortune his first two years of high school, missing weight at district in 2017 when he was a sure fire state qualifier at 106 and missing all of last year with an injury that has went on into this season in terms of recovery; this season does include a title at the Mike Lewis Invitational and a semifinal appearance at Delaware Hayes. Heil went 1-2 at state last year as a freshman at 106; this season was runner-up at Milan Edson, fourth at North Coast, sixth at Maumee Bay, and failed to place at Brecksville.

The district at Hilliard Darby features lots of uncertainty, headlined at the top by returning state placer Sherman, who has yet to wrestle this season but should be back from injury before sectional time. The last two years he was 0-2 and fourth at state in the 113 pound weight class. Impact freshman Aidan Agin, the younger brother of Logan, missed placement at Medina by one match (though he beat Butler in a preliminary round) and has since won three tournament titles. The other ranked wrestlers are Baumann (see notes at 113) and returning state qualifier Branson, who was runner-up at Dublin Scioto (to Ryan) and Hilliard Bradley (to Agin) while placing sixth at GMVWA.

Last but not least in this weight is a depth challenged district at Mentor, where just two state placement contenders reside in the freshman Burnett and returning state placer Sabin. Burnett went 4-4 between Ironman and the Beast before placing fifth at Brecksville and Maumee Bay; he also has a 1-0 dual meet win over Sabin. Sabin this season was third at North Coast and Perry Pin City along with seventh at Medina. Also ranked is 2017 state qualifier Oviedo, who was a state qualifier last year at Perrysburg, but has transferred to Toledo Waite though on the mat competition for him this season has been limited at best.

126 pounds

1. Dylan Shawver, Elyria, junior (Mentor)
2. Angelo Rini, St. Edward, senior (Mentor)
3. Jimmy Carmany, Brecksville, junior (Hoover)
4. Antonio Allen, Cincinnati LaSalle, junior (K. Fairmont)
5. Logan Heil, Brunswick, senior (Hoover)
6. Jabari Thomas, Fairfield, senior (K. Fairmont)
7. Logan Hoskins, Vandalia Butler, junior (K. Fairmont)
8. Jack Haskin, Toledo Whitmer, sophomore (Mentor)
9. Jack Collins, Cincinnati Elder, junior (K. Fairmont)
10. Jake Williams, Massillon Perry, junior (Hoover)
11. Lucas Uliano, Olentangy Liberty, sophomore (H. Darby)
12. Caden Wendling, Berea-Midpark, junior (Hoover)
13. Ismael Ayoub, Dublin Coffman, freshman (H. Darby)
14. Jacob Reed, Lancaster, sophomore (H. Darby)
15. Jacob Dunstan, North Ridgeville, senior (Mentor)
16. Alex Taylor, Centerville, junior (K. Fairmont)

HDAR – Uliano, Ayoub, Reed, Joseph Eckelberry (Tri-Valley, sophomore); *Mitch Herren (Upper Arlington, senior)*, Deacon Sawchuk (Hilliard Bradely, sophomore)

HOOV – Carmany, Heil, Williams, Wendling; Matthew Whipkey (St. Ignatius, senior)

KF – Allen, Thomas, Hoskins, Collins; Taylor

MEN – Shawver, Rini, Haskin, Dunstan; Kyle Maville (Oregon Clay, senior)

On the Sunday before Christmas, just before noon, the junior Shawver sent shockwaves across the country with a 5-4 semifinal win at the Beast of the East over two-time Cadet World team member Robert Howard from New Jersey. Last year a state runner-up and fourth the year before, both at 113, it's been a most excellent season in total to date. He was runner-up at the Beast and fifth at the Ironman with a handful of wins over nationally ranked wrestlers.

The lone blemish this season came at Brecksville, where he lost 6-2 in the semifinal to Carmany despite scoring a takedown in the first period; the match was much closer than the final score. That tournament

also did include three wins over Division II state title contenders; while January competition included a 6-3 dual meet victory over Heil and earning Outstanding Wrestler honors at Maumee Bay with three wins over state medalists.

Ranked second in this weight is two-time state fifth place finisher Rini, who is headed to Columbia next year, and joins Shawver in the Mentor district. On the season, he replicated a consolation semifinal victory from state with a 13-11 December win over Allen, and won the Powerade keyed by an 8-4 semifinal victory over Pennsylvania state runner-up Camacho. While Rini went 1-2 at the Ironman, the opening round win came 9-8 against nationally ranked Schwartz of Colorado; the losses were 9-8 to nationally ranked Murphy of California and 9-7 against two-time Oklahoma state champ Tanner.

The other two ranked wrestlers at the Mentor district are returning state qualifier Haskin and the senior Dunstan. Haskin was champion at Northwood and Perrysburg, third at Grappler Gold, fifth at Maumee Bay, and missed placement by one match at Brecksville in a loaded field. Dunstan was champion at Perry Pin City in this weight class and up a weight at two other tournaments. Also at this district is returning state qualifier Maville.

The previously mentioned Carmany upset Shawver on the way to winning the Brecksville title, also beating a two-time Indiana state placer in the quarterfinal round. At the Beast of the East, he was one match from placing (one of the losses to a wrestler that Shawver beat), plus he was 0-2 up a weight class at the Walsh Ironman. Carmany also has tournament titles at the Bill Dies, where he pinned Heil in the final in the midst of a blowout, and the Brooke Classic. Joining him at the Hoover district are three other ranked wrestlers, headlined by Heil; the two-time state placer has tournament titles on the season at Solon, the North Coast Classic, and Medina. The junior Williams won a state tournament match last year at 113 pounds, and this season was 3-2 at the Beast of the East before placing fourth at Top Gun and second at Delaware Hayes. Wendling was a go-to-state match loser last year as a sophomore and this season was third at the North Coast Classic up a weight class before going 2-2 at Brecksville and placing seventh at Maumee Bay (where he did beat Haskin on the front side).

Two additional state placers viewing themselves as finalist threats are Allen and Thomas, who headline a group of five ranked wrestlers at Kettering Fairmont. The junior Allen has titles at Franklin and the Grizzly Invitational this season to go with third place finishes at the Dvorak and Escape the Rock, plus a 2-2 performance at the Walsh Ironman; while the senior Thomas has tournament titles at SWOWCA, Kenston, and Fairfield. Two-time state qualifier Hoskins was runner-up at SWOWCA (12-8 to Thomas) and GMVWA (overtime against Gavin Brown) after winning at title at Upper Arlington up a weight class to open the season; then in January, he was champion at Central Crossing and fourth at Maumee Bay. Returning state qualifier Collins spent much of the season at 132 where he as 3-2 at Brecksville and sixth at the CIT before dropping into this weight to take third. Fellow junior Taylor placed fifth at SWOWCA, fourth at GMVWA and (at 132) Perrysbug, plus was champion at Dubin Scioto.

Rounding it out is the district at Hilliard Darby, which is lacking in top end talent at this weight class, though there is a modicum of depth. Leading the way is Uliano, who placed third at 106 in Iowa's big-school division last year as a freshman; this season he has a title at DeSales to go with missing placement at Brecksville by one match, and a fifth at the Grizzly Invitational. The freshman Ayoub was champion at Big Walnut up a weight class and fourth at Delaware Hayes. Returning state qualifier Reed has three tournament titles (two of them with finals victories over fellow state qualifier Sawchuk) and top four finishes in three other events (most notably fourth at Medina). Eckelberry and Sawchuk are returning

state qualifiers, while Herren (though he could end up at 120) is a returning state placer, though none is ranked in the top 16.

132 pounds

1. Mick Burnett, Elyria, junior (Mentor)
2. Jordan Ward, Cincinnati Moeller, senior (K. Fairmont)
3. Blake Saito, Perrysburg, junior (Mentor)
4. Casey Wiles, Cincinnati LaSalle, sophomore (K. Fairmont)
5. Jaivon Jones, Nordonia, senior (Hoover)
6. Sam Glassco, Mason, senior (K. Fairmont)
7. Cameron Baird, Harrison, senior (K. Fairmont)
8. Scott Richter, St. Edward, junior (Mentor)
9. Caleb Graber, Green, senior (Hoover)
10. Patrick McGraw, St. Ignatius, senior (Hoover)
11. Nate DeBoe, Mentor, senior (Mentor)
12. Charles Chapman, Fremont Ross, senior (Mentor)
13. Mason Kleinberg, Springboro, junior (K. Fairmont)
14. Matt Verdes, Vandalia Butler, junior (K. Fairmont)
15. Jesse Bowers, Upper Arlington, junior (H. Darby)
16. James Bronstrup, Brecksville, sophomore (Hoover)

HDAR – Bowers, Connor Euton (Westerville North, freshman), Rocco Torio (Olentangy Orange, junior), Mitchell Coultas (Licking Heights, senior); Nick Varanelli (Olentangy, senior)

HOOV – Jones, Graber, McGraw, Bronstrup; Jake Bryson (Medina Highland, junior)

KF – Ward, Wiles, Glassco, Baird; Kleinberg, Verdes

MEN – Burnett, Saito, Richter, DeBoe; Chapman

The Elyria junior Burnett, who has placed sixth and second at both the state tournament and Cadet National freestyle tournament the last two years comes from an excellent wrestling family. His father (head coach Erik Burnett) was a four-time state champion at Oberlin from 1984 to 1987, and went on to earn All-American honors at Clarion (fifth at 118 pounds in 1992); while his uncle Scott (head coach at Perrysburg) was a three-time state champion at Elyria Catholic from 1996 to 1998. Mick is trying to earn a state title of his won this season, which has been an excellent one despite not yet winning a tournament; sixth at the Ironman, seventh at the Beast, and second at Brecksville (all very strong fields).

A pair of wrestlers that placed in this weight class last year, and are now both two-time state placers, are the two most direct challengers to Burnett. The senior Ward, whose brother Joey was one of the most clutch state tournament wrestlers you'll ever see, missed the first half-plus of this season with an injury before returning to win the CIT; he placed sixth at this weight last year after finishing seventh at 126 the year before. The junior Saito was eighth last year after placing seventh at 106 the year before. This season, Saito was predominantly at 138 where he was runner-up at Brecksville and Perrysburg before winning at Maumee Bay; he dropped last week before regional duals.

Burnett and Saito both exit the Mentor district, where there are three other ranked wrestlers in the hunt for those last two state tournament spots. Richter missed state last year at 113 pounds despite beating eventual third place finisher Andrew Perelka of Brecksville in both the state duals semifinal and the district quarterfinals. This season, Richter went 2-2 at the Ironman, failed to place at the Powerade, and has lost to multiple very tough dual meet opponents (Wiles, Nick Moore, and three out of state

nationally ranked wrestlers). Fellow state alternate DeBoe was also a state alternate his sophomore year in 2017, and this season features titles at Pin City and Central Crossing along with a sixth at Medina; while the senior Chapman missed placement at Brecksville by one match, placed at Maumee Bay, and was runner-up at Delaware Hayes. Also adding to the congestion at this district tournament are returning state qualifiers Jake Visintine (Ashland, senior) and Mike Daly (Oregon Clay, junior) who are not ranked inside the top 16.

Ward also anchors a very deep district, the one at Kettering Fairmont. It features another legit title threat in Wiles, who had a very hot state tournament to finish third as a freshman. On the season he was champion at Franklin up a weight class, fourth at the Dvorak (beat Glassco along the way), and placed sixth at the Escape the Rock in Pennsylvania. Four other ranked wrestlers are in the hunt for what essentially is two remaining state spots.

Glassco qualified for state as a freshman before being closed out of the lineup his sophomore year and finishing as a state alternate last year. This season he was runner-up at Grappler Gold, fifth at the Dvorak, missed placing at the Powerade by one match, and then broke through with a title at Delaware Hayes. Two-time state qualifier Baird has tournament titles at SWOWCA and Fairfield to go with third place finishes at Medina and the Grizzly Invitational. Returning state qualifier Kleinberg was runner-up at the GMVWA and champion at Watkins; while the junior Verdes won at Upper Arlington up a weight class opening weekend, has top four finishes in four other tournaments this season (most notably runner-up to Baird at SWOWCA), plus beat Kleinberg in overtime in a dual meet.

Four ranked wrestlers find their home at the Hoover district, led by returning state placer Jones and returning state qualifier Graber. On the season Jones has titles at North Coast, Olentangy Liberty, Kenston, and Top Gun; while Graber was champion at the Bill Dies, third at Solon and North Canton, and fifth at Medina. The senior McGraw was champion at Solon, runner-up to Jones at North Coast, sixth at Brecksville, and third at CIT (loss to Ward). The sophomore Bronstrup has two older brothers with state tournament success, two-time state placer Jared and state qualifier Jason; while his season includes going 4-4 between the Ironman and Beast, finishing seventh at Brecksville, third at the Bill Dies, and runner-up at the Brooke Classic.

Rounding it out is a Hilliard Darby district that features just one ranked wrestler in returning state qualifier Bowers, who was champion at Upper Arlington and fourth at Fairfield up two weights along with missing placement at Medina when competing up at 138. Also here is returning state qualifier Torio, while Coultas and Varanelli were state alternates last year.

138 pounds

1. Marco Regalbutto, Brecksville, senior (Hoover)
2. Luke Baughman, Wadsworth, senior (Hoover)
3. Bryce Hepner, St. Edward, junior (Mentor)
4. Matt Zuckerman, Elyria, senior (Mentor)
5. Derek Fields, Brunswick, sophomore (Hoover)
6. Jake Niffenegger, Cincinnati LaSalle, freshman (K. Fairmont)
7. Gus Sutton, Austintown Fitch, senior (Hoover)
8. Mitch Collica, Nordonia, senior (Hoover)
9. Connor DeBoe, Mentor, senior (Mentor)
10. Cyle Wells, Tecumseh, junior (K. Fairmont)
11. D.J. Huff, St. Ignatius, senior (Hoover)

12. Zach Williams, Delaware Hayes, senior (H. Darby)
13. Jacob Williams, Teays Valley, senior (H. Darby)
14. Jonah Smith, Findlay, junior (Mentor)
15. Luke Marsh, Lebanon, freshman (K. Fairmont)
16. Tanner Donathan, Western Brown, senior (K. Fairmont)

HDAR – Z. Williams, J. Williams, Zander Ellison (Hilliard Bradley, senior), Joey Orlando (Upper Arlington, senior); Jakob Hurley (Westland, freshman)

HOOV – Regalbuto, Baughman, Fields, Sutton; Collica, Huff

KF – Niffenegger, Wells, Marsh, Donathan; Bartley Thomas (Cincinnati Elder, freshman)

MEN – Hepner, Zuckerman, DeBoe, Smith; Jayden Jones (Ashland, sophomore)

If one thought the previous two weight classes were wide open and bonkers at the top, this one takes it to another level. There are two wrestlers nationally ranked, a third who is a returning state champion, two additional wrestlers that have a single win over each of the top two wrestlers, another who is a Cadet freestyle All-American, and then two others that have state tournament podium appearances.

Needing emphasis in this shuffle is five of those eight wrestlers exit the same district at North Canton Hoover. If someone doesn't move down (or more likely up) in weight, they're going to be watching the state tournament from the stands. The favorite here is two-time state placer Regalbuto, a senior who has four wins over nationally ranked opponents on the season. He missed placement by one match at the Ironman up a weight class, came down to 138 and placed third at the Beast with two wins over nationally ranked out of state competition, and won titles at Brecksville and Brooke Classic (beating a nationally ranked Super 32 placer 10-3 in the latter). Fellow two-time state placer and three-time state qualifier Baughman missed placement by one match at the Ironman despite beating a nationally ranked opponent in the round of 16, and has since won titles at North Canton, Medina (2-1 tiebreaker victory in the final over three-time state champ D'Emilio), and the Grizzly Invitational (5-3 over Alek Martin).

Regalbuto avenged last year's dual meet and state semifinal losses to Baughman in a 9-5 mid-January dual meet victory, though two days later he would get majored 17-7 by Fields in the Bill Dies final. Baughman beat Fields 5-1 in the Medina semifinal, but lost 3-2 to Collica in a mid-January dual meet; Regalbuto has additional dual meet victories over Patten (at 145) and Collica (twice).

Fields qualified for state at 126 last year as a freshman taking Burnett to the brink, losing 5-4 in the opening round before losing by fall later that evening. He would finish fifth in Cadet freestyle in the summer. While this season, he has titles at Solon and the Bill Dies plus a third place finish at Medina (beat Sutton in consolation there). Sutton was an unexpected state semifinalist his sophomore, placing sixth at 120 before finishing a disappointing eighth last year at 126. This season he was champion at EOWL and the Hephner, runner-up at Beaver Local (losing 3-1 to Peyton Hall) and Top Gun (losing to a Pennsylvania big-school state champion in a match that he led in the third period), and then a disappointing seventh at Medina. Finally at this district is the senior Collica, who finished eighth at this weight class last year; this season he was runner-up at the North Coast Classic, champion at Olentangy Liberty (beat Cole Mattin 3-2 when he bumped up a weight) and Kenston), before finishing fourth at Top Gun. Also ranked in this weight class at Hoover is returning district placer Huff, who missed the first half of the season (for yet another time) due to injury, but returned to make the semis of the CIT.

The junior Hepner has merely made state finals each year of his high school career to date, finishing second at 113 as a freshman and winning gold last year over Burnett at 126. He went 2-2 at the

Ironman, losing 1-0 to Lackman from Pennsylvania on the front side before falling 2-0 to Alek Martin to get eliminated. Hepner was also runner-up at Powerade, and his dual meet results include quality wins 4-1 over Niffenegger and by major over a two-time Michigan state placer. Three other ranked wrestlers join him at the Mentor district, most notably three-time state qualifier Zuckerman (who was seventh in this weight class last year). On the season, Zuckerman missed placement at the Ironman by two bouts (so did Hepner) before finishing third at Brecksville and runner-up at Maumee Bay, while picking up a dual meet victory over Fields in overtime.

Rounding out the ranked lot at Mentor are state qualifier DeBoe and the junior Smith. The senior DeBoe beat Collica 5-4 in the finals of the North Coast Classic, while placing sixth at the Medina Invitational. Smith has titles at the Kilted Klassic and Defiance to go with a second at Findlay, fourth at Maumee Bay, and sixth at the Grizzly Invitational.

The remaining wrestler in our eight person group at the top of this weight class is the freshman Niffenegger, a Cadet freestyle fourth place finisher from this summer. He went 2-2 at the Ironman after beating a former state qualifier two times to win the 145 pound title at Franklin on opening weekend, while tournament placements in January included a sixth at Escape the Rock and a fifth at the Grizzly Invitational (lone loss 4-3 to Baughman). Three other ranked wrestlers join Niffenegger at Kettering Fairmont for district competition. The junior Wells has three tournament titles on the season to go with a third at the GMVWA; the freshman Marsh was a junior high state champ last year and this season has a title at Western Brown after spending the first month down a weight class where he finished fifth at SWOWCA and went 2-2 at Medina; while the senior Donathan qualified for state in 2017, this season finishing runner-up at Franklin and (to Wells) at Central Crossing, third at Western Brown (losing 3-1 to Marsh), and going 2-2 at Brecksville.

Last is a district at Hilliard Darby that features just two ranked wrestlers, none within the top ten. 2017 state qualifier Williams of Delaware Hayes was a go-to-state match loser in this weight class last year; while fellow senior Williams of Teays Valley was a state alternate down a weight class. The Delaware Hayes grappler was champion at his home tournament, runner-up at GMVWA, and third at Olentangy Liberty; while the Teays Valley athlete has titles at West Jefferson and (over Ellison) at Watkins Memorial. Also at this district are 2017 state qualifier Ellison and – though not in the top five listing – returning state qualifier Kuric Buell (Worthington Kilbourne, junior)

145 pounds

1. Bryce Andonian, St. Edward, senior (Mentor)
2. Michael North, Wadsworth, senior (Hoover)
3. Chris Donathan, Mason, senior (K. Fairmont)
4. Daniel Patten, Stow, junior (Hoover)
5. Daniel Segura, Dublin Scioto, junior (H. Darby)
6. *Alex Garee, Perrysburg, sophomore (Mentor)*
7. Austin Mullins, Huber Hts. Wayne, sophomore (K. Fairmont)
8. Darnai Heard, Cincinnati LaSalle, sophomore (K. Fairmont)
9. Deshea Pettiford, Fremont Ross, senior (Mentor)
10. Jacob Bernhardt, Harrison, senior (K. Fairmont)
11. Darese Sparkman, Massillon Perry, senior (Hoover)
12. Andrew Knick, Northmont, junior (K. Fairmont)
13. Brady Pethel, Olentangy, senior (H. Darby)
14. A.J. Szigeti, Oregon Clay, senior (Mentor)

15. Andrew Philion, Midview, junior (Mentor)
16. Jayce Fitzpatrick, Olentangy Liberty, sophomore (H. Darby)
17. Adam Nedolast, Copley, senior (Hoover)

HDAR – Segura, Pethel, Fitzpatrick, Luke Deweese (Hilliard Davidson, senior); Shawn Will (Marysville, freshman)

HOOV – North, Patten, Sparkman, Nedolast; Zack Scalf (Barberton, senior)

KF – Donathan, Mullins, Heard, Bernhardt; Knick

MEN – Andonian, *Garee*, Pettiford, Szigeti, Philion; Tommy Sear (Avon, senior)

Win or lose, though almost all the time it's in the course of winning, the Virginia Tech bound Andonian has to be one of (if not) the most entertaining wrestlers to watch in the Buckeye State. He has a score from anywhere mentality that is fun to watch, though can be admittedly stressful one to coach. Bryce won state at 106 as a freshman by pinning Gabe Tagg in the midst of a back-and-forth bout, while last year's state final victory at 138 was 14-10 over Baughman. Keeping him from going for a fourth title is a 3-1 overtime loss in 2017 to Gio DiSabato on Friday night at 120 pounds, an outcome many would view as an upset.

After winning a Junior National freestyle title in Fargo, Andonian started his senior season losing 7-3 in the Ironman semifinal to California super-star Jaden Abas, and would default down to sixth. At the Powerade, he emerged as champion beating Donathan 7-4 in the championship match. He also has an early January dual meet victory over North, the other nationally ranked wrestler in this weight class.

Joining Andonian at Mentor are four other ranked wrestlers, the first of which is the sophomore Garee, who missed state by one match last year in an absolutely loaded district weight class. His current season includes placing sixth at Brecksville before sustaining an injury at Perrysburg, one that he should return from right before sectional. 2017 state qualifier Pettiford missed placement at Brecksville by one match, losing 5-2 to Garee in consolation, before winning a title at the Gorman. Fellow senior Szigeti placed third at Solon, was one match away from placing at Brecksville, and then was fifth at Fairfield and fourth at Maumee Bay; while returning state alternate Philion was fourth at Medina, fifth at the Bill Dies, and runner-up at West Holmes.

Two-time state placer North had an in-season win over Donathan during January 2018. He placed fifth at the Ironman losing to a pair of nationally ranked opponents, while beating a nationally ranked opponent from Illinois (Mayora) 10-3 in the consolation quarterfinal. North also has tournament titles at North Canton (majoring Segura in the semifinal), Medina, and the Grizzly Invitational, though he suffered a surprising 8-6 dual meet loss to Patten in mid-December. Returning state placer Patten is one of three other ranked wrestlers joining North at the Hoover district.

In addition, Patten was champion at Solon beating state champ Burgard 7-4 in the final, and adding to that with titles at Hudson and the Bill Dies. Returning state qualifier Sparkman started the season going 0-2 at the Ironman (consolation loss to Heard) and 2-2 at the Beast; he then missed placement at Brecksville and Top Gun by one match before finishing third at Delaware Hayes. Fellow senior Nedolast was sixth at Medina, third at the Bill Dies, and champion of the Hephner.

Donathan finished runner-up in this weight class last year at state, losing 5-2 to Voinovich in the final after upsetting Dover 7-4 on Friday night with a third period rally. His Ironman entailed a 4-1 quarterfinal loss to Abas before forfeiting his consolation match (which would have been against North);

while a runner-up finish at the Powerade has been augmented by titles at Grappler Gold (at 152), Dvorak, and Delaware Hayes. Donathan joins North in having wins over Mayora (Dvorak) and Segura (Delaware Hayes) on the season, and beat a nationally ranked Michigan opponent to win the Grappler Gold. Four other ranked wrestlers join him at the Kettering Fairmont district.

The first of which is Mullins, who placed seventh at state in this weight last year as a freshman; this season he was fifth at the GMVWA, seventh at Top Gun, plus has titles at Troy and Eaton. Fellow sophomore Heard won a state match last year at 132 pounds, while his present season includes going 2-2 at the Ironman and Escape the Rock, winning a title at 152 at Franklin, along with fourth place finishes in this weight at the Dvorak and Grizzly Invitational. Bernhardt and Knick are also returning state qualifiers, which means someone with state experience is staying home. Bernhardt's season includes titles at SWOWCA and Fairfield, along with a fifth at Medina; for Knick he started at 152, where it was a fourth at North Coast, fifth at GMVWA, and title at Troy before coming to this weight where he was runner-up at Troy losing 8-6 to Mullins.

Rounding it out is the Hilliard Darby district, one that features just three ranked wrestlers, the junior Segura the only one with state experience. Last year he placed fourth as a sophomore at 138, and this season there are three tournament titles at 152 to go with the third at North Canton (21-9 loss to North) and runner-up at Delaware Hayes (12-4 loss to Donathan) in this weigh class. The senior Pethel has tournament titles at Olentangy and the Kilted Klassic to go with a fifth at North Canton and fourth at Medina, while the sophomore Fitzpatrick was third at Olentangy Liberty and sixth at the Grizzly Invitational.

152 pounds

1. Sam Dover, St. Edward, senior (Mentor)
2. Victor Voinovich, Brecksville, sophomore (Hoover)
3. Elan Heard, Cincinnati LaSalle, junior (K. Fairmont)
4. Walker Heard, Marysville, senior (H. Darby)
5. Enrique Munguia, Elyria, sophomore (Mentor)
6. Logan Messer, Wadsworth, sophomore (Hoover)
7. Gavin Bell, Beaver Creek, junior (K. Fairmont)
8. Noah Ewen, Perrysburg, freshman (Mentor)
9. Jestin Love, Vandalia Butler, junior (K. Fairmont)
10. Amar Thomas, Fairfield, senior (K. Fairmont)
11. Connor Liber, Sylvania Northview, sophomore (Mentor)
12. Antoine Holloway, Maple Hts., senior (Hoover)
13. Paul Twarog, North Royalton, senior (Hoover)
14. Brady Linder, Medina Highland, junior (Hoover)
15. Shayne Magda, Madison, senior (Mentor)
16. Seth Lambers, Cincinnati Elder, junior (K. Fairmont)
17. Hunter Barker, Grove City, senior (H. Darby)

HDAR – W. Heard, Barker, Antonio Gonzalez (Dublin Coffman, senior), Mason Sparks (Marion Harding, senior); Dane Fenice (Franklin Hts., senior)

HOOV – Voinovich, Messer, Holloway, Twarog, Linder; Salek

KF – E. Heard, Bell, Love, Thomas; Lambers

MEN – Dover, Munguia, Ewen, Liber; Magda

The returning state champion in this weight class is the sophomore Voinovich, who earned gold last year at 145 pounds, beating Donathan 5-2 in the state final. He was significantly aided by Donathan knocking off Dover on Friday night, as Dover won all three matches the pair wrestled earlier in the year (3-1 in overtime in the Walsh Ironman quarterfinal, 1-0 in the state dual meet semifinal, and 5-1 in the district semifinal). Given the above sentence, the Oklahoma University bound three-time state placer Dover is the weight class favorite; the pair would be protected from meeting prior to the state final should each win their district.

On the season, Dover was champion at the Walsh Ironman upsetting Oklahoma State signee Brevin Balmececa from Florida 5-2 in the Ironman final. At the Powerade, he was runner-up, getting upset 5-2 by three-time Super 32 placer Ryan Vulakh from Pennsylvania. In addition, he was pinned in overtime by Cameron Amine from Michigan last month. Voinovich had an uncharacteristic performance at the Ironman going 1-2, and then sat out the Beast. However, since return it's been "all systems a go" as he finished runner-up at Brecksville and then won titles at the Bill Dies and Brooke Classic (combined championship final match margin, 29 points). Quality wins at Brecksville included avenging his front side Ironman loss with a 6-2 victory over Munguia and then beating a two-time Indiana state placer in the semifinal. The championship match was a 1-0 defeat to Amine with Voinovich unable to get the match-tying escape in the third period.

Dover exits the Mentor district, along with four other ranked wrestlers. The group is led by the sophomore Munguia, who went 1-2 at district last year and 1-2 at the Super 32 this fall, but has made an absurd leap this season; quarterfinalist at the Ironman, placed seventh at the Beast, was third at Brecksville (wins over Fishback, Jax Leonard, and Conley of Indiana), and runner-up at Maumee Bay. The freshman Ewen, who was a Cadet freestyle All-American in the summer and placed in the junior/senior division of Preseason Nationals in the fall, is next in line. His season includes three losses to Munguia, placing sixth at Brecksville, runner-up at Perrysburg (beat Liber), and fourth at Maumee Bay. Next is the sophomore Liber, who went 2-2 in a loaded district 138 weight class last year; this year he has won two tournaments, was runner-up at Findlay, third at Perrysburg, and sixth at Maumee Bay. Rounding it out is returning state qualifier Magda, champion at Perry Pin City and runner-up at the Bill Dies.

Voinovich is joined by four other ranked wrestlers at North Canton. Messer placed fifth last year at state as a freshman down at 132, and this year has placed third at North Canton and Medina with semifinal losses coming to title contenders in the other two divisions; however, he did have to pull out of the Grizzly Invitational and did not wrestle at regional duals. The senior Holloway was champion at Hudson; fellow senior Twarog was a go-to-state match loser in this weight class last year and has titles at Solon, North Coast Classic, and the Hephner along with a third at Hudson (losing 6-3 to Holloway); while returning state qualifier Linder was third at Solon (11-7 loss to Twarog), fourth at Medina, and champion at West Holmes.

Ranked third in this weight class is the junior Elan Heard, who is extraordinarily talented, but good health has not been on his side in any year of his high school career. The University of Illinois verbal commit won at Franklin up a weight class before missing placement at the Ironman by one match, but then in the semifinal of the Dvorak, he had to injury default and has not competed since, though a return for the state series is expected. Four additional ranked wrestlers join Heard at the Kettering Fairmont district.

First in line is fellow junior, two-time returning state qualifier Bell, who missed a chunk of this season but lost 7-3 to Donathan at regional duals this past week. Then it's another junior, returning state

qualifier Love, who dropped into this weight to place fifth at Maumee Bay after spending the first half-plus of the season at 160 where he was fourth at SWOWCA and champion at both GMVWA and Central Crossing. Fellow returning state qualifier Thomas was champion at SWOWCA and Kenston before finishing runner-up at Fairfield, while the junior Lambers was runner-up at SWOWCA, 3-2 at Brecksville, fourth at the CIT, and champion at Delaware Hayes.

Rounding out the districts is Hilliard Darby, which is anchored by the senior Walker Heard, a two-time state placer. He was at 160 for the first half, missing placement at the Ironman by one match, finishing runner-up at SWOWCA, and third at Brecksville; then at 152, he was third at Top Gun. He is joined by just one other ranked wrestler in the district field, returning state qualifier Barker, champion at DeSales and Hilliard Bradley as well as runner-up at Dublin Scioto. Also at Hilliard Darby is two-time state qualifier Sparks.

160 pounds

1. Connor Brady, Olentangy Liberty, senior (H. Darby)
2. Pdraic Gallagher, St. Edward, sophomore (Mentor)
3. Brett McIntosh, Harrison, junior (K. Fairmont)
4. Naeem Russell, Lima Senior, senior (Mentor)
5. Jackson Weissinger, Fremont Ross, junior (Mentor)
6. Dillon Walker, Cincinnati LaSalle, sophomore (K. Fairmont)
7. Drew Newton, Perrysburg, senior (Mentor)
8. Sean Mondello, Oxford Talawanda, senior (K. Fairmont)
9. Sal Perrine, Nordonia, sophomore (Hoover)
10. Troy Murphy, Oregon Clay, senior (Mentor)
11. Aaron Morton, Westerville South, junior (H. Darby)
12. Jaden Hardrick, Huber Hts. Wayne, junior (K. Fairmont)
13. Joe Koplou, Kenston, senior (Hoover)
14. Aidan Corrigan, Twinsburg, sophomore (Hoover)
15. Ethan Silvis, Medina, junior (Hoover)
16. Mason Motter, Vandalia Butler, senior (K. Fairmont)
17. Emmett Cain, Delaware Hayes, junior (H. Darby)

HDAR – Brady, Morton, Cain, Jade Batross (Newark, senior); Eli Williams (Westerville North, junior)

HOOV – Perrine, Koplou, Corrigan, Silvis; Anthony Rizzo (Brecksville, sophomore)

KF – McIntosh, Walker, Mondello, Hardrick, Motter; Coffield

MEN – Gallagher, Russell, Weissinger, Newton; Murphy

Like the weight class before, nationally elite senior Brady has yet to make it to the state final. His losses came 2-1 to Zack Donathan via a penalty point in the opening round his freshman year, 11-4 in the tiebreaker to Corey Shie in the consolation final that same year, and 3-1 in the quarterfinal to David Carr as a sophomore. Last year, Brady suffered injury in an early February dual meet to Carr that precluded his participation in the state series. This scholastic season features titles at the Super 32 prior to the start of the season, in December at the Walsh Ironman, and late last month at the Grizzly invitational.

Brady is currently one of three Ohio wrestlers ranked No. 1 in their respective weight classes nationally. Like Andonian, he is going to be a Virginia Tech Hokie next year, which is news that makes Tony Robie and crew in Blacksburg happy. Should Brady be denied gold yet again, it would likely come via the hand

of the sophomore Gallagher, who was third at state last year as a freshman losing 3-2 to Jake Marsh (now at Princeton) in the state semi.

Gallagher is also a two-time UWW Cadet freestyle All-American and a 2017 Cadet National freestyle All-American. He missed the bulk of this season with injury, returning for the first time in varsity competition at the regional duals. The district at Mentor from which he exits has four other ranked wrestlers, led by returning state placer Russell, who lost to Gallagher 19-4 in the consolation semifinal round at state last year; this season for Russell is bereft a loss and features four tournament titles. Next in line is the junior Weissinger, a state alternate last year in this weight class; this season features a seventh at Brecksville before winning titles at the Gorman, Maumee Bay, and Delaware Hayes. Newton, who placed at district as sophomore before missing most of last year due to injury, placed second at Perrysburg and third at Maumee Bay; while fellow senior Murphy is a returning state qualifier, this season finishing second at Solon and Fairfield while missing placement at Brecksville and Maumee Bay by one match.

The other congested district is the one at Kettering Fairmont, which features five ranked wrestlers, led by the junior McIntosh. The 2017 Cadet freestyle All-American won at Medina last year, beating eventual Division III state champ Gavin Stika in the quarters but an injury precluded his post-season participation. This season includes titles at SWOWCA and Fairfield, a runner-up finish at Wadsworth, and a third at Medina (the 8-3 semifinal loss to Danals came as a shock).

Walker qualified for state last year in Division III as a freshman before transferring to LaSalle. He won a title in the 170 weight class at Franklin on opening weekend before going 3-2 at the Ironman, including a narrow 3-2 loss on the front side to Brady. The senior Mondello qualified for state in 2017 when his school was in Division II, then went 2-2 last year at district in this weight class; the current season includes titles at Edgewood and Eaton, while finishing third at SWOWCA and second at Sycamore. The junior Hardrick was runner-up at GMVWA and a quarterfinalist at Top Gun, while the senior Motter has a 2-1 dual meet win over Hardrick but went 2-2 at Maumee Bay (losing to Murphy and Jake Mack of Solon) along with up a weight placing at SWOWCA and GMVWA.

The district at Hoover features four ranked wrestlers, though none is a real mid-to-high placement candidate. Leading the way is the sophomore Perrine (last year a go-to-match loser), who has titles at North Coast, Olentangy Liberty, and Kenston to his credit on the season – along with a third place finish at Top Gun, though he was upset 13-7 by Rizzo in the regional dual final. Returning state qualifier Koplou was runner-up at Solon (at 170) and Kenston, champion at the Bill Dies, and fourth at the Grizzly Invitational. The sophomore Corrigan has spent most of the year at 170 where he was third at Solon, champion at North Coast Classic, and a semifinalist at Kenston; however, it's 160 for the state series. Lastly it's the junior Silvis, who was champion of the Kilted Klassic at 182, placed sixth at Medina up at 170, and in this weight class was fourth at Maumee Bay and third at the Hephner.

Joining Brady at Hilliard Darby is just two other ranked wrestlers, a pair of juniors in Morton and Cain. Morton has two tournament titles and was runner-up at Marion Harding, losing 11-8 to Russell; while Cain was third at Olentangy Liberty and Delaware Hayes, with sixth place finishes at GMVWA and Top Gun.

170 pounds

1. Carson Kharchla, Olentangy Liberty, senior (H. Darby)
2. Jacob Lagoa, Ashtabula Lakeside, senior (Mentor)

3. Nevan Snodgrass, Kettering Fairmont, junior (K. Fairmont)
4. Najee Lockett, Shaker Hts., junior (Hoover)
5. Jake Evans, Elyria, sophomore (Mentor)
6. Drew Wiechers, Centerville, senior (K. Fairmont)
7. Kamal Adewumi, Mason, senior (K. Fairmont)
8. Dominic Loparo, Wadsworth, junior (Hoover)
9. Michael O'Horo, Boardman, senior (Hoover)
10. Michael Garcar, St. Edward, junior (Mentor)
11. Simon Shirley, Harrison, senior (K. Fairmont)
12. Max Van Fossen, Mt. Vernon, senior (H. Darby)
13. Jacob Meek, Oregon Clay, junior (Mentor)
14. Mason Sutandar, Delaware Hayes, junior (H. Darby)
15. Cole Foor, Watkins Memorial, junior (H. Darby)
16. Matt Lewis, West Clermont, senior (K. Fairmont)

HDAR – Kharchla, Van Fossen, Sutandar, Foor; Josh Halbakken (Big Walnut, senior)

HOOV – Lockett, Loparo, O'Horo, Michael Caniglia (Hudson, senior); Logan Shepherd (Massillon Perry, freshman)

KF – Snodgrass, Wiechers, Adewumi, Shirley; Lewis

MEN – Lagoa, Evans, Garcar, Meek; Jakob Beverly (Ashland, sophomore)

Second of the three national No. 1 ranked wrestlers in the Buckeye State is Brady's high school teammate, and Ohio State signee Kharchla. Unequivocally the best wrestler in Ohio this year, he makes even high end opponents look ordinary. In his Junior National freestyle title run, Kharchla faced four of the next five place-finishers, three of the matches ended by shutout technical superiority and the other was a 7-4 win over multi-time Fargo champ Travis Wittlake. From the last six weeks of the 2017-18 season, he earned 3-1 (dual meet) and 7-2 (state semifinal) victories over returning state champion Emil Soehnlén, who earlier that season was runner-up of the Ironman and Beast of the East.

This season for Kharchla includes championships at the Ironman and Brecksville tournaments, with statement performances in each finals bout. It was a 5-2 win over national No. 2 Julian Ramirez in the Ironman final and a 17-2 technical fall over two-time state champion Jacob Lagoa at Brecksville. Three other ranked wrestlers, all with state experience, join Kharchla at the Hilliard Darby district.

The senior Van Fossen has dual meet wins over Sutandar and Foor this season, while also winning titles in two tournaments to go with a fourth at SWOWCA and sixth at Maumee Bay. The junior Sutandar beat Foor 7-5 in a dual meet this year, while also placing third at Delaware Hayes; and fellow junior Foor has finishes of third at North Canton and eighth at Brecksville on the current season.

Lagoa won state titles each of the previous two years in Division III while competing for Ashtabula St. John. He transferred to his home school district for this his junior season. Prior to the runner-up finish at Brecksville, he was champion at Solon and Riverside. While he has not competed since early January, he should be back by the time the state series commences. Three additional ranked wrestlers, all with a state tournament win from last year, join Lagoa at the Mentor district.

The sophomore Evans has made a significant leap from his freshman season where qualified for state at 160 pounds. He has placed seventh at the Ironman, fourth at the Beast and Brecksville, and runner-up at Maumee Bay; the Maumee Bay performance featured a 1-0 semifinal win over Super 32 runner-up (at

160) River Shettler from Michigan and 3-2 tiebreaker finals loss to Snodgrass. The junior Garcar qualified for state at 170 last year, while this year in tournaments he was 2-2 at the Ironman and one match from placing at Powerade; a couple match results mildly surprise, the losses to Smith of Beaver Local and Rojas from Detroit Catholic Central. Fellow junior Meek advanced to state last year up at 182, where he started this season placing third at Solon before dropping into this weight to go 2-2 at Brecksville then placing second at Fairfield and eighth at Maumee Bay.

The third dynamic talent in this weight is nationally ranked junior Snodgrass, twice fourth at state and a Junior National freestyle All-American this past summer. His first two years were a bit uneven given the talent level and credentials coming in from youth and junior high. Snodgrass has been 100% locked in this year with his only blemishes coming in the Ironman and Brecksville semifinals (6-2 to Ramirez at Ironman, a hotly contested and highly controversial 3-2 against Lagoa at Brecksville). Four other ranked wrestlers join him in a congested district weight class at Kettering Fairmont.

Returning state placer Wiechers has been superb this season in winning titles at SWOWCA, GMVWA, Dublin Scioto, and Perrysburg. Fellow senior Adewumi was a state alternate last year, but looks to have made a leap starting with his placement this fall at the Super 32 Challenge; it continued into the season with runner-up finishes at the Grappler Gold and Dvorak tournaments, a sixth place finish at Powerade, and a championship at Delaware Hayes. Another senior is returning state qualifier Shirley, who was runner-up at SWOWCA and the Grizzly Invitational along with his title at Fairfield, while finishing fifth up a weight at Medina. Finally among the ranked group is another senior Lewis, who missed placing at SWOWCA by a match but beat Division II state placer Williams to win a title at Milford.

Wrapping up the weight class is the Hoover district with just three ranked wrestlers, led by returning state placer Lockett. The junior has titles at Kenston and Top Gun to his credit this season. Next in line is returning state qualifier Loparo, who is also an excellent two-way football player on a team that has went undefeated the last two regular seasons. On the mat this year it's titles at North Canton, Medina, and the Grizzly Invitational. Lastly it's the senior O'Horo, who probably is looking at state qualification and possibly a podium last year if he doesn't fail to make weight at the sectional tournament. He spent most of the current season up a weight class where he was champion at Beaver Local, runner-up at EOWL, and third at Top Gun; in this weight class it's a runner-up finish at the Hephner (7-6 upset loss to Hendershot).

182 pounds

1. Gary Wokojance, Barberton, senior (Hoover)
2. Trey Sizemore, Cincinnati LaSalle, senior (K. Fairmont)
3. Micah Potterf, Westerville North, senior (H. Darby)
4. Lenox Wolak, Dublin Coffman, senior (H. Darby)
5. Hudson Hightower, St. Edward, sophomore (Mentor)
6. Ben Vanadia, Brecksville, sophomore (Hoover)
7. Sebastian Beachler, Miamisburg, senior (K. Fairmont)
8. Jonathan List, Wadsworth, sophomore (Hoover)
9. Ethan Garee, Perrysburg, senior (Mentor)
10. Corbin May, Delaware Hayes, junior (H. Darby)
11. Toby Amburgy, Mason, sophomore (K. Fairmont)
12. Austin Belcher, Cincinnati Elder, senior (K. Fairmont)
13. Josh Nagy, Oregon Clay, senior (Mentor)
14. Drake Smith, Springboro, senior (K. Fairmont)

15. George Rozier, Akron Firestone, junior (Hoover)
16. Cody Wilson, Licking Hts., junior (H. Darby)

HDAR – Potterf, Wolak, May, Wilson; Colton Doup (Olentangy, senior)

HOOV – Wokojance, Vanadia, List, Rozier; Ryan Prusinowski (North Canton Hoover, sophomore)

KF – Sizemore, Beachler, Amburgy, Belcher; Smith

MEN – Hightower, Garee, Nagy, Ben Doehr (Elyria, junior); Clay Carpenter (Amherst, junior)

The first ten weight classes of the big-school division feature high end, national caliber talent as the leading figure (or in some cases figures). On the other hand, the back four weight classes in Division I are lacking in that regard. Compared to the immediate two preceding weights, there is significant intrigue over the state champion and other finalist spot. Four returning state medalists are at the head of the field.

Ranked first is the lone two-time state placer in the group, three-time state qualifier Wokojance, who has placed seventh then sixth the last two years. He was champion at the NHSCA Junior Nationals in the spring, and has continued that positive form into the season where he has four tournament titles (most notably for Division I purposes a technical fall victory in the Bill Dies final).

However, the highest returning placer is fellow senior Wolak, who placed fourth in this weight class last year despite actually losing to Wokojance 10-6 in the state quarterfinal round. The Columbia bound wrestler has been in the finals of four tournaments, two each at 195 and 182; titles coming at Big Walnut (195) and Delaware Hayes, with runner-up finishes at North Canton (195) and Medina. In that Medina final, he lost by technical fall to fellow senior Potterf, who was seventh last year in the state tournament at 170 pounds. On the season, Potterf was also runner-up at Olentangy Liberty and champion at Dublin Scioto. Two other ranked wrestlers join that pair at the Hilliard Darby district, a pair of juniors in May and Wilson. May was third at Olentangy Liberty, seventh at Top Gun, and runner-up at Delaware Hayes; while Wilson was champion at Marion Harding along with second place finishes at DeSales and Olentangy Liberty up a weight class and at Dublin Scioto in this weight class.

Ranked second in this weight is the fourth and final returning state medalist, the Brown University bound Sizemore. He was seventh last year at 160 pounds, and has had a very positive run of production since then. He missed placement at the preseason Super 32 by one match, was champion at Franklin, took fifth at the Ironman, was runner-up at the Dvorak, fourth at Escape the Rock, and champion of the Grizzly Invitational. Four other ranked wrestlers join him at the Kettering Fairmont district.

The first of which is another senior, returning state qualifier Beachler, who has titles at Edgewood and Valley View to go with a sixth place finish at North Canton. Next is the sophomore Amburgy, who was champion at the Grappler Gold Invitational, eighth at the Dvorak, then missing placement at the Powerade by one match. The senior Belcher was third at SWOWCA and Delaware Hayes, eighth at Brecksville, and runner-up at the CIT; while fellow senior Smith was third at GMVWA and champion at Beaver Creek.

Ranked fifth and sixth in this weight class are a pair of sophomores from Northeast Ohio, Hightower and Vandaia. Hightower was 1-2 last year at the state tournament in the 160 weight class, but sustained an injury during that event which caused him to miss the entire month of December. Despite that, he is the leading figure at the Mentor district, which features just two other ranked wrestlers. The senior Garee has improved significantly from a 1-2 district tournament performance last year, as he has finished sixth

at Brecksville, runner-up at Perrysbug, and champion at Maumee Bay. Fellow senior Nagy did not even make district last year, but this year won at Solon up a weight class before missing placement in this weight at Brecksville by one match, while following it up with a third at Fairfield and fourth at Muamee Bay.

Vanadia went two-and-out at 152 last year after rallying from behind to upset a returning state qualifier from Ashland in his go-to-state bout. On the season he was 3-2 at both the Ironman and Beast, advancing to the second day of each event; while since then he was third at Brecksville and the Brooke Classic and runner-up at the Bill Dies. Wokojance and Vanadia are joined by two other ranked wrestlers at the Hoover district. List also went 0-2 at the state tournament last year as a freshman at Medina in the 152 weight class, but transferred to Wadsworth this season; a season in which he went 1-2 at the Ironman, was top eight at North Canton (losing to Beachler in the consolation quarterfinal), finished fourth at Medina, and was runner-up at the Grizzly Invitational; he also lost 13-3 to Vanadia during a mid-January dual meet. Rozier went 2-2 at district last year as a sophomore at 160 pounds, and this season was champion at Clear Fork, third at West Salem Northwestern, and sixth at the Bill Dies.

195 pounds

1. Michael Baker, Cincinnati LaSalle, senior (K. Fairmont)
2. Ethan Hatcher, Brecksville, junior (Hoover)
3. Seth Shumate, Dublin Coffman, freshman (H. Darby)
4. Deron Pulliam, Dublin Scioto, junior (H. Darby)
5. Jordan Greer, Avon, junior (Mentor)
6. Micah Clemson, Canton McKinley, senior (Hoover)
7. Jacob Kowalski, Springboro, junior (K. Fairmont)
8. Max Boyle, Harrison, senior (K. Fairmont)
9. Logan Painter, Marysville, senior (H. Darby)
10. Chrisean Merritt, Maple Hts., junior (Hoover)
11. Mitchell Gibson, West Clermont, senior (K. Fairmont)
12. Justin Jaeckin, Olmsted Falls, junior (Mentor)
13. Nick Lisco, St. Edward, junior (Mentor)
14. Thomas Feldman, Cincinnati Elder, senior (K. Fairmont)
15. Jacob McCloskey, Delaware Hayes, senior (H. Darby)
16. Jack Murphy, Dover, senior (Hoover)

HDAR – Shumate, Pulliam, Painter, McCloskey; Jake Nelson (Groveport-Madison, sophomore)

HOOV – Hatcher, Clemson, Merritt, Murphy; Blake Chrisman (Medina, junior)

KF – Baker, Kowalski, Boyle, Gibson; Feldman

MEN – Greer, Jaeckin, Lisco, Lewis Aguilar (Elyria, senior); Ty Cobb (Oregon Clay, freshman)

Outside of 106, this weight class (along with 220 and 285) features the least state tournament experience of any in Division I this year with just four returning state qualifiers. It's a group led by three-time state qualifier Baker, who finished sixth in this weight class last year after going 1-2 his first two years in the 170 pound state tournament bracket. Other than an overtime loss to Pennsylvania freshman Franklin in the consolation match to place at the Ironman, Baker's other three losses are to nationally ranked opposition (7-2 to Dugan in the Ironman quarters, 10-2 to Christensen in the Dvorak final, and 5-3 to Garcia in the Escape the Rock final).

Ranked second in this state weight is the junior Hatcher, who has qualified for state at 152 and then 170, but went 0-2 on each occasion. Since last year's state tournament, it's been a most excellent string of production: placing at the NHSCA Sophomore Nationals, finishing a rather unexpected sixth at the UWW Cadet Nationals in freestyle, and placing fifth in Cadet freestyle in Fargo during the off-season. The regular season includes placing fifth at the Ironman (beating Franklin in the consolation quarterfinal), third at the Beast of the East, second at Brecksville, and then first at the Bill Dies and Brooke Classic; three of those four losses have come to nationally ranked opposition, the other loss (Brecksville final) was reversed in the Bill Dies semifinal.

A pair of Hilliard Darby district wrestlers are next in the rankings, Shumate and Pulliam. The freshman Shumate placed in both Greco-Roman and freestyle at the Cadet Nationals this summer in the 170 pound weight class, and then was 3-2 in that same weight class at the Super 32 in late October. He started the season at 182, where he was champion at Big Walnut beating two-time state qualifier Vanmeter 13-2 in the final and placing third at North Canton with four wins over state qualifiers/placers. Moving up to 195, he was champion at Medina beating Junior freestyle All-American Cover by a 5-1 decision in the final and also winning gold at Delaware Hayes.

Pulliam is the only additional returning state medalist in this weight class, other than Baker, as he placed seventh last year during his sophomore season at 182 pounds. This season includes titles at North Canton (beating Wolak 7-4 in the final), Marion Harding, and Dublin Scioto before finishing runner-up at Delaware Hayes where he was pinned by Shumate in the final. A pair of ranked wrestlers, both seniors, join Shumate and Pulliam at the district tournament. Returning state alternate Painter has placed fourth at SWOWCA and Top Gun while missing out on placing at Brecksville by a single match; McCloskey has top five finishes in four different tournaments this year, including finishing runner-up at Top Gun. Returning go-to-state match losers Nelson and Andrew Sherman (Westland, senior) are not ranked in the top sixteen.

The fifth primary contender in this weight class is the junior Greer, a state alternate last year in this weight class. On the current season, he beat Cover 3-1 in overtime to win the Cobos Classic during the season's opening weekend, and then followed it up with a Brecksville title beating Hatcher 5-2 in the final. He would lose to Hatcher 5-1 in the Bill Dies semi and then default the consolation final bout. Just two ranked wrestlers join Greer at the Mentor district, both are also juniors. Jaeckin was champion at Olentangy Liberty before placing fourth at Medina and fifth at the Bill Dies; while Lisco went 2-2 at the Powerade before upsetting Michigan state champ Turner 11-9 in a dual meet, it's a result that should be noted even if it is unsustainable.

Last of those with state experience in this weight is the senior Clemson, who was 1-2 last year at the Schott in this weight class. His current season includes titles at the Wayne Invitational up a weight class and at Hudson in this weight class. Clemson is ranked second to Hatcher among those at a Hoover district that features two additional ranked wrestlers in Merritt and Murphy. Merritt was state alternate in this weight last year as a sophomore, while his current season includes a runner-up finish to Clemson at Hudson. Murphy did not qualify for district last year as a junior, but this season has been most excellent winning titles at the Mike Lewis Invitational then beating two-time state qualifier Loughman to win at Sheridan, along with placing sixth at Top Gun.

Baker is joined by four other ranked wrestlers at the Kettering Fairmont district. It's a group led by state alternate Kowalski and go-to-state match loser Boyle. The junior Kowalski has won titles at GMWA, Beaver creek, and Watkins while also beating Boyle 7-6 at the regional duals. The senior Boyle was

champion at SWOWCA, Fairfield, and the Grizzly Invitational while finishing third at Medina (losing 13-4 to Shumate). Fellow senior Gibson placed third at SWOWCA and first at Milford; while another senior in Feldman was fifth at SWOWCA, missed placing at Brecksville by a match, was runner-up at CIT, and third at Delaware Hayes.

220 pounds

1. Josh Bever, Ashland, senior (Mentor)
2. Seamus O'Malley, St. Edward, senior (Mentor)
3. Jarin Curtis, Massillon Perry, senior (Hoover)
4. Caleb Wood, Fremont Ross, senior (Mentor)
5. Ethan Smegal, Marysville, senior (H. Darby)
6. Lazar Gasic, North Royalton, junior (Hoover)
7. Riley Ucker, Dublin Coffman, freshman (H. Darby)
8. Kaden Tong, Olentangy Liberty, junior (H. Darby)
9. Drew Levis, Elyria, senior (Mentor)
10. Jared Sanders, Uniontown Lake, senior (Hoover)
11. Jake Noon, Findlay, junior (Mentor)
12. Joe Wahl, West Clermont, senior (K. Fairmont)
13. Bryan Heyward, Northmont, senior (K. Fairmont)
14. Jay Thompson, Worthington Kilbourne, junior (H. Darby)
15. Nathan Robinson, Delaware Hayes, junior (H. Darby)
16. Bradley Smith, Beaver Creek, senior (K. Fairmont)

HDAR – Smegal, Ucker, Tong, Thompson; Robinson

HOOV – Curtis, Gasic, Sanders, Eddie Sevastos (Brunswick, junior); TBD

KF – Wahl, Heyward, Smith, Jaeden Crowe (Kettering Fairmont, senior); Ivan Pace, Jr. (Colerain, senior)

MEN – Bever, O'Malley, Wood, Levis; Noon

Like the 195 pound weight class, just two state medalists and four total state qualifiers feature among the field. Both state placers exit the Mentor district. Though O'Malley placed higher than Bever last year at state (fourth vs. fifth), it was Bever who earned the district title, which was keyed by a 10-3 semifinal victory over O'Malley. The current season for Bever includes titles at the Gorman and West Holmes, which were preceded by a third place finish at Brecksville. O'Malley missed the Ironman after being a lynchpin at defensive end for the Division I football state champion Eagles. He advanced to the semifinals of the Powerade, where he lost 11-0 Deluca, who is nationally ranked from Pennsylvania; O'Malley would subsequently default down to sixth. Since then his notable results consist of a 1-0 loss to his top five in the country opponent from Blair and a 13-2 defeat against Yatooma from Detroit Catholic Central.

Three other ranked wrestlers join these two at the Mentor district, a group which is led by returning state qualifier Wood; current season performances include runner-up finishes at the Gorman and Delaware Hayes, sixth at Brecksville, and a poor eighth place finish at Maumee Bay. Fellow senior Levis missed placement at the Ironman by one match before going 1-2 at the Beast (though the losses were by 3-0 and 3-1 scores), then placing eighth at Brecksville and fifth at Maumee Bay. The junior Noon was champion at the Kilted Klassic before taking fourth at Findlay, sixth at Maumee Bay, and fifth at the Grizzly Invitational.

Ranked third in this weight class is returning state qualifier Curtis, who will be playing running back next year at NCAA Division II Wheeling Jesuit. His current season includes placing eighth at the Ironman, seventh at the Beast, fifth at Brecksville, fourth at Top Gun, and winning the title at Delaware Hayes. The district field at Hoover is extremely limited as there are just two other ranked wrestlers and it was next to impossible to identify a fifth wrestler to list. The junior Gasic was a go-to-state match loser last year, and this season started strong with a title at Solon and runner-up at the North Coast Classic before an injury that following week cost him a month of competition; his return to the mat was in finishing third at the Hephner (beating Sanders 4-3 for bronze). The senior Sanders is a returning state alternate, and his season includes placing third at North Canton, failing to place at Brecksville and Maumee Bay, and taking fourth at the Hephner.

In words that might be stunning to read, the Hilliard Darby district is deep at this weight class with five ranked wrestlers present. Leading the group is returning state qualifier Smegal, who missed the first three weeks of the season before going 2-2 at Brecksville; he then won titles at Dublin Scioto and Watkins, while in between it was a fifth place finish at Top Gun. Next in line is the freshman Ucker, who was seventh in Cadet freestyle this summer and in the current season finished fifth at Big Walnut, fourth at Medina, and third at Delaware Hayes; along with losing 9-2 to Smegal in the regional duals. Tong was a go-to-state match loser in this weight last year as a sophomore, and was champion at Olentangy Liberty, runner-up at the Grizzly Invitational, while missing placement at the Ironman by one match. Fellow junior Thompson was champion at Upper Arlington, runner-up at Dublin Scioto, and sixth at the Top Gun; while another junior Robinson was fourth at Olentangy Liberty, the GMVWA, and Delaware Hayes and eighth at Top Gun.

The district at Kettering Fairmont does not feature a projected state placer, and has just three ranked wrestlers led by the senior Wahl. His season includes third place finishes at SWOWCA and GMVWA along with a title at Milford. Fellow senior Heyward was a state alternate last year, with titles this season at Xenia and Troy along with a third at North Coast and fifth at GMVWA; while another senior Smith was champion at Beavercreek.

285 pounds

1. Jacob Padilla, Huber Hts. Wayne, junior (K. Fairmont)
2. Max Millin, Massillon Perry, junior (Hoover)
3. Michael Mather, Uniontown Lake, senior (Hoover)
4. Daniel Bucknavich, Midview, junior (Mentor)
5. Jack Roesch, Avon, senior (Mentor)
6. Robert Brown, Cincinnati LaSalle, senior (K. Fairmont)
7. Brian Kilbane, St. Edward, junior (Mentor)
8. Jake Burns, Wooster, junior (Hoover)
9. Brock Kimble, Austintown Fitch, senior (Hoover)
10. Day'marin Jones, Franklin Hts., senior (H. Darby)
11. Yousef Awad, Lakewood, junior (Hoover)
12. Omari Green, Central Crossing, junior (H. Darby)
13. Jake Bever, Ashland, sophomore (Mentor)
14. Nicholas Nash, Glen Oak, senior (Hoover)
15. Peyton Bartley, Xenia, senior (K. Fairmont)
16. Kevin Stone, Cincinnati Anderson, senior (K. Fairmont)

HDAR – Jones, Green, Rodney Beneker (Hilliard Darby, senior), Eric Feng (Dublin Coffman, senior);
Donovan Hardin (Dublin Scioto, junior)
HOOV – Millin, Mather, Burns, Kimble; Awad, Nash
KF – Padilla, Brown, Bartley, Stone Seth Frantz (Northmont, junior)
MEN – Bucknavich, Roesch, Kilbane, Bever; Tyler Jones (North Olmsted, senior)

Along with 106, this weight class has the least returning state medalists, one in total. That lone individual is a two-time state qualifier in this weight class in Padilla, who placed eighth last year as a sophomore. His current season includes titles at SWOWCA, GMVWA, Top Gun, and Eaton; among those wins are victories over championship finals victories over projected state runners-up (Shafer at GMVWA, Millin at Top Gun).

The lone additional state tournament win among competitors in this weight class comes from fellow junior Millin, who won 3-2 in the opening round last year before losing by fall in the quarters and 3-1 in the tiebreaker against Padilla in the match to place. He placed sixth at the Ironman this season, third at the Beast, second at Top Gun and third at Delaware Hayes. Joining him at Hoover for district are five other ranked wrestlers, a group led by fellow returning state qualifier Mather. The senior has tournament titles at North Canton, Brecksville (overtime decision against Michigan runner-up Kolcheff), Maumee Bay, and the Hephner this season.

Next up is the junior Burns, who was champion at West Salem Northwestern, beating Division III state placer Warren 5-1 in the final. Fellow senior Kimble was fourth at Medina and Top Gun, champion at Youngstown Liberty, fifth at EOWL, and runner-up at the Hephner. The junior Awad was third at Solon before winning titles at Cleveland Central Catholic and Black River, while the senior Nash placed third at Hudson and West Salem Northwestern.

The last remaining state qualifier is the senior Roesch, who was 0-2 last year at 220 pounds. His current season includes a third place finish at Brecksville and a runner-up finish at the Bill Dies. That finals loss at the Bill Dies was to the junior Bucknavich, who has three other tournament titles on the season – those coming at Solon, Medina, and West Holmes. Two other ranked wrestlers will join that pair at the Mentor district, in fact fellow junior Kilbane joins both Roesch and Bucknavich at the Westlake sectional. Kilbane played offensive tackle for the state championship football team at St. Edward; notable for his season is a seventh place finish at Powerade and a 3-2 regional dual meet victory over Kimble. Rounding out that ranked group is the sophomore Bever, whose older brother is the projected 220 pound state champ; his current season includes placing eighth at Brecksville, runner-up at the Gorman, and third at West Holmes.

Joining Padilla at the Kettering Fairmont district is three other ranked wrestlers, including returning state alternate Brown who was champion at Franklin before placing seventh at the Dvorak then sixth at Escape the Rock; he also has a dual meet win over Kilbane from December. The senior Bartley has titles at Western Brown and Milford to go with a third at Xenia, sixth at GMVWA, and fifth at Fairfield; while Stone has titles at Edgewood and Sycamore to go with third place finishes at SWOWCA and Milford.

Stop where you've heard this before, but only two ranked wrestlers exit district competition at Hilliard Darby. The senior Jones was runner-up at Olentangy Liberty before winning titles at Grandview Hts. and Central Crossing, while the junior Green was champion at Olentangy before finishing second at Marion Harding and Delaware Hayes, along with a third at Central Crossing.

Team – based on a state scoring model per ranking position

1. Cincinnati LaSalle (Kettering Fairmont)
2. St. Edward (Mentor)
3. Elyria (Mentor)
4. Brecksville (Hoover)
5. Wadsworth (Hoover)
6. Mason (Kettering Fairmont)
7. Olentangy Liberty (Hilliard Darby)
8. Massillon Perry (Hoover)
9. Perrysburg (Mentor)
10. Dublin Coffman (Hilliard Darby)
11. Harrison (Kettering Fairmont)
12. Huber Hts. Wayne (Kettering Fairmont)

DIVISION II

106 pounds

1. Kyle Rowan, Perry, junior (Alliance)
2. Kenneth Crosby, Akron SVSM, sophomore (Alliance)
3. Nolan Gessler, St. Paris Graham, freshman (Wilmington)
4. Brendan McCrone, Lake Catholic, freshman (Alliance)
5. Nick Barber, Canfield, sophomore (Alliance)
6. Gabe Alda, Bellevue, sophomore (Norwalk)
7. Robbie Sagaris, Aurora, sophomore (Alliance)
8. Drake Cerney, Caledonia River Valley, freshman (Heath)
9. Damon Molina, Wauseon, sophomore (Norwalk)
10. Max Orpzadek, Perkins, sophomore (Norwalk)
11. Caiden Hart, Salem, sophomore (Alliance)
12. David Woolever, Carrollton, freshman (Heath)
13. Drake Decker, Minerva, senior (Heath)
14. Jaymin Salsberry, Beaver Local, freshman (Heath)
15. Caleb Thomas, Lemon Monroe, sophomore (Wilmington)
16. Andrew Stachler, Greenville, junior (Wilmington)

ALL – Rowan, Crosby, McCrone, Barber; Sagaris, Hart

HEA – Cerney, Woolever, Decker, Salsberry; Alexander Crane (Sheridan, freshman)

NOR – Alda, Molina, Orpzadek, Shayne Bianchi (Padua, sophomore); Colin Mellott (Wapakoneta, sophomore)

WIL – Gessler, Thomas, Stachler, Brandon Sauter (Batavia, freshman); Malachi O’Leary (Wyoming, freshman)

Back in eighth grade, Rowan won a Junior High state title at 78 pounds, which was an indication of his ability level. The next year the fact he was able to earn a state alternate spot as an undersized 106 at the loaded Alliance district further demonstrated said ability. The summer of 2017 saw him place fourth in Cadet freestyle at 94 pounds. Then in 2017-18, Rowan was state runner-up at 106, losing 7-3 to Jacob Decatur in the state final. Subsequently, he would finish runner-up at the UWW Cadet Nationals at 106 pounds and earn a second straight Cadet freestyle All-American finish.

All this is a prelude to his current junior season where as a full sized 106, he has cleared past all challengers and is a top five wrestler in the country. Rowan has titles at Ironman, Brecksville, Maumee Bay, and the Grizzly Invitational while winning two tournaments up in weight class (113 at Willoughby South and 120 at the CVC where he weighed-in at 113). Yet again, Alliance at 106 is extraordinarily deep with four of the top five and six of the top eleven ranked wrestlers present.

Projected to finish second is Crosby, who was fourth at this weight class in Colorado last year and a Cadet Greco-Roman runner-up over the summer. His season includes placing eighth at the Beast, runner-up at Medina and the Grizzly Invitational, and earning a title at the Top Gun. Next in line is the freshman McCrone, who was champion at North Canton and CIT while finishing fifth at Solon, Brecksville, and the Grizzly Invitational; he also beat Crosby 6-4 in overtime at the regional duals. The sophomore Barber was stuck at 113 last year due to Fletcher’s presence at 106; his current season includes finishing fourth at Solon (splitting bouts with McCrone), third at the Bill Dies, plus winning titles at the EOWL and Hephner. Fellow sophomore Sagaris went 1-2 last year at district in the 113 weight

class; while this year he was a match from placement at Brecksville and Top Gun at 113 before finishing sixth at the Grizzly Invitational in this weight. Yet another sophomore Hart was 2-2 at district in this weight last year, while the current season includes a title at Beaver Local.

The Graham brigade starts out yet again with an excellent opening weight wrestler in the freshman Gessler, who was runner-up at Junior High state last year. The current season includes a runner-up finish at the GMVWA, winning the Valley View title, and placing fourth at the Grizzly Invitational (2-1 win over McCrone). Just two ranked wrestlers will join Gessler at the Wilmington district, the sophomore Thomas and the junior Stachler. Thomas was fourth at SWOWCA, champion at Logan Elm, and runner-up at Milford; while returning state alternate Stachler was champion at Edgewood, runner-up at Sidney and Miami Trace, along with taking third at Troy.

There's a group of three ranked wrestlers at the Norwalk district, led by the sophomore Alda, who placed seventh at Junior High state in 2017 before mid-season injury precluded him from state qualification contention last year. This season includes titles at the Cobos Classic, Bellevue, and the Gorman along with missing placement at Brecksville by one match. Returning go-to-state match loser Orpzadek won two tournament title at 113, while in this weight class he was sixth at Medina and one match short of placing at Maumee Bay. Lastly it's another sophomore in Molina, who was 1-2 at district last year in this weight class, but did pick up a 3-2 dual meet win over Orpzadek last week; other season highlights include being one match away from placing at Brecksville, finishing second at Perrysburg, and seventh at Maumee Bay.

Rounding it out is a quartet of ranked wrestlers at Heath, led by the freshman Cerney, who was seventh at Medina before winning titles at Nelsonville York and Watkins Memorial. Another freshman Woolever finished top eight at North Canton, was champion at Licking Valley, and then runner-up at Top Gun. The senior Decker has been at both this weight and 113 on the season; in this weight, there is a runner-up finish at Licking Valley and fifth at Top Gun, while up a weight it's a second at Cambridge and sixth at North Canton. Lastly there is another freshman in Salsberry who was runner-up at Beaver Local and EOWL before winning the OVAC title; in the regional dual final he beat Barber 6-4 despite losing to him on two earlier occasions.

113 pounds

1. Jacob Decatur, CVCA, senior (Alliance)
2. Cael Woods, West Holmes, senior (Heath)
3. Dierre Clayton, Akron SVSM, sophomore (Alliance)
4. Jake Manley, Otsego, junior (Norwalk)
5. Nic Willingham, Aurora, freshman (Alliance)
6. Michael Petrella, Bishop Hartley, junior (Heath)
7. Trace Braun, St. Paris Graham, sophomore (Wilmington)
8. Blake Sheppard, New Lexington, junior (Heath)
9. Howard Williams, East Liverpool, sophomore (Heath)
10. Rico Cunningham, Sandusky, junior (Norwalk)
11. Caleb Hernandez, Napoleon, senior (Norwalk)
12. Ethan Fletcher, Canfield, sophomore (Alliance)
13. Jake Hamulak, Chardon, junior (Alliance)
14. Josh Dunn, Goshen, junior (Wilmington)
15. Brendan Dawes, Washington C.H., freshman (Wilmington)
16. Justin Mills, Valley View, junior (Wilmington)

ALL – Decatur, Clayton, Willingham, Fletcher; Hamulak

HEA – Woods, Petrella, Sheppard, Williams; Mark Emmerling (Beaver Local, freshman)

NOR – Manley, Cunningham, Hernandez, Noah Alda (Bellevue, junior); Eddie Pinc (Medina Buckeye, sophomore)

WIL – Braun, Dunn, Dawes, Mills; Kaleb Ream (Springfield Shawnee, senior)

Just last season, there were a pair of two-time state champions that I did not to pick to win a third state title (Brendon Fenton and Kevon Freeman); Fenton ended up finishing second, while Freeman upset Ryan Thomas on Saturday night to earn gold. In this weight class, two-time state champion Decatur ended the 2017-18 season ranked first nationally at 106 pounds; however, his present year form is clearly not up to that standard. In placing sixth at the Ironman, he was 3-0 in matches that went past regulation (two of those victories were against nationally ranked out-of-state opponents); while the losses came by 3-0 and 4-0 score to top ten national out-of-state opponents.

Also on the ledger for Decatur is losses to the wrestlers ranked second and third in this weight class. He lost 2-1 in the tiebreaker to two-time state placer Woods in the North Canton final, while it was a 5-2 loss (3-2 until the last five-to-ten seconds of the bout) against Clayton in the Grizzly Invitational semifinal. However, there are also wins over nationally ranked Moran of Indiana in the Brecksville final and an ultimate tiebreaker win over the very talented Moon to earn gold at Maumee Bay. When all is said and done, I see Decatur channeling that ability level into a formula that yields him a third state title.

The sophomore Clayton, who lost 5-4 to Fletcher last year in his district consolation semifinal at 106, has found a new gear this season. Since going a combined 5-4 at Ironman and Beast, it's been extremely positive. There was the third at Medina (only losing 4-3 to Agin in a preliminary round), a Top Gun title where he beat three state qualifiers, and then a runner-up finish at the Grizzly Invitational. Three additional ranked wrestlers join Decatur and Clayton at Alliance, including Willingham, who was a junior high state champ last year. This season has been spent in part trying get down to 106 unsuccessfully, while on the mat include a pair of losses to Clayton (Grizzly Invitational prelim and regional dual final) and a win over Braun (Grizzly Invitational fifth place match). Next is essentially a two-person battle for one spot between returning state qualifier Fletcher and Hamulak, a returning state eighth in this weight class. Fletcher went 2-2 at Brecksville before finishing second at the EOWL and third at both the Bill Dies and Hephner; while Hamulak was champion at Solon, fourth at Kenston and Perrysburg, and second at Top Gun.

Woods placed eighth at 113 as a freshman before placing third last year at 106 pounds, a tournament run that included an 8-2 quarterfinal loss to Decatur. The current season includes tournament titles at four events, most notably those at North Canton (beating Decatur) and opening weekend at Cambridge where he went 120 and beat two-time state placer Wayt 12-4 in the final. Three additional ranked wrestlers will join Woods at Heath. Returning state placer Petrella has titles at Olentangy Liberty and the CIT to go with a seventh at Brecksville and second at Licking Valley. The junior Sheppard was a state alternate last year, and this year has titles in four tournaments (including a 3-2 finals win over Petrella at Licking Valley) to go with a seventh at Medina and third at New Lexington. while Williams went 1-2 at state last year as a freshman; while this year he has tournament titles at the Gorman (at 120) and OVAC in addition to placing fourth at Barnesville and missing out on placement at Medina by one match, both those at 120.

A trio of returning state qualifiers find themselves as the three ranked wrestlers at the Norwalk district. Two-time state qualifier Manley was runner-up at Medina before winning titles at Perrysburg and Van Buren, fellow junior Cunningham was champion at Defiance and the Gorman before placing fifth at Maumee Bay, while two-time state qualifier Hernandez was fourth at Medina and third at Perrysburg.

The four ranked wrestlers at Wilmington include two that each won a state tournament bout last year. The sophomore Braun was second at GMVWA, champion at Valley View, and sixth at the Grizzly Invitational; while the junior Dunn has been in-and-out this season, including a finals appearance against his teammate Huff up a weight class at Western Brown. Next is the freshman Dawes, who was runner-up to Sheppard (3-1 loss) at his home event in December before winning at Nelsonville York and Washington C.H. in January. The junior Mills was a go-to-state match loser up at 120 last year, but this year was runner-up at Franklin and Valley View before taking titles at Sycamore and Eaton. Not ranked in the top sixteen is returning state qualifier Ream.

120 pounds

1. Logan Ours, Beaver Local, freshman (Heath)
2. Christian Wayt, West Branch, senior (Alliance)
3. Garrett Lautzenheiser, Louisville, sophomore (Alliance)
4. Payton Burgdorf, Firelands, junior (Norwalk)
5. Gavin Ritter, Wauseon, senior (Norwalk)
6. Jimmy Balazy, Padua, senior (Norwalk)
7. Jason Mayes, Jefferson, senior (Alliance)
8. *Terry Gatrell, Meadowbrook, senior (Heath)*
9. Koen Kish, St. Clairsville, sophomore (Heath)
10. Tyler Masters, West Holmes, junior (Heath)
11. Chase Huff, Goshen, junior (Wilmington)
12. Bret Minnick, Tiffin Columbian, freshman (Norwalk)
13. Joey Dima, Valley View, senior (Wilmington)
14. Dawson Show, St. Paris Graham, senior (Wilmington)
15. Brandon Brown, Carrollton, sophomore (Heath)
16. Caden Scarbrough, CVCA, sophomore (Alliance)
17. Anthony Trivisonno, Lake Catholic, sophomore (Alliance)

ALL – Wayt, Lautzenheiser, Mayes, Scarbrough; Trivisonno

HEA – Ours, *Gatrell*, Kish, Masters, Brown; Jarrett Warrington (Claymont, senior)

NOR – Burgdorf, Ritter, Balazy, Minnick; Jordan Holt (Perkins, senior)

WIL – Huff, Dima, Show, Gaige Reeves (Bellefontaine, senior); Chanston Moll (Westfall, junior)

Two years running Wayt has found himself in the state semifinal against an opponent from Beaver Local (Cole McComas both times), with it ending unkindly both times. In 2017 it was a 4-3 loss, while last year he was unable to hold on to a late third period lead then lost 4-2 in the tiebreaker. This year it's a different Beaver Local wrestler that could be matched up with Wayt deep in the tournament.

That would be the freshman Ours, who was a Junior High state champion at 120 last year. Though indications point to him beating McComas in practice, he's the one that has dropped in weight class to stretch the Beavers very talented lineup. While at 126, he won Cambridge with two victories over state medalists, went 2-2 at the Ironman, and was runner-up at the EOWL. Down at 120, he was champion at OVAC and pinned returning state placer Lautzenheiser in the regional dual final.

Wayt and Lautzenheiser both placed fourth at state last year, and are among five ranked wrestlers at the Alliance district (stop me where we've heard that before, and you'll keep on hearing about five-plus ranked wrestlers in a weight class at this district site). The current season for Wayt includes a runner-up finish at Cambridge before he won titles at Barnesville, Pin City, and Top Gun; while for Lautzenheiser he went 113 at Ironman and missed weight the second day before moving up to 120 where he won titles at North Canton and the EOWL, while placing second at Brecksville and Maumee Bay (beating Ritter in both semifinals then losing to Canitano in each final).

The senior Mayes was expected to make state last year, but lost on Friday night at district to Fletcher 9-2, whom he had beaten two times earlier in the season; that put him against Lautzenheiser to go, where he fell by the score of 5-3. This season has been most excellent, as he was champion at Riverside before finishing second at Perry Pin City (beat DI state placer Sabin in the semis), EOWL, and the Bill Dies. The sophomore Scarbrough was backup to Decatur and Williams in the opening two weights, while this season he placed sixth at North Canton, eighth at Maumee Bay, and fourth at the Grizzly Invitational along with falling one match short of the podium at Brecksville. Fellow sophomore Trivisonno did beat Scarbrough to place fifth at North Canton, but lost to Scabrough in placing seventh at the Grizzly Invitational, along with placing second at the CIT.

Two other title threats reside at the Norwalk district, returning state placers Burgdorf and Ritter. The junior Burgdorf has twice competed at 106, and if he gets to Saturday night at the Schott, he would be the first state finalist for Firelands' program. He was champion at Medina before placing third at Perrysburg and Milan Edison. The senior Ritter has been to state twice as well, and this season includes a third place finish at Brecksville, second at Perrysburg, and fourth at Maumee Bay. Burgdorf beat Ritter 8-4 at Maumee Bay, while Ritter beat Burgdorf 1-0 at the regional duals. Also ranked from this district are two-time state qualifier Balazy and the freshman Minnick. Balazy was runner-up at North Coast, eighth at Brecksville, and champion at the CIT; while junior high state runner-up Minnick missed placement by one match at Brecksville and was third at the Gorman.

Circling back to Ours at Heath, there will be three or four other ranked wrestlers in that district. The senior Gatrell is a two-time state alternate, and has competed both at 120 and 126 this season. Up one weight he was champion at Union Local and Barnesville, finishing second at Beaver Local; while at the OVAC, he was runner-up in this weight class. Climactical considerations will be at the heart of his decision, and it's a tough one. Fellow returning state alternate Kish, who was runner-up at NHSCA Freshman Nationals last spring lost 12-11 to Gatrell in the OVAC semis on the way to a third place finish, while he was runner-up at North Canton (beating Masters) and the Brooke Classic. Returning state placer Masters has titles at the Wayne Invitational and West Holmes to go with third place finishes at North Canton and (at 126) Cambridge where he lost to Ours. Rounding out the ranked group is returning state qualifier Brown, who was fourth at North Canton before finishing second at Top Gun and West Holmes. Also here is 2017 state qualifier Warrington.

The Goshen district features the three remaining ranked wrestlers headlined by the junior Huff, who was eighth at 106 last year, and this year was finalist at Western Brown. 2017 state qualifier Dima was a state alternate last year, and this season features a runner-up finish at Franklin to go with titles at Valley View, Sycamore, and Eaton; while the senior Show was a state alternate two years ago and missed last year with injury, with this season including a seventh at the GMVWA, runner-up finish at Valley View, and fifth place at the Grizzly Invitational.

126 pounds

1. Cole McComas, Beaver Local, junior (Heath)
2. Connor McCrone, Lake Catholic, senior (Alliance)
3. Peyton Kellar, Vincent Warren, sophomore (Heath)
4. Peyton Blasko, Steubenville, senior (Heath)
5. Davin Rhoads, Louisville, sophomore (Alliance)
6. Chris Kelly, St. Paris Graham, junior (Wilmington)
7. Nolan Ray, Wauseon, junior (Norwalk)
8. Matthew Williams, CVCA, sophomore (Alliance)
9. Pierce Taylor, Cincinnati McNicholas, freshman (Wilmington)
10. Terry Gatrell, Meadowbrook, senior (Heath)
11. Collin Koenig, Perry, sophomore (Alliance)
12. Andrew Branson, Tiffin Columbian, senior (Norwalk)
13. Matt Kaufmann, Fairview, junior (Norwalk)
14. Dominick Speelman, Carrollton, freshman (Heath)
15. Sam Van Sickle, Akron SVSM, sophomore (Alliance)
16. Keegan Kohler, Fairfield Union, junior (Wilmington)
17. Anthony Ashley, Medina Buckeye, sophomore (Norwalk)

ALL – McCrone, Rhoads, Williams, Koenig; Van Sickle

HEA – McComas, Kellar, Blasko, *Gatrell*, Speelman; Deven Factor (Sheridan, junior)

NOR – Ray, Branson, Kaufmann, Ashley; Zane Hull (Napoleon, senior)

WIL – Kelly, Taylor, Kohler, Tyler Woods (Franklin, sophomore); Tyler Harkins (Norwood, junior)

This is truly a wide open weight class. There are six wrestlers here that on any given weekend could win state gold; furthermore, a bad tournament for any of these athletes could mean a finish off the podium. Even with there being no “protection” present within the state draw, it should be noted that district tournament performance and the subsequent state draw could influence the complexity of paths to a state title.

On a total whim of intuition, the pick to win state gold is the junior McComas, who was runner-up at state the last two years. The ability to win multiple matches at the Schott on the front side is a skill and experience that cannot be replicated. His season started in the 132 weight class, where he won titles at Cambridge and Beaver Local, while going 3-2 at the Ironman in between (beating Carmany 5-1 while losing to two nationally ranked out-of-state opponents. Dropping into this weight saw him place fourth at Brecksville, where he beat McCrone in overtime and Rhoads 4-3, but was upset by Williams in the tiebreaker in the semi and was pinned by Shawver; then he lost the OVAC final to Blasko 6-5 in the tiebreaker, an opponent he went 3-0 against last year.

Kellar and Blasko join McComas at the Heath district. Kellar placed fifth last year as a freshman at 106 pounds before placing at the Flo Nationals in April; while this season started with a runner-up finish at Cambridge losing in OT to Ours and then going 2-2 at the Ironman beating Ours 4-2 on the backside (losses were to a pair of nationally ranked out-of-state wrestlers). Subsequent results include titles at three tournaments. The senior Blasko placed seventh at state competing at 113 last year after qualifying at 106 the year before. This season includes a fifth place finish at North Canton in the 132 weight class, the OVAC title in this weight class, a 6-4 dual meet loss to Ours, before pinning Rhoads at the regional duals.

Either one or two other ranked wrestlers will be here. Gatrell, who was mentioned in the 120 discussion, and the freshman Speelman. Speelman's season includes a sixth place finish at North Canton, runner-up finish at Licking Valley (losing to Kellar), fifth at Top Gun, and third at West Holmes.

Another "gut play" is ranking three-time state qualifier McCrone second in this weight class. The future Ohio Bobcat placed fourth then fifth at state before a poor state tournament last year in this weight class where he went 1-2. Going into the tournament at the Schott, McCrone had an outside shot of winning after losing the district final 3-2 in the ultimate tiebreaker to eventual champion David Massey; however Thursday afternoon was not pretty, losing 8-2 to Wortham, and then he was eliminated on Friday morning with a 4-2 overtime loss. This season started with a runner-up finish at Solon, includes titles at North Canton (beating Rhoads in the semifinal) and CIT, a fourth place finish at Brecksville, and a third at the Grizzly Invitational (was pinned in the semifinal by Kelly when leading 6-2 late in the second period).

Yet again, the Alliance district is absolutely congested, as four ranked wrestlers join McCrone in the field. Said group is led by Rhoads, who needed a 4-3 win over two-time state placer Hunter Ryan to merely make the state tournament, where he would go on to place seventh. In the summer, the sophomore was a Cadet Greco-Roman national champion; this season includes a 3-2 performance at the Ironman (beating state placer Allen in overtime), third place finishes at North Canton and Maumee Bay (where he took Shawver to overtime in a quarterfinal loss), a sixth at Brecksville, and beating Ours to win the EOWL.

Williams – state alternate last year as a freshman – performed out of his mind to finish second at Brecksville beating two returning state placers before the semifinal win over McComas, along with placing fourth at North Canton and the Grizzly Invitational plus eighth at Maumee Bay. Fellow sophomore Koenig was a go-to-state match loser last year, while this season includes third place finishes at North Coast and Perry Pin City, championships at Willoughby South and the CVC, and an eighth at Brecksville. Fellow sophomore Van Sickle went 2-2 at district last year, eliminated with losses to Hunter Ryan and Rhoads; he was 0-4 between the Ironman and Beast before taking third at Medina, seventh at the Top Gun, and eighth at the Grizzly Invitational.

Last in the group of six is Graham junior Kelly, a two-time state finalist in Arizona. He won multiple matches at the preseason Super 32, including one over an Indiana state champion but then went 0-2 at the Ironman with losses to a pair of unheralded out-of-state opponents. Follow-up performances were a third at the GMVWA, first at Valley View, and second at the Grizzly Invitational. His district at Wilmington features just two other ranked wrestlers, junior high state champion Taylor and returning state qualifier Kohler. Taylor was champion up a weight class at Williamsburg before placing third at SWOWCA and second at Madeira in this weight class; while the junior Kohler was champion at Logan and West Jefferson before placing second at Sheridan and third at New Lexington.

Rounding out the district tournaments is a group of four ranked wrestlers at Norwalk led by returning state placer Ray. The junior placed sixth last year after advancing to the state semifinals in this weight class; this season features missing placement at Brecksville by one match up at 132. The senior Branson qualified for state two years ago, and this season includes missing placement by one match at two tournaments (up at 132 in the Gorman and in this weight at Maumee Bay). Kaufmann went 1-2 last year at the state tournament as a sophomore, while this year includes titles at Lorain and Hudson, a third at Kenston and failing to place at Maumee Bay (eliminated with an 8-2 loss to Branson). Ashley also went 1-2 at the state tournament, doing so last year at 113 as a freshman. His season features titles at the

Mike Lewis Invitational and West Holmes, missing placement at Medina and the Gorman by one match, and advancing to the Bill Dies semis. Returning state qualifier Jameson Mullins (Port Clinton, sophomore) is not ranked, but is in this district field as well.

132 pounds

1. Jordan Decatur, CVCA, senior (Alliance)
2. Nick Moore, St. Paris Graham, sophomore (Wilmington)
3. Jack Gorman, Aurora, senior (Alliance)
4. Isaiah Wortham, Dayton C-J, junior (Wilmington)
5. Brady O'Connor, Indian Valley, senior (Heath)
6. Miles Knuckles, Coventry, senior (Alliance)
7. Brandon Reeves, Woodridge, senior (Alliance)
8. Michael Kelley, Norton, junior (Alliance)
9. Cody Matthews, Marengo Highland, freshman (Heath)
10. Logan Schoen, Perkins, senior (Norwalk)
11. Alex Delgarbino, Girard, junior (Alliance)
12. Jonathan Potts, Beaver Local, sophomore (Heath)
13. Tyler Muldrew, Steubenville, sophomore (Heath)
14. Shaun Pletcher, Philo, sophomore (Heath)
15. Hayden Martin, Warsaw River View, junior (Heath)
16. Nick Coreno, Lake Catholic, junior (Alliance)

ALL – Decatur, Gorman, Knuckles, Reeves; Kelley, Delgarbino, Coreno

HEA – O'Connor, Matthews, Potts, Muldrew; Pletcher, Martin

NOR – Schoen, Carter Kroll (Ontario, sophomore), Elijah Hunter (Sandusky, sophomore), Cameron Pollard (Otsego, senior); Corbin Houdeshell (Tiffin Columbian, junior)

WIL – Moore, Wortham, Jordan Hoselton (Zane Trace, senior), A.J. Lewandowski (Dayton Oakwood, junior); TBD

Two-time state champion Jordan Decatur has two career state series loss, one that matters and one that doesn't. The one of consequence was to the scale his freshman year at the sectional tournament, when he failed to successfully make weight. The other was in the district final as a sophomore to Hunter Kosco, a result that was reversed in a 7-6 state finals match. Decatur's other seven state tournament bouts have been bonus point victories (three major decisions, two technical falls, and two pins).

The Ohio State signee is as high end as it can get, qualifying for Cadet Worlds in freestyle in 2017, and winning Fargo freestyle titles on three different occasions (2015 and 2016 as a Cadet, 2018 as a Junior). His only loss in the current season came to national No. 2 Shayne van Ness of Blair Academy, 11-5 in the Ironman semifinal, the last five points for van Ness coming when Decatur had to force action trailing 6-5. Decatur has five wins over nationally ranked wrestlers, including three-time state champ D'Emilio in the consolation final at Ironman; he also has won titles at four tournaments this year (North Canton, Brecksville over Burnett, Maumee Bay over Mattin, and Grizzly Invitational).

While Decatur is clearly favored, the sophomore Moore showed the ability to challenge Decatur in the final of the Grizzly Invitation when Decatur needed a late takedown to earn a 3-1 victory. Nick is the younger brother of three-time state champion Brent and four-time state champion Mitch. This season he upset Beau Bartlett (the wrestler that beat van Ness last month) 2-1 in the Ironman round of 16 before losing his next two bouts to nationally ranked opponents, and was champion at GMVWA and

Valley View. Only returning state placer Wortham, eighth last year at 126, joins Moore as a ranked wrestler at Wilmington. On the season, Wortham has titles at Findlay (at 138) and Eaton to go with a third at GMVWA and runner-up finishes at Perrysburg and CIT. Two-time state qualifier Hoselton is also at this district.

Yet again the Alliance district is absurdly loaded with six ranked wrestlers in the hunt for the three qualifying spots outside of Decatur. Said group is led by two-time state placer Gorman, who missed the first month of the season but returned to finish second at Top Gun and fourth at the Grizzly invitational. Returning state qualifier Knuckles was champion at Defiance, while fellow senior Reeves was a go-to-state match loser two years ago but had to go this weight last year as his teammate won state at 126. The current season for Reeves features a championship at Hudson with runner-up finishes at Central Crossing and the Bill Dies.

The junior Kelley qualified for state last year at Division I Barberton before transferring to Norton, where his season includes a title at the Wayne Invitational, finishing fourth at the Gorman, then failing to place at the Bill Dies. Another junior Delgarbino was a state alternate two years ago before going 1-2 last year at district; his season features runner-up finishes at four tournaments and a fifth at Top Gun. Rounding things out is fellow junior Coreno; he finished runner-up at Riverside down a weight, top eight at North Canton in this weight, and went 3-2 at Brecksville before placing top six at both CIT and the Grizzly Invitational.

Last of the returning Ohio state placers in this weight is three-time state qualifier O'Connor, who was sixth last year at 120 pounds. His present season includes two tournament titles, most notably beating a returning state qualifier in the West Holmes final; a third at Beaver Local up a weight (losing 4-3 to Sutton in the semis); and finishing eighth at Brecksville. He anchors a group of six ranked wrestlers at the Heath district. Next up is the freshman Matthews, who was champion at Licking Valley, fourth at Marion Harding up a weight, and third at two additional tournaments. The sophomore Potts was third at the EOWL and runner-up at the OVAC (beating Muldrew 2-1 in the semifinal); while fellow sophomore Muldrew is a returning state qualifier, and has a title at Nelsonville-York to go with the fourth place finish at the OVAC. Another sophomore is Pletcher, who was runner-up at Cambridge, Nelsonville-York, and New Lexington to go with a title at Barnesville; while the junior Martin was third at Cambridge and Licking Valley before winning gold at Utica.

Rounding out the districts at Norwalk is a field that features just one ranked wrestler in Schoen, who went 1-2 at state last year as a junior at 126. His season includes finishing second at Lorain and first at West Salem Northwestern up a weight, while missing placement by one bout at Medina and Maumee Bay in this weight. Returning state qualifier Kroll is not ranked in the top 16, but in this district field.

138 pounds

1. Alek Martin, St. Paris Graham, sophomore (Wilmington)
2. Micah Norwood, sophomore, Bishop Hartley (Heath)
3. *Wade Monebrake, senior, Eaton (Wilmington)*
4. Caden Blust, Tiffin Columbian, senior (Norwalk)
5. Jackson Muldrew, Steubenville, senior (Heath)
6. Hunter Olson, Akron SVSM, senior (Alliance)
7. Dalton Burcher, Indian Valley, senior (Heath)
8. Jared Wright, Beaver Local, senior (Heath)
9. Brayden Ploehs, Hamilton Ross, senior (Wilmington)

10. Ethan Mueller, Minerva, junior (Heath)
11. Carter Mickley, Louisville, junior (Alliance)
12. Kyle Petersen, Aurora, senior (Alliance)
13. Gabe Steyer, Van Wert, junior (Norwalk)
14. Danny Sinchok, CVCA, senior (Alliance)
15. Isaiah Smith, Field, senior (Alliance)
16. Ayyoub Muhammed, Thurgood Marshall, senior (Wilmington)
17. Eian Sherman, Sandusky, senior (Norwalk)

ALL – Olson, Mickley, Petersen, Sinchok, Smith

HEA – Norwood, Muldrew, Burcher, Wright; Mueller

NOR – Blust, Steyer, Sherman, Bailey Gibson (Kenton, senior); TBD

WIL – Martin, *Monebrake*, Ploehs, Muhammed, McKale Callahan (Miami Trace, sophomore); Bryce Stamps (Kenton Ridge, junior)

While Martin was a known commodity entering high school in the 2017-18 season, with also having a positive season up to the state tournament, it was a 6-5 semifinal victory over projected state champion Matthew Cardello that further cemented his place as a high end talent. This season started with finishing one match short of placement at the Ironman, both losses coming to nationally ranked opponents from out of state, though he picked up a 2-0 victory over returning state champion Hepner in consolation. Since then he added titles at the GMVWA and Valley, along with a runner-up finish at the Grizzly Invitational.

One of his direct challengers could come from his own district at Wilmington should the senior Monebrake (smartly) choose to make the drop into this weight class. Monebrake last year was runner-up to Decatur at 132 pounds, and has competed exclusively at 145 season to date with runner-up finishes at both GMVWA and Top Gun. At the GMVWA, he was pinned by Jordan Crace in the final, while he forfeited to Crace in the Top Gun final after beating Division III state champ Burgard in the semifinal. Two other wrestlers appear in the rankings, 2016 state qualifier Ploehs and returning state qualifier Muhammed.

Ploehs was competing at 145 until the regional duals last week. At 145, he was runner-up at four tournaments where he lost to Division I opposition on each occasion (state qualifier Bernhardt and SWOWCA and Fairfield, freshman Niffenegger at Franklin, and state placer Mullins at Eaton). Fellow senior Muhammed has won titles at four tournaments this season.

A group of five wrestlers with state tournament experience is present at Heath, led by the sophomore Norwood who was a quarterfinalist last year when competing for Division I Lancaster before losing 4-1 to Burnett and then 6-3 in the tiebreaker to affirm Gio DiSabato as a four-time state placer. He competed in this weight class at Brecksville, where he finished fifth keyed by wins over Blust and Michigan state champ Edmond. The rest of the season has been at 152, while weighing in at 145 for those competitions after Brecksville.

Two-time state placer Muldrew went 2-2 at the Ironman with a win over Olson before winning at Nelsonville-York and finishing runner-up at the OVAC meet. Three-time state qualifier Burcher, a 2016 state placer, was one match from placing at Brecksville though he had a consolation win over Wright and picked up a tournament title at West Holmes. Fellow senior Wright qualified for state last year at 152, but had to drop two weights this year due to congestion in the Beaver Local lineup (two-time state

placer Lasure at 145 and not being able to beat Krulik at 152, lost to him 2-1 in the final at Cambridge); at this weight class he went 2-2 at Brecksville before finishing runner-up at the EOWL and fourth at Brecksville. The sophomore Mueller qualified last year for state at 126, and this year was champion at Cambridge and Licking Valley, while placing fourth at North Canton and sixth at the Top Gun.

Two-time state placer and three-time state qualifier Blust anchors a field at Norwalk that features just two other ranked wrestlers. The present season for Blust includes a sixth at Brecksville, winning the Gorman, and placing third at Maumee Bay. Returning state qualifier Steyer won a state bout at 132 last year as a sophomore, while this season features a pair of tournament runner-up finishes, those coming at Sidney (up at 145) and Marion Harding. The senior Sherman went 0-2 at state in this weight last year, and has runner-up finishes at Defiance and the Gorman to go with finishing one match short of placing at Maumee Bay.

Wrapping up this weight class is an Alliance district that features five ranked wrestlers, three of whom have made state tournaments before. 2017 state qualifier Olson was a state alternate last year, eliminated with losses to returning state placers McCrone and Joe Wright. This year started with a two-and-out at the Ironman, but then it was going 3-2 at the Beast, fifth place finishes at Medina and Top Gun, before a third at the Grizzly Invitational. He's the class of the field, which leaves four in the hunt for the last three spots.

The junior Mickley went 1-2 at district last year, but started strong with a runner-up finish at North Canton, before missing out on placement by one bout at both Brecksville and Maumee Bay, along with finishing third at the EOWL and Hephner. Returning state placer finished eighth at 120 pounds last year, while this season includes missing out on placement at Brecksville by one match, finishing seventh at Top Gun, and not placing at Wadsworth with narrow losses to Sinchok and Olson. Fellow senior Sinchok lost twice to Smith last year at the district, 9-3 in the opening round and 11-6 in overtime in the consolation semifinal. This season for Sinchok features missing placement at North Canton (top eight finish), Brecksville, and Maumee Bay by one match before finishing eighth at the Grizzly Invitational; while the senior Smith was third at Kenston and eighth at the Top Gun.

145 pounds

1. Jordan Crace, Bellefontaine, senior (Wilmington)
2. Andrew Garr, Aurora, senior (Alliance)
3. *Wade Monebrake, Eaton, senior (Wilmington)*
4. Skyler Lasure, Beaver Local, junior (Heath)
5. Douglas Terry, Granville, sophomore (Heath)
6. Jake Potok, Akron SVSM, senior (Alliance)
7. Brody Conley, Tiffin Columbian, freshman (Norwalk)
8. Antwaun Burns, London, freshman (Heath)
9. Ethan Turnbaugh, Ontario, freshman (Norwalk)
10. Adam Lenhoff, Indian Valley, senior (Heath)
11. Sam LoFaso, Padua, senior (Norwalk)
12. Austin Pownall, CVCA, sophomore (Alliance)
13. Isaiah Bretz, Van Wert, senior (Norwalk)
14. Walker Uhl, West Holmes, junior (Heath)
15. Keegan Moran, Bishop Hartley, senior (Heath)
16. Jordan Barnett, Sheridan, sophomore (Heath)
17. Jakob Koleszar, Vermillion, senior (Norwalk)

ALL – Garr, Potok, Pownall, Jeff Dunfee (Ravenna, senior); Daniel Kennedy (Louisville, senior)
HEA – Lasure, Terry, Burns, Lenhoff; Uhl, Moran, Barnett
NOR – Conley, Turnbaugh, LoFaso, Bretz; Koleszar
WIL – Crace, *Monebrake*, Peyton Bennett (Logan Elm, junior), Logan Raney (Franklin, senior), Casey Washburn (New Richmond, senior); Sean Beltran (Hamilton Ross, sophomore)

It's been a circuitous last fifteen months for Crace to say the least. The 2017 state champion entered the 2017-18 season off an eighth place finish at the Super 32 Challenge in an absolutely loaded 132 pound weight class. He then started the season for Graham competing at 126 pounds, where he won the Ironman, catalyzed by a 2-1 tiebreaker victory over Jordan Decatur in the semifinal round. Crace would subsequently leave Graham and move on to Elyria after disagreement with the coaching staff over what weight class he would wrestle.

Going to Elyria, was ineligible to compete the remainder of 2017-18 due to transfer bylaws. His off-season was excellent including an undefeated run at the Junior Duals in freestyle and a run to the semifinals in Junior freestyle where he racked up something like five wins over state champions. It continued into the fall where he placed third at 138 in the Super 32 Challenge, lone loss being 3-2 to eventual champion Jaden Abas from California. Before the start of the season he left Elyria and headed home to Bellefontaine. During the present season, he is undefeated with titles at four tournaments including victories over his most direct challengers at GMVWA (*Monebrake*, fall) and Top Gun (Garr, 4-3).

As discussed in the 138 commentary, it would be prudent for *Monebrake* to make the drop down. Those two exit the same district at Wilmington, where there are no other ranked wrestlers present.

The senior Garr placed fifth at state losing 6-4 to eventual state runner-up Mike Clark and 9-3 in the consolation semifinal to 2017 state champion J.D. Stickley. Headed to Columbia, Garr was one match from placing at the Ironman and picked up some excellent wins along the way (beating National Prep champion Connor Kievman and Super 32 placer Manzona Bryant both in overtime); he also placed third at Brecksville and Top Gun (4-3 semifinal loss to Crace), and lost 8-5 to nationally ranked North in the Grizzly Invitational final. Just two other ranked wrestlers join him at Alliance. Fellow senior Potok is a two-time state qualifier, and second half of his season features a sixth place finish at Top Gun and a third place finish at the Grizzly Invitational. Pownall finished his freshman season last year as a state alternate at 138 pounds, and has continued into this year with three tournament placements (fourth at North Canton, third at Maumee Bay, and fifth at the Grizzly Invitational).

It's really congested at the Heath district with seven ranked wrestlers, three of whom are returning state qualifiers and have won state matches. The junior Lasure has placed seventh and fourth so far in his high school career; while this season features titles at Cambridge and the EOWL along with runner-up finishes to West Virginia state champions at Beaver Local and the OVAC meet (Lasure flipped that 7-1 loss to Cook from the Beaver Local final with a 7-3 semifinal victory at the OVAC meet). Terry qualified for state last year at 126 as a sophomore, and has been most excellent up three weight classes with titles at four different tournaments (most notably beating Caprella to win gold at Defiance) along with a fifth place finish at Top Gun (beating Potok twice). Two-time state qualifier Lenhoff has finished runner-up to Beaver Local wrestlers at two tournaments, was seventh at Brecksville, and has titles in two tournaments on the season.

Impact freshman Burns was a Junior High state runner-up last year, while this season features championships at West Jefferson, North Union, and the Sally George. Uhl was state alternate down at 126 last year as a sophomore, and started this season at 152 where the results weren't great (fourth at Cambridge, fifth at the Wayne Invitational, and failing to place at North Canton) before moving into this weight and placing third at West Holmes. The senior Moran was runner-up at Olentangy Liberty and went 3-2 at Brecksville before third place finishes at Licking Valley and the CIT; Finally the sophomore Barnett started the season at 160 where he won a title at Big Walnut before dropping to 152 where he was sixth at Marion Harding and champion at Sheridan; then at this weight class he was runner-up at the Bill Dies and champion at Watkins Memorial.

There's also solid depth at the Norwalk district with five ranked wrestlers present, though that field is led by a pair of freshmen in Conley and Turnbaugh. Conley was a junior high state champion with Turnbaugh third in the same weight class last year, and the pair have split bouts this season. On the season Conley was fourth at Brecksville, third at the Gorman, and champion at Maumee Bay; while Turnbaugh was fifth at Findlay (losing to Crace) with runner-up finishes to follow at Marion Harding, the Gorman, and Maumee Bay. The senior LoFaso placed eighth in this state weight class last year, while this season includes a title at the North Coast Classic, an eighth at Brecksville, and a runner-up finish at the CIT. Fellow senior Bretz is a returning state qualifier, while another senior Koleszar was a state alternate last year; this year Koleszar was runner-up at the Cobos Classic and eighth at the Gorman up at 152 before dropping to this weight and finishing eighth at Maumee Bay.

152 pounds

1. Jax Leonard, Louisville, junior (Alliance)
2. Anthony Rice, Steubenville, senior (Heath)
3. Dylan Fishback, Aurora, freshman (Alliance)
4. Jeff Thomas, St. Paris Graham, senior (Wilmington)
5. Logan Krulik, Beaver Local, sophomore (Heath)
6. Dylan Dodson, Licking Valley, sophomore (Heath)
7. Dakota Ryan, Lake Catholic, senior (Alliance)
8. Colton Turnbaugh, Ontario, junior (Norwalk)
9. Derrick Coleman, Clyde, junior (Norwalk)
10. John McNulty, Padua, senior (Norwalk)
11. Nicholas Machuca, Dayton C-J, junior (Wilmington)
12. Kaleb Dohse, Ravenna Southeast, senior (Alliance)
13. Dalton Duvall, CVCA, sophomore (Alliance)
14. Zayne Lehman, Revere, sophomore (Alliance)
15. Josh Colvin, London, senior (Heath)
16. Nathan Welsh, Fairfield Union, junior (Wilmington)

ALL – Leonard, Fishback, Ryan, Dohse; Duvall, Lehman

HEA – Rice, Krulik, Dodson, Colvin; Connor Harlan (Claymont, sophomore)

NOR – Turnbaugh, Coleman, McNulty, Ethan Phillips (Norwalk, sophomore); TBD

WIL – Thomas, Machuca, Welsh, Sam Price (Lemon Monroe, senior); Chris Weadick (Eaton, senior)

The joint favorites in this weight class each come from schools that have not had an individual win state in thirty-plus years. Despite having a state finalist in three of the last four years, and top finishes in the standings each of those years, Steubenville has not had an individual win state since 1989 when Shawn McGhee (125) and Dunyasha Yetts (145) stood on top of the podium. Like the Big Red, Louisville is an

excellent team this year in its own right, but its last state champion was Daryl Mickley in 1986 at the 167 pound weight class.

Louisville's Leonard and Steubenville's Rice are the lone wrestlers in this weight class to have placed at state last year. The junior Leonard earned his second state podium by finishing third at 145 pounds, while the senior Rice was on the podium for the second time placing seventh at 138 one year after finishing fourth in that same weight class.

They have split matches this season, with Rice rallying for a 5-3 win in the North Canton final and Leonard winning 7-5 in the regional duals final. Additional resume highlights for Leonard are a fifth place finish at Brecksville and titles at the EOWL and Maumee Bay, while Leonard was one match from placing at the Ironman and champion at the OVAC.

Leonard anchors what is yet another super deep district weight class at Alliance, one with five additional ranked wrestlers present (i.e. a total of six). Leading that group is the freshman Fishback, who has had an excellent season with titles at the Top Gun and Grizzly Invitational as well as an eighth place finish that included a 3-1 win in consolation over nationally ranked Austin Boone from Michigan. Returning state alternate Ryan was runner-up at Solon and CIT along with placing third at the Grizzly Invitational (losing there by technical fall to Fishback). 2017 state alternate Dohse was third at the Wayne Invitational and Hephner, second at Kenston and fourth at the Top Gun; the sophomore Duvall missed placement at Maumee Bay by one match before taking fourth at the Grizzly Invitational; while fellow sophomore Lehman was fourth at Kenston and third at the Bill Dies.

Rice is joined by three other ranked wrestlers at the Heath district, most notably the sophomore Krulik, who was a go-to-state match loser last year up at 160 pounds. Krulik's season includes titles at Cambridge (beating Dodson in the semis) and Beaver Local, missing placement at Brecksville by one match, along with runner-up finishes at EOWL and OVAC (finals match losses coming to Leonard and Rice). Fellow sophomore Dodson qualified for state last year at 138 pounds, and this year has titles at Licking Valley and Alexander to go with runner-up finishes at Olentangy Liberty (up at 160) and the Brooke Classic. Lastly the senior Colvin was champion at West Jefferson, runner-up at North Union, and fourth at the Sally George.

The other wrestler with state podiums in this weight is the senior Thomas, who was second at 113 as a freshman and third at 126 as a sophomore before missing the entirety of last season due to injury. This season started by going 2-2 down in the 145 weight class at the Walsh Ironman, then winning titles at the GMVWA and Valley View in this weight class, and an overtime loss to Fishback in the Grizzly Invitational final despite getting the match's only takedown. Just two other ranked wrestlers join Thomas at Wilmington, a pair of juniors in Machuca and Welsh. Machuca started his season up at 170, where he was runner-up at Findlay and seventh at the GMVWA; then he dropped to 160, placing seventh at Perrysburg, before finishing fifth at the CIT and second at Eaton in this weight. Welsh's season includes titles at Logan and New Lexington, as well as a runner-up finish to Colvin at West Jefferson.

Last is a Norwalk district that also features just three ranked wrestlers, and is quite frankly limited when it comes to a fourth state qualifier and contenders for potential go-to-state match participants. It's led by returning state qualifier Turnbaugh, whose season includes a title at Findlay, finishing third at Marion Harding and the Gorman, before taking seventh at Maumee Bay. Fellow junior Coleman was runner-up at Bellevue up two weight class before dropping to 160 where he beat a returning Division III state

qualifier in a dual meet, and then he beat returning state alternate McNulty 4-3 at the regional duals. The senior McNulty was runner-up at the North Coast Classic and third at the CIT, while going 2-2 at Brecksville.

160 pounds

1. Ben Pasiuk, Carrollton, senior (Heath)
2. Ethan Hernandez, Norwalk, junior (Norwalk)
3. Will McGhee, Aurora, senior (Alliance)
4. Justin Mayes, Bellevue, sophomore (Norwalk)
5. Brenden Severs, Beaver Local, freshman (Heath)
6. Hayden Danals, Caledonia River Valley, sophomore (Heath)
7. David Reinhart, Canfield, senior (Alliance)
8. Layne Talbot, New Lexington, junior (Heath)
9. Isaiah Stickley, St. Paris Graham, junior (Wilmington)
10. James Munro, Miami Trace, senior (Wilmington)
11. Chris Anderson, Streetsboro, senior (Alliance)
12. Richie Eyre, Tallmadge, senior (Alliance)
13. Sean O'Dwyer, Lake Catholic, senior (Alliance)
14. Ethan Pappas, Steubenville, sophomore (Heath)
15. Liam Fagan, Coventry, senior (Alliance)
16. Zach Dunn, Goshen, senior (Wilmington)

ALL – McGhee, Reinhart, Anderson, Eyre; O'Dwyer, Fagan

HEA – Pasiuk, Severs, Danals, Talbot; Pappas

NOR – Hernandez, Mayes, Kaeden Hatley (Tiffin Columbian, senior), Tommy Mabry (St. Mary's Memorial, junior); Austin Willard (Padua, senior)

WIL – Stickley, Munro, Dunn, Steele Boysel (Benjamin Logan, junior); Trenton Randall (Dayton Carroll, senior)

Two times previously to my knowledge has a wrestler finished as state runner-up during his freshman, sophomore, and junior years (if there's another situation like this, I apologize for the omission). On the first occasion, Josh Horne of Pickerington (Central) won the 140 pound weight class in 2005 with a finals victory over Mikey Davis; his finals losses had come to Brendon Luce as a freshman and Jason Johnstone the following two years. Then, in 2008 Ryan Fields of Lakota West lost in the semifinals at 130 to Brad Squire, having also lost to him in overtime the year before in the state final; Squire had lost in the district final to Seth Horner, and would lose to Horner in the state final, while Fields lost in the consolation final to Nick Sulzer. As a freshman and sophomore, Fields lost to Tony Jameson and Lance Palmer respectively.

In this case, Carrollton's Ben Pasiuk has made the state final and lost on Saturday night each of the last three years. The last two years, he has fallen short against Mitch Moore, the four-time state champion from St. Paris Graham now starting at 141 as a true freshman at Virginia Tech; those came by a 2-0 score at 132 in 2017 and 3-2 in the 145 weight class last year. Back in 2016, it was a 2-0 loss for Pasiuk at 106 against Josh Venia.

Outside of a totally aberrant loss to DeBerry from Michigan in the North Canton final, a match in which Pasiuk led by a significant margin in the third period and got caught to be pinned at the 5:02 mark, it has been total domination. It would be a significant surprise if Pasiuk did not get the gold medal that eluded

him, and in so doing he would join older brother Aidan as a state champion for Carrollton; that title in 2017 was the first (and only) individual champion for the Warriors in program history.

Four additional ranked wrestlers will join Pasiuk at the Heath district, a group that is led by the freshman Severs, a Junior High state champion last year at 164. Severs has tournament titles this year at Cambridge, EOWL, and OVAC; went 3-2 at the Ironman; was a match from placing at Brecksville; and was runner-up at Beaver Local. Danals was a state alternate last year at 145 as a freshman, and this season has been most excellent featuring a runner-up finish at Medina and a title at Nelsonville-York. The junior Talbot was at 170 for the vast majority of this season where he won titles at Washington C.H. and New Lexington, and placed in three others (including fifth at Medina); dropping to this weight class, he beat returning state qualifier Brady Oberdier (Vincent Warren, junior). Finally, it's the sophomore Pappas who made it to state last year up at 170; this season includes placing fourth at North Canton, third at Nelsonville-York, and second at the OVAC.

As noted in previous paragraph, Oberdier is not ranked but at this district as well. Unfortunately, when one looks up to 170 at Heath, it's also hotly contested, so there's not exactly "amnesty" in that direction.

Four wrestlers other than Pasiuk in this weight class placed at state last year, with two of them exiting the Norwalk district, where they also happen to be the only two ranked wrestlers. The junior Hernandez was third at state last year in this weight class. He started the season at 170 where championships at Findlay and the Gorman were sandwiched by missing placement at Brecksville by one match; dropping down to 160, he earned a tournament title at West Holmes. Mayes placed seventh last year in this weight class as a freshman, and won tournaments the first two weekends of the season (up at 170 for the Cobos Classic and in this weight at Bellevue); since then it was missing placement at Brecksville by one match, and taking second at the Gorman.

The senior McGhee placed fifth at state in the 152 weight class and anchors what is yet against a brutal district weight class at Alliance, as there are six ranked wrestlers present. Notable results this season for McGhee include missing placement by a match at Brecksville, finishing fourth at the Top Gun, and a 3-2 tiebreaker loss to a nationally ranked Blair Academy wrestler on the front side at Ironman. Fellow senior Reinhart won a state match last year, but has been a very "hot and cold" wrestler for the second straight season. For instance, after suffering three losses to Severs during the course of the season, Reinhart earned a 10-5 victory in the regional duals final. Additional results include a sixth at Brecksville, runner-up at the EOWL, fifth at the Bill Dies, and winning the Hephner.

Yet another senior, Anderson has been excellent most of this season in winning at Clear Fork, taking third at North Canton, and finishing fourth at the Bill Dies; this includes three wins over state qualifiers. Next is Eyre, who was state alternate last year at 170 as a junior; up at that 170 weight class he was third at North Coast, then runner-up at Kenston and the Bill Dies before dropping to this weight and losing 11-7 to Reinhart in the Hephner final. Fellow senior O'Dwyer was a go-to-state match loser last year in overtime at 145 pounds, while this season includes titles at Solon and the CIT along with fifth place finishes at North Canton and the Grizzly Invitational. Finally it's another senior Fagan, whose year-to-date includes a runner-up finish at the North Coast Classic.

Last among the returning state placers is Stickley, who was eighth as a sophomore last year at 132 pounds. His season includes placing third at the GMVWA and Grizzly Invitational as well as a title at Valley View. Just two other ranked wrestlers join him at the Wilmington district. Munro went two-and-

out at this weight class last year at the state tournament as a junior, while this season includes titles at Logan Elm and Miami Trace; while fellow senior Dunn rounds out the ranked group.

170 pounds

1. Cole Hivnor, Lake Catholic, sophomore (Alliance)
2. Xavier Torres, Wauseon, senior (Norwalk)
3. Hank Carey, Streetsboro, senior (Alliance)
4. Beau Smith, Beaver Local, senior (Heath)
5. Brandon Daniels, Carrollton, senior (Heath)
6. Lucas Salmon, Perkins, senior (Norwalk)
7. John Mark Williams, Indian Hill, senior (Wilmington)
8. Jake Armstrong, Indian Valley, junior (Heath)
9. Hayden McGee, Maysville, senior (Heath)
10. Ben Cutrer, Canfield, senior (Alliance)
11. Brice Parks, Jackson, junior (Heath)
12. David Federick, Dayton C-J, sophomore (Wilmington)
13. Ethan Anderson, Aurora, junior (Alliance)
14. Wesley Pauley, McConnellsville Morgan, senior (Heath)
15. Gage Johnson, Franklin, junior (Wilmington)
16. Trevor Stewart, Urbana, freshman (Wilmington)

ALL – Hivnor, Carey, Cutrer, Anderson; Brody Stallings (Cloverleaf, junior)

HEA – Smith Daniels, Armstrong, McGee; Parks, Pauley

NOR – Torres, Salmon, Lawrence Slygh (Elida, senior), Michael Bentley (Shelby, senior); Carson Smith (Port Clinton, senior)

WIL – Williams, Frederick, Johnson, Stewart; Scott Mulkey (Westfall, senior)

Another deep field shows itself here as six returning state placers are among the eleven wrestlers with state tournament experience; however, none has placed in the top three at state. The pick from this corner to win what is a wide open weight class is Hivnor, who was a semifinalist last year at this weight class before sliding all the way back to sixth. Most of his season was up at 182 pounds, where he placed second at Solon, fourth at North Canton and Brecksville, while going 2-2 at the Ironman; he dropped to 170 at the CIT, where he won the title.

The highest returning state placer is three-time state qualifier Smith, an Edinboro signee who placed fourth last year at 145. On the season Smith has four tournament titles, finished seventh at Brecksville, and missed placement at Brecksville by one match. Two other returning state placers join him at the Heath district, fellow seniors Daniels and Pauley who were fifth and eighth respectively at 160 last year. On the season, Daniels was fifth at North Canton and Top Gun, champion at Licking Valley and West Holmes, while also picking up a quality win over Loparo in the regional dual final by a 7-5 score. Pauley's season includes a runner-up finish to Armstrong at Cambridge before finishing third at Vincent Warren (despite losing twice) and second at Nelsonville-York.

Three additional ranked wrestlers are among the contenders at what is a congested group of middle-weights at Heath. Armstrong was a state alternate last year as a sophomore, and has built upon that this season in winning gold at Cambridge; finishing second up a weight at Barnesville and Beaver Local, second to Daniels in this weight at West Holmes; plus taking fifth at Brecksville. Returning state qualifier McGee has three tournament titles on the season, along with finishing second at Defiance and fourth at

West Holmes; while the junior Parks has titles in four tournaments this year plus a second at Vincent Warren and a third at Nelsonville-York.

Ranked second in this weight is the Kent State commit Torres, who placed fifth at 160 last year as a junior. His current season includes placing sixth at Brecksville then third at Perrysburg and Maumee Bay. The lone ranked wrestler to join him at Norwalk is fellow senior Salmon, who won a state tournament bout in this weight class last year. The current season for Salmon includes a runner-up finish at Lorain, placing third at Medina and the Gorman, then finishing fourth at Maumee Bay.

Circling back to Alliance, there are three additional ranked wrestlers that will join Hivnor in the district field, most notably 2017 state qualifier Carey who suffered a late season injury last year that cost him the post-season. It's been a most excellent return to the mats for Carey, who has been runner-up at North Canton and champion at the Bill Dies. Fellow senior Cutrer was a go-to-state match loser last year at 160 pounds, and this season went 2-2 at Brecksville before placing third at the EOWL, Bill Dies, and Hephner tournaments. Rounding out the group is Anderson of Aurora, who went 1-2 at district last year in the 160 weight class when competing for Lima Shawnee; the current season includes 2-2 performances at both Ironman and Brecksville before taking seventh at Top Gun and third at the Grizzly Invitational.

Last year as a junior Williams earned just the third state medal by a wrestler at Indian Hill, as he took seventh in this weight class; should he reach the finals, he would become the first Braves wrestler to do so. His season to date includes a third at SWOWCA, winning Madeira, and taking second at Milford. Three other ranked wrestlers join him at Wilmington, including two that made state last year. The sophomore Frederick started the season at 160 placing fourth at Findlay before finishing second at GMVWA and CIT, fourth at Perrysburg, and winning CIT (all those were in this weight class). The junior Johnson was third at Franklin, first at West Jefferson, and runner-up at Eaton to Frederick. Rounding out the ranked group is Stewart, last year a Junior High state runner-up; this year features a runner-up finish at 182 at Valley View before winning the title at Benjamin Logan in this weight class.

182 pounds

1. Anthony D'Alesio, Canfield, junior (Alliance)
2. Hunter Johns, Dayton C-J, senior (Wilmington)
3. Gabe Phillips, Norwalk, junior (Norwalk)
4. David Tuttle, Steubenville, junior (Heath)
5. Keegan Vanmeter, Granville, senior (Heath)
6. Alex Carrothers, Carrollton, junior (Heath)
7. Evan Anderson, Aurora, freshman (Alliance)
8. Neil Ginnetti, West Branch, senior (Alliance)
9. Austin Hinzman, Coventry, senior (Alliance)
10. Trent Davis, Wauseon, senior (Norwalk)
11. Joey Simcoe, Tiffin Columbian, junior (Norwalk)
12. Tai Carter, Perkins, junior (Norwalk)
13. Cody Mies, Ontario, junior (Norwalk)
14. Logan Iams, Hamilton Ross, senior (Wilmington)
15. Jesse Kanatzar, Tallmadge, junior (Alliance)
16. Ryan Gear, Cincinnati McNicholas, junior (Wilmington)

ALL – D'Alesio, Anderson, Ginnetti, Hinzman; Kanatzar

HEA – Tuttle, Vanmeter, Carothers, Cooper Graham (Caledonia River Valley, sophomore); Kiah Smith (Athens, junior)

NOR – Phillips, Davis, Simcoe, Carter; Mies

WIL – Johns, Iams, Gear, Austin Carroll (Zane Trace, senior); Jared Kremer (Franklin, junior)

Placing inside the top four in the back half of the weight classes as a freshman and sophomore is a pretty clear demonstration of potential upside. In the case of D'Alesio he was fourth as a freshman at 152 and third last year at 170, while also being a key contributor as an undersized defensive tackle for a football program that has reached the Division III state quarterfinals each of the last two years. Placing fourth at the Ironman with a pair of wins over out-of-state opponents who are/were nationally ranked served to raise his name on the radar of many a Division I college coach.

He is the pick to make it two years in a row for a Canfield wrestler to win gold in this weight class, as last year David Crawford (who is now wrestling at Pitt) won this weight class to earn his second state title. In addition to the Ironman, D'Alesio was runner-up at Brecksville and champion at the EOWL. Four additional ranked wrestlers will be in the hunt for the three remaining state spots at Alliance.

It is a group led by the freshman Anderson, who is the third of three Junior High state champions starting for Aurora this year as freshmen. His season includes placing fifth at Brecksville and the Grizzly Invitational, advancing to the semifinals at the Top Gun, and going 2-2 at the Ironman. The senior Ginnetti placed third at Cambridge, Barnesville, and EOWL while placing second at Perry Pin City and fourth at Top Gun. Fellow senior Hinzman was runner-up at North Coast and sixth at Defiance; while the junior Kanatzar was third at North Coast and the Bill Dies, along with winning titles at Hudson and the Hephner.

The senior Johns is the second highest returning placer in this field, placing fourth last year at this weight class. His season includes titles at four tournaments (most notably GMVWA) and a third place finish at Perrysburg. Just two other ranked wrestlers join him at the Wilmington district. Iams was state alternate last year at 152 as a junior; this season he was champion at North College Hill before taking second at SWOWCA, Fairfield, and Eaton. The junior Gear was champion at Williamsburg and Madeira, while placing fifth at SWOWCA and fourth at CIT. Also in this field is 2017 Division III state qualifier Carroll.

The other deep district in this weight class is the one at Norwalk, which is anchored by Phillips, who placed last year at state in this weight as a sophomore. His current season includes a runner-up finish to Johns at Findlay, finishing one match short of placing at Brecksville, then winning the Gorman and finishing second at West Holmes. Two additional wrestlers at this district are returning state qualifiers, the junior Simcoe and the senior Davis.

This season for Davis includes placing seventh at Brecksville, first at Perrysburg, and third at Maumee Bay; while for Simcoe it includes missing placement at Brecksville by one match, a runner-up finish at the Gorman, and an eighth at Maumee Bay. Two other wrestlers competing at the Norwalk district are also ranked. The junior Carter was champion at West Salem Northwestern and has placed in four other tournaments, most notably finishing as runner-up at Maumee Bay. Fellow junior Mies placed third at Findlay and Marion Harding while taking fifth at Maumee Bay.

Three returning state tournament participants competing at the Heath district wrap the group of ranked wrestlers in this weight class. Tuttle placed eighth at state last year as a sophomore at 170 pounds, while this season features a title at Nelsonville-York and runner-up at the OVAC after failing to place at

North Canton. The senior Vanmeter has runner-up finishes at four tournaments, including Top Gun, and a third place finish at Defiance; while the junior Carrothers was a quarterfinalist at North Canton, champion at Licking Valley and West Holmes, and placed eighth at Top Gun.

195 pounds

1. Matthew Cover, Bay Village, senior (Norwalk)
2. Nick Crawford, Canfield, junior (Alliance)
3. Griffin Rathburn, Bishop Hartley, senior (Heath)
4. Brent Paulus, Louisville, junior (Alliance)
5. Colin McNamara, Aurora, senior (Alliance)
6. Owen Loughman, Sherian, senior (Heath)
7. Bowen McConahay, Logan Elm, senior (Wilmington)
8. Mitch Miracle, Caledonia River Valley, senior (Heath)
9. Trevor Plaugher, Wapakoneta, senior (Norwalk)
10. Kenny Marra, West Branch, sophomore (Alliance)
11. Nathan Snyder, Springfield Northwestern, senior (Wilmington)
12. Brodey Parsons, Indian Valley, senior (Heath)
13. Keith Bodnar, Steubenville, junior (Heath)
14. Nate Amato, Tallmadge, sophomore (Alliance)
15. Garrett Gross, Bellefontaine, junior (Wilmington)
16. Will Mannier, St. Paris Graham, sophomore (Wilmington)

ALL – Crawford, Paulus, McNamara, Marra; Amato

HEA – Rathburn, Loughman, Miracle, Parsons; Bodnar

NOR – Cover, Plaugher, Wesley Jeffries-Babcock (Napoleon, junior), Nick Hickman (Keystone, sophomore); Drew Krall (Wauseon, junior)

WIL – McConahay, Snyder, Gross, Mannier; Will Striet (Lemon Monroe, senior)

Bay Village has had five state champions over the years, though they all came back in the 1970's, two of them were in 1972 when Jeff Schoenmann and Mark Totten enabled the Rockets to share the Class AAA title with Valley Forge; then the other three were earned by Mike DeAnna from 1974-1976, who would go on to be a four-time NCAA All-American for Iowa, finishing runner-up in both 1979 and 1981. Since that time, success for the Rockets on the mat has been scattered at best, though they have a state title hopeful this year in Princeton commit Matthew Cover.

Cover qualified for state in 2017 as a sophomore, and then would go on to earn All-American honors in both freestyle and Greco-Roman at the Cadet Nationals that summer. Then last year he lost in the state semifinal at this weight class before going on to place third, and then in the summer he placed eighth in Junior freestyle. Cover has been a finalist in four tournaments this year, winning titles at the North Coast Classic and Gorman, while placing second at the Cobos Classic (3-1 overtime loss to Greer) and Medina (losing 5-1 to Shumate).

Just two other returning state placers appear in this field, those being Crawford and Rathburn, who were fifth and eighth at this same weight class last year. Each of those two wrestlers exits a district tournament that features four other ranked wrestlers.

Nick Crawford is the younger brother of two-time state champion David, and was on the podium last year as a sophomore. He's joined at the Alliance district by two other returning state qualifiers, the

senior McNamara and the sophomore Marra. McNamara placed eighth at Brecksville before taking third at Top Gun and the Grizzly Invitational, while Marra has runner-up finishes in four tournaments this year (including to Crawford at the EOWL) and a seventh at the Top Gun. The junior Paulus All-American honors in both styles at the Cadet Nationals this summer, and has wrestled well this season; third place at North Canton and the EOWL, seventh at Brecksville, and finally earning a title at Maumee Bay. Amato was a go-to-state match loser last year as a freshman at 182 (getting pinned by Marra), and this year was third at the North Coast Classic.

The senior Rathburn was second at Olentangy Liberty up at 220 pounds before placing fifth at Brecksville (beating Paulus and Crawford along the way), and then winning titles at Licking Valley and the CIT. Two-time state qualifier Loughman and returning state qualifier Parsons join him at the Heath district. Loughman's senior season includes winning the 220 weight class at Cambridge and Big Walnut before finishing runner-up at three tournaments in this weight class as well as third at the Bill Dies. Fellow senior Parsons was third at Barnesville, missed placing at Brecksville by one match, then finished second at West Holmes. Also ranked here is Miracle, who qualified for state at 132 pounds as a sophomore in 2017, as well as returning state alternate Bodnar. Miracle missed placing at Medina by one match, while Bodnar was fifth at North Canton and the OVAC along with winning a title at Nelsonville-York.

Circling back to Cover, he is joined by just one other ranked wrestler at the Norwalk district, that being fellow senior Plaughter, who was third at the GMVWA in late December.

The Wilmington district features four ranked wrestlers, two of whom advanced to state last year as juniors. McConahay won a state tournament match in this weight class, and this year has tournament titles at West Jefferson and Logan Elm along with finishing second at Miami Trace; while Snyder was third at Marion Harding, champion at North Union, and runner-up at Benjamin Logan. Gross lost in the go-to-state match last year as a sophomore, and this year was champion at Findlay, missed placing at Top Gun by a match, and took fifth at Miami Trace. Rounding things out is the sophomore Mannier, who was fourth at the GMVWA, champion at Valley View, and fifth at the Grizzly Invitational.

220 pounds

1. Tyler Stein, Canfield, senior (Alliance)
2. Blake Robbins, Louisville, junior (Alliance)
3. Alec Maloney, Norwalk, junior (Norwalk)
4. Sam McNulty, Perkins, junior (Norwalk)
5. Breslin Walker, CVCA, junior (Alliance)
6. Kole Aubiel, Claymont, senior (Heath)
7. Bruno Pattison, Bellefontaine, senior (Wilmington)
8. Justice McCamick, St. Clairsville, senior (Heath)
9. Tom Coleman, Hamilton Ross, senior (Wilmington)
10. Trey Pence, St. Paris Graham, senior (Wilmington)
11. Max Fausnaugh, Bowling Green, junior (Norwalk)
12. Garrett Givens, Beaver Local, senior (Heath)
13. Dalton Cunningham, River View, junior (Heath)
14. Skylor Wooley, East Liverpool, junior (Heath)
15. Kevin Mici, Bay Village, junior (Norwalk)
16. Aaron Harris, Wauseon, senior (Norwalk)

ALL – Stein, Robbins, Walker, Lucas Pritchett (Ravenna, senior); Dante Leone (Aurora, senior)

HEA – Aubiel, McCamick, Givens, Cunningham; Wooley

NOR – Maloney, McNulty, Fausnaugh, Mici; Harris

WIL – Pattison, Coleman, Pence, Kade Rawlins (McClain, sophomore); Nathaniel Armstrong (Kettering Alter, senior)

Multi-sport participation and success can be viewed as both a blessing and a curse. It is clearly a blessing under the premise that success in one sport creates a culture and a confidence that carries over into success in another sport. The core group of upper-weights at Canfield serves as an excellent example. They've been part of three straight runner-up finishes in the individual state tournament in wrestling, while the last four years in football include three playoff appearances (the last two of which were advancements to the state quarterfinals) and a cumulative record of 38-9.

Winning state last year in this weight class after going 1-2 at state in 2016 competing at 195 pounds as a sophomore, Stein has also played linebacker on the Cardinals' football team. State playoff runs in football the last two years took him out of the Ironman in 2017 and left him not 100 percent prepared for this year's Ironman, an event in which he none the less placed seventh. Since then it's been three tournament wins, each of which involved wins over high caliber opposition in the finals; at Brecksville and the EOWL it was Robbins, while it was on overtime victory over Boyle at the Bill Dies.

Only two other ranked wrestlers join Stein at the Alliance district, but they are both of a high caliber. Robbins was kind of a surprise state qualifier last year in this weight class as a sophomore, but he did win a state tournament match in consolation. It has propelled him into this season where he has been a runner-up at all five of his tournaments: North Canton, Brecksville and EOWL (losing to Stein), Maumee Bay (losing to Michigan placer Stanton), and the Hephner (losing to Boyle); his most notable wins came at Brecksville over projected Division I state champ Bever and at Maumee Bay in overtime over a returning Michigan state runner-up. Fellow junior Walker is a two-time state qualifier in this weight, but is after his first championship bracket win at the Schott; his season to date includes a seventh at Brecksville, a quarterfinal appearance at Maumee Bay, and a runner-up finish at 285 in the Grizzly Invitational.

The only other wrestler with a state tournament win in this weight class is Maloney, who went 1-2 at state last year as a sophomore competing at 195. His current season includes a title at Findlay, missing placement at Brecksville by one match, then placing third at the Gorman and second at Maumee Bay. He is joined by four other ranked wrestlers at the Norwalk district. Fellow junior McNulty has taken a leap this year in his performance level, and it's shown through in winning titles at three tournaments including the North Coast Classic, along with a third at Medina and fourth at Maumee Bay. Fausnaugh is another junior, and he was champion at Milan Edison, third at Findlay and Bill Dies, along with taking second at Defiance. Fellow junior Mici was runner-up at the Cobos Classic before taking fourth at the North Coast Classic and Gorman; while the senior Harris missed placement at Brecksville by one match before taking second at Perrysburg and seventh at Maumee Bay.

Two others in this weight were qualifiers in this state weight class last year, both Aubiel and Pattison went 0-2 as juniors. Pattison beat Aubiel in the Top Gun semifinal before losing by technical fall to Boyle in the final; he also has titles at GMVWA and Miami Trace to go with a runner-up finish to Maloney at Findlay. Joining Pattison at the Wilmington district are just two other ranked wrestlers. Coleman was state alternate last year in this weight class as a junior, and his current season includes titles at SWOWCA and Fairfield to go with a runner-up finish at Eaton; while fellow senior Pence was runner-up at GMVWA, champion at Valley View, and third at the Grizzly Invitational.

Aubiel has a second at Barnesville and a championship at Tri-Valley to go with that third place finish at the Top Gun, as well as missing placement at Brecksville by one match despite beating Walker in the round of 16. He is joined by four additional ranked wrestlers at the Heath district. The senior McCamick was fourth at North Canton, fifth at OVAC, and third at the Brooke Classic; another senior Givens was champion at Youngstown Liberty, third at EOWL, and fourth at OVAC (beating McCamick 3-2 along the way); returning state alternate Cunningham was second at Cambridge and fourth at Licking Valley in the 195 weight class before moving up here to win the title at Utica; while fellow junior Wooley was third at Barnesville and the OVAC, as well as placing sixth at Medina and fifth at the Gorman.

285 pounds

1. Jack Delgarbino, Girard, senior (Alliance)
2. Johnny Shafer, St. Paris Graham, senior (Wilmington)
3. Brenan Knueve, Wapakoneta, senior (Norwalk)
4. Jonah Schlegel, Defiance, senior (Norwalk)
5. Tiche Leroux, Norwalk, senior (Norwalk)
6. Alex Coleman, Hamilton Ross, junior (Wilmington)
7. Jacob Jackson, Toledo Central Catholic, junior (Norwalk)
8. Cole Potts, Columbus DeSales, junior (Heath)
9. Jacob Petit, Akron Hoban, senior (Alliance)
10. Sammy Sosa, Wauseon, junior (Norwalk)
11. Lane Cluff, Hillsboro, senior (Wilmington)
12. Kyler Capizzi, Perkins, senior (Norwalk)
13. Jarrett Burress, Minerva, sophomore (Heath)
14. Nate Jackson, Bishop Hartley, senior (Heath)
15. Riley Brendle, Louisville, senior (Alliance)
16. Noah Dehainaut, Fairfield Union, senior (Wilmington)

ALL – Delgarbino, Petit, Brendle, Deonte Williams (Canton South, senior); David Hooks (Akron SVSM, junior)

HEA – Potts, Burress, N. Jackson, Daniel Wirth (Beaver Local, junior); Jacob Danielson (New Lexington, sophomore)

NOR – Knueve, Schlegel, Leroux, J. Jackson; Sosa, Capizzi

WIL – Shafer, Coleman, Cluff, Dehainaut, Seth Bowman (Eaton, senior)

There's another strong wrestling/football combination athlete from the Mahoning Valley here in Girard's Jack DelGarbino. Playing left tackle on the gridiron in front of Mr. Football Mark Waid, the Indians finished as state runners-up this year in Division IV, and over the last two years have gone a combined 23-4. When he pinned his state finals opponent in the first period, it marked Girard's first state wrestling champion. His season to date has been limited by the football success and a recent illness, but he did win titles at Jackson-Milton and the EOWL.

If there is going to be someone to deny DelGarbino a repeat state title, it would most likely be three-time state placer Shafer, who came into high school with a very strong track record but has yet to put it together at the Schott. Last year he came in as kind of a joint favorite, but a 5-3 quarterfinal loss to Warren Howland's Brandon Matlock derailed things. Shafer placed fifth at the Ironman, losing to a pair

of nationally ranked wrestlers (one of them in the tiebreaker); lost to projected Division I state champ Padilla in the finals at GMVWA; and then won the Grizzly Invitational.

Three ranked wrestlers join Shafer at the Wilmington district, including one of the remaining two returning state tournament participants. That would be Cluff, who went 0-2 in this weight class last year as a junior. His season includes a title at Vinton County before taking third at West Jefferson and second at Western Brown. The more direct threat in this district would be Coleman, state alternate last year as a sophomore and a Cadet National champion in Greco-Roman this summer. His season includes runner-up finishes at Franklin, SWOWCA, and Eaton; a championship at Fairfield; and a total stunner of a first period pin against nationally ranked Loudon Haga from Parkersburg South. Also ranked here is the senior Dehainaut, who was fifth at West Jefferson, champion at Sheridan, and runner-up at New Lexington.

Last of the returning state qualifiers is the senior Knueve, whose season includes a third place finish at GMWA where he lost 3-2 to Shafer in the semifinal and a 5-1 dual meet victory over Schlegel. Knueve is one of six top 12 ranked wrestlers at the Norwalk district and one of four within the top seven.

Fellow senior Schlegel has built upon a 2-2 district tournament run in this weight class last year to win at Defiance and take second at Perrysburg, both of those coming over high quality fields. Leroux was a go-to-state match loser last year at 195 as a junior competing at Division III Monroeville, but took a liking to Norwalk during their state semifinal football run, and has found further success on the wrestling mat in placing fourth at Brecksville, winning the Gorman, and finishing runner-up at West Holmes. Jackson was state alternate in this weight last year as a sophomore, and this season features a third place finish at Northwood (losing 4-3 to projected Division III champ Price in the semis), runner-up to Schlegel at Defiance, fifth at Perrysburg, and winning the CIT. Fellow junior Sosa placed sixth at Brecksville, seventh at Perrysburg, and fourth at Maumee Bay; while the senior Capizzi was champion at Lorain, seventh at North Coast, runner-up at Medina and Maumee Bay, but lost by fall to Sosa in the regional dual final.

Turn the attention back to Alliance, where it's just two ranked wrestlers present along with DelGarbino, both of whom lost go-to-state matches last year as juniors. Petit was at 220 last year, and has taken kindly to this weight class with a title at Hudson before taking third at Defiance and the Bill Dies; while Brendle was state alternate in this weight class and has had much more of an uneven season to say the least.

Lastly it's the Heath district, one that features just three ranked wrestlers, though two are returning state alternates (Potts and Jackson). Potts competed last year in this weight class as a sophomore, and has been excellent this season winning three tournament titles along with placing third at Olentangy Liberty and the CIT; while Jackson was at 220 last year as a junior, with results this season including a fourth at Olentangy Liberty, going 1-2 at Brecksville, and taking third at Licking Valley. The other ranked wrestler here is the sophomore Burress, who beat returning district placer Daniel Wirth (Beaver Local, junior) to win the title at Cambridge, placed third at North Canton, was runner-up at Licking Valley (beating Jackson of Hartley 3-2 in the semifinal), and fifth at Top Gun.

Team – based on a state scoring model per ranking position

1. Graham (Wilmington)
2. Aurora (Alliance)
3. Beaver Local (Heath)

4. Canfield (Alliance)
5. Louisville (Alliance)
6. CVCA (Alliance)
7. Lake Catholic (Alliance)
8. Norwalk (Norwalk)
9. Steubenville (Heath)
10. SVSM (Alliance)
11. Carrollton (Heath)
12. Wauseon (Norwalk)
13. Bishop Hartley (Heath)

It should be noted that teams ranked 3, 4, 5, and 9 were put together in one dual team regional, and all of those squads are doing it with rather balanced lineups as well (i.e. not “stars and scrubs”). The top ten features SIX teams from the Alliance district, though that may not hold as there is going to be displacement of some key kids for some of the teams due to the absolute strength and depth of the district.

DIVISION III

106 pounds

1. Zack Mattin, Delta, sophomore (Lakota)
2. Kellan Anderson, Covington, sophomore (Troy)
3. Brett Szuhay, Crestwood, junior (Garfield Hts.)
4. Gavin Owens, Eastwood, freshman (Lakota)
5. Matt Ellis, Legacy Christian, freshman (Troy)
6. Nolan Frye, Cuyahoga Hts., freshman (Garfield Hts.)
7. Jarrett Hornish, Wayne Trace, freshman (Troy)
8. Caleb Schroer, Troy Christian, junior (Troy)
9. Gavin Caprella, Lima Central Catholic, freshman (Troy)
10. Jayden Strickland, South Central, sophomore (Lakota)
11. Cade Petersen, Oak Harbor, freshman (Lakota)
12. Olivia Shore, sophomore (Troy)
13. Wil Blevins, Sandusky SMCC, junior (Lakota)
14. Tayton Kleman, Bluffton, sophomore (Troy)
15. Jordan Kennedy, Allen East, junior (Troy)
16. Griffen Stephen, Barnesville, freshman (Buckeye Local)

BL – Stephen, Alex Overly (Shenandoah, sophomore), Joe Cunningham (Nelsonville-York, freshman), TBD; TBD

GH – Szuhay, Frye, Jarrison Moore (Norwayne, sophomore), Patrick Reineke (Hawken, freshman); Joey Bond (Newbury, sophomore)

LAK – Mattin, Owens, Strickland, Petersen; Blevins

TROY – Anderson, Ellis, Hornish, Schroer; Caprella, Kleman, Shore, Kennedy

Three wrestlers in this weight are returning state placers from last year, they were the competitors that took sixth, seventh, and eighth place. Narrowing things further, the deliberation for projected champion came down to Mattin and Anderson. While the only real common data point (last year's state tournament), I'm playing on gut instinct and picking Mattin. At last year's state tournament, both wrestlers earned major decision victories over Szuhay (Anderson in the consolation quarterfinal, Mattin for seventh place); they also wrestled Wyatt Riddle, with Mattin losing 2-1 in the consolation quarterfinal and Anderson winning 6-4 in overtime.

For me, the sophomore Mattin has demonstrated an excellent talent level despite clearly lacking size. His junior high state title in eighth grade came at 78 pounds, and he has competed on USA Ohio National Dual teams the last two summers at 88 and 100 pounds respectively, while he placed fourth this fall at the Preseason Nationals in the freshman/sophomore division at 100 pounds. The current season for Mattin includes titles at Olentangy Liberty, Medina (where he beat Brugh and Crosby), and Perrysburg along with an 8-2 finals loss to Rowan at Maumee Bay.

Anderson is excellent in his own right, as he has won three tournaments this year – GMVWA (beating Gessler in the final), Troy, and Lima CC. The greatest advantage for Anderson against Mattin would probably come if they met on Saturday night in the state final. The district from which Anderson exits at Troy is yet again absolutely loaded in the opening weight class. There are eight total ranked wrestlers here, including five of the top nine!

The freshman Ellis was runner-up to Mattin at Olentangy Liberty, placed fifth at the GMVWA, missed placement by one match at Escape the Rock, and was runner-up at Delaware Hayes. Fellow freshman Hornish was champion at Arcadia and Defiance before finishing second at Troy and Van Buren then finishing fourth at Lima CC. Schroer was state alternate in this weight last year as a sophomore, while this season features a sixth place finish at GMVWA (splitting with Ellis), runner-up at Western Brown, and third at Lima CC (splitting with Hornish). Another freshman is Caprella, who has runner-up finishes at three tournaments (including a 2-1 finals loss to Owens at Lima Senior and 5-4 to McCrone at CIT, while finishing third at Defiance and fifth at Lima CC.

The sophomore Kleman was runner-up at Defiance, fourth at Van Buren, and sixth at Lima CC. Ms. Shore has competed at Cadet Worlds in women's freestyle the last two years, and this year went 1-2 at Medina after placing there last year (both losses were to excellent freshmen) before taking seventh at Lima CC. Then finally, the junior Kennedy has a title at Sidney to go with a sixth at Defiance, fifth at Van Buren, and eighth at Lima CC.

Four additional ranked wrestlers will join Mattin at the Lakota district. The freshman Owens placed third at Junior High state last year, and has started his high school career excellently with titles in four tournaments (most notably at Lima Senior and Van Buren) before taking second to Anderson at Lima CC. Strickland was a go-to-state match loser in this weight last year as a freshman, while he has titles at the Kilted Classic and Black River to his credit this season. Petersen placed seventh last year at Junior High state in the 102 weight class, and this year was runner-up at Bellevue and a placer at Maumee Bay. The junior Blevins was champion at Northwood before placing third at the Gorman and Van Buren.

Szuhay was eighth at state last year, and this season has won tournament titles at Willoughby South and Kenston, along with taking second up a weight class to Hamulak at Solon; dual meet results include a loss to McCrone and a 5-2 win over Frye. The lone additional ranked wrestler at the Garfield Hts. district is the freshman Frye; last year a Junior High state runner-up, he has three tournament titles this year to go with a runner-up finish (to Owens) at Waterloo and a fourth at Top Gun.

Last but not least it's the Buckeye Local district, which features just one ranked wrestler in this weight class, that being the freshman Stephen. He was fourth at Union Local and second at Barnesville with finals losses to Overly on both occasions, before beating the returning state qualifier in the third place match at the OVAC meet, and then taking fifth at New Lexington. Overly is a returning state qualifier, as he finished fourth in this district weight class last year. Similar to last year, there is a clear lack of options when looking at the back end state spots for this weight class.

113 pounds

1. Caleb Edwards, Rootstown, sophomore (Garfield Hts.)
2. Lucian Brink, Coshocton, junior (Buckeye Local)
3. Casey Barnett, Milan Edison, sophomore (Lakota)
4. Max Shore, Miami East, freshman (Troy)
5. Cael Vanderhorst, Covington, sophomore (Troy)
6. Collin Yinger, Nelsonville-York, senior (Buckeye Local)
7. Marshal Niswonger, Caldwell, senior (Buckeye Local)
8. Dominic Savoca, Crestwood, senior (Garfield Hts.)
9. Troy Kennedy, Troy Christian, freshman (Garfield Hts.)
10. Tyler Davis, Oak Harbor, sophomore (Lakota)

11. Brian Chmielewski, Coldwater, senior (Troy)
12. Kobe Epperly, Versailles, sophomore (Troy)
13. Teagan Hendricks, Greeneview, sophomore (Troy)
14. Logan Attisano, Legacy Christian, freshman (Troy)
15. Adam Ryder, Tuslaw, freshman (Garfield Hts.)
16. Trey Allen, Mechanicsburg, freshman (Troy)

BL – Brink, Yinger, Niswonger, Josh Proper (Delaware Christian, sophomore); Corey Keim (Tuscarawas Valley, junior)

GH – Edwards, Savoca, Ryder, Brandt Virden (Columbiana, senior); Trevor Meeker (Grand Valley, sophomore)

LAK – Barnett, Davis, Christian Lecki (Milbury Lake, freshman); Cameron Henneman (Liberty Center, senior); Bryce Maynard (Eastwood, sophomore)

TROY – Shore, Vanderhorst, Kennedy, Chmielewski; Epperly, Hendricks, Attisano, Allen

Though he is slotted third in this report, I would actually identify Barnett as the most likely wrestler to win this weight class. Winning state last year as a freshman, should Barnett and the two wrestlers ranked above him win district titles, it is Barnett who would be isolated in terms of half-bracket at state the following week. Brink lost 7-3 to Barnett last year in the 106 pound state final, while Edwards took third as a freshman in this weight class after losing 5-1 in the semifinal to 2017 state champion Oscar Sanchez. As a result, Brink and Edwards would be looking at a semifinal clash.

During the month of December, Edwards was one match away from placing at the Beast before finishing runner-up at Kenston up at 126 while weighing-in at 120. During January, he was champion at Jackson Milton and the Hephner, with a runner-up at the Bill Dies sandwiched in between. There are just two other ranked wrestlers present in his district weight class at Garfield Hts. The senior Savoca went 2-2 in this district weight last year, while this year he placed fifth up a weight at Solon before taking second to Rowan at Willoughby South, then beating state placer Hamulak 1-0 to win the title at Kenston. The freshman Ryder went 3-2 at Brecksville and placed sixth at Top Gun.

Brink went 1-2 at state as a freshman at 106, then last year was runner-up to Barnett. This season includes titles at Barnesville and Waterloo, along with a 4-3 win over Barnett at the SMCC Duals in late January. Only two ranked wrestlers join him in district competition at Buckeye Local. The first is two-time state placer Yinger who has titles in three tournaments, runner-up finishes at Nelsonville-York and Lima CC, and a fourth at GMVWA. The other is returning state qualifier Niswonger, whose season includes a runner-up finish to Brink at Barnesville and a fourth at the OVAC. Also a returning state qualifier is Proper, who went 0-2 at state last year as a freshman at 106.

Barnett started his season with a title at Milan Edison, before going undefeated at the Fricker's Duals including an upset pin over Moon in the championship final. He then missed Brecksville with an injury. There is just one other ranked wrestler at the Lakota district, and that is returning state qualifier Davis, who went 1-2 at 106 last year as a freshman. His season includes titles at Bellevue and Woodmore along with a seventh at Perrysburg.

Eight ranked wrestlers once again reside at the Troy district, as this is the other residual from last year's loaded 106 weight class. The group is led by the freshman Max Shore, younger brother of Olivia and Graham, who won state last year at 120 pounds and is now at the Air Force Academy. Max placed fifth at Medina, was runner-up at Troy up a weight class, and beat a pair of state placers to win at Lima CC.

Next in line is Vanderhorst, who placed eighth in this weight last year a sophomore; his current season includes placing fourth up a weight at GMVWA, winning this weight class at Troy, and placing third at Lima CC (5-2 semifinal loss to Shore). The freshman Kennedy has two tournament titles to go with a fifth at GMVWA and fourth at Lima CC. Chmielewski was a go-to-state match loser last year in this weight as a junior, while this year has titles at Findlay and Milton Union along with a fifth at Lima CC on the resume.

The sophomore Epperly was runner-up at Sidney up a weight class, then in this weight class placed seventh at GMVWA and third at Valley View. Fellow sophomore Hendricks went 1-2 at state last year in the 106 weight class, with championships at two tournaments on the resume, but placed eighth at Lima CC and missed placement by one match at GMVWA. The freshman Attisano was champion at Fenwick, sixth at Olentangy Liberty at GMVWA, missed placement by a match at Escape the Rock, and was third at Delaware Hayes. The eighth of the ranked wrestlers is fellow freshman Allen, who was champion at Lima Senior.

120 pounds

1. Oscar Sanchez, Genoa, senior (Lakota)
2. Brandon Hahn, Eastwood, sophomore (Lakota)
3. Cameron Lacure, Legacy Christian, freshman (Troy)
4. Ray Adams, Milan Edison, senior (Lakota)
5. Austin Guthrie, Coshocton, senior (Buckeye Local)
6. Hunter Long, Wayne Trace, freshman (Troy)
7. Dylan Matthews, Liberty Center, sophomore (Lakota)
8. Trey Sander, Bethel-Tate, senior (Troy)
9. Aidan McAlexander, Antwerp, senior (Lakota)
10. Drake Carmean, Allen East, sophomore (Troy)
11. J.C. Fox, Dixie, senior (Troy)
12. Jake Edelman, Pymatuning Valley, junior (Garfield Hts.)
13. Jackson Reineke, Hawken, junior (Garfield Hts.)
14. Mason Turner, Troy Christian, freshman (Troy)
15. Lukas Wamer, Milbury Lake, junior (Lakota)
16. Jacob Edwards, Bidwell Rive Valley, senior (Troy)

BL – Guthrie, Joseph Bonfini (Bellaire, senior), Aiden Aiello (Bishop Ready, sophomore), Brayden Rittenhouse (West Muskingum, junior); Hayden Pacha (North Union, senior)

GH – Edelman, Reineke, Zach LaHood (Black River, senior), Michael Markulin (South Range, freshman); Michael Prikryl (Rootstown, sophomore)

LAK – Sanchez, Hahn, Adams, McAlexander; Matthews, Wamer

TROY – Lacure, Long, Sanders, Carmean; Fox, Turner, Edwards

Hear ye, hear ye, let the Genoa brigade begin. Last year the Comets scored 113.5 points with six wrestlers placing inside the top three on the way to their title at the individual state tournament. All six of those wrestlers return this year, including 2017 state champion Oscar Sanchez who lost 3-2 in the tiebreakers to Ethan Turner in the 113 pound final.

The Ohio Bobcat signee's season did not start great, as it featured a 3-2 dual meet loss to Hahn then going 1-2 at the Ironman (though both losses were to nationally ranked out-of-state opponents). Sanchez returned back to relative normalcy with a third at Medina, winning gold at Perrysburg, and then

three dual meet wins over direct contenders in this weight class (9-1 over Guthrie, 8-3 over Adams, and then 7-2 over Hahn). Splitting matches with Sanchez and losing nowhere else puts Hahn, who was 1-2 at state last year as a freshman at 113, in the second spot of the rankings; he has tournament titles at Waterloo, West Jefferson, Lima Senior, Van Buren, and Lima CC on the resume.

Four other wrestlers join Sanchez and Hahn in the rankings at the Lakota district, most notably state placers Adams and McAlexander. Two-time state placer Adams was champion at Milan Edison and seventh at Brecksville, while picking up a 3-2 dual meet win over Guthrie in late January. The third place finish for McAlexander last year at 106 was the first state medal Antwerp had ever earned in wrestling; his current season results include a third place finish at Defiance. Rounding out the ranked wrestlers is the sophomore Matthews and the junior Wamer. Matthews was champion at Marion Harding up a weight before dropping to this weight, taking eighth at Perrysburg and winning the Sally George; while Wamer was champion at Woodmore and third at the Sally George (2-1 semifinal loss to Matthews).

Five of the six ranked wrestlers from Lakota feature in the top nine, while five of the remaining six wrestlers inside the top 11 exit the Troy district. That group is led by a pair of freshmen in Lacure and Long. Lacure has titles at Bishop Fenwick, GMVWA, and Delaware Hayes to his name this season, along with a third at Olentangy Liberty and fourth at Escape the Rock; while Long has titles at Defiance (wins over Carmean and McAlexander) and Troy to go with a runner-up finish at Van Buren.

Sander placed seventh in this weight last year as a junior, while this season started with a pair of tournament titles at 126 before placing fifth at SWOWCA and second at Madeira in this weight. Carmean went 1-2 at the state tournament in this weight last year as a freshman, and started this season with titles at Sidney and Allen County, before placing third at Defiance and Van Buren then taking second at Lima CC. Fox missed all of last season after finishing as a state alternate in his sophomore season, and his return to the mat has been excellent with three tournament titles leading into a third place finish at Lima CC.

Additional ranked wrestlers at Troy are the freshman Mason Turner (younger brother of state champion Ethan) and two-time go-to-state match loser Edwards. Turner's season features an eighth at GMVWA, fifth at Western Brown, and a quarterfinals appearance at Lima CC. Edwards won tournaments up in weight at Jackson (132) and Gallia (126) before placing fifth at Nelsonville-York in this weight class.

The remaining top 11 ranked wrestler is Guthrie, who placed seventh at 113 last year as a junior. He was third at Barnesville and runner-up at Van Buren, but is the only ranked wrestler at the Buckeye Local district. Returning state alternate Bonfini is among those projected to qualify for state, while fellow returning state alternate Branden Parsons (Caldwell, sophomore) is not among the top five at this district.

Rounding out the ranked contingent is a pair of returning state qualifiers from the Garfield Hts. district, who each went 0-2 last year competing at 113 in the state bracket as sophomores. Edelman was champion at Hawken and Jackson-Milton, runner-up at Riverside and Kenston, and fourth at the EOWL; while Reineke won titles at Hawken (at 126) and Berkshire, was runner-up at the CVC, along with placing third at Waterloo and fifth at North Coast. Returning state qualifier Prikryl is also in this district.

126 pounds

1. Gavin Brown, Legacy Christian, freshman (Troy)
2. Ethan Turner, Troy Christian, junior (Troy)

3. Zach Larue, Manchester, senior (Garfield Hts.)
4. Cameron Dickman, Oak Harbor, senior (Lakota)
5. Gavin Weaver, Newcomerstown, junior (Buckeye Local)
6. B.J. Palmer, Buckeye Local, sophomore (Buckeye Local)
7. Gavin Ramos, Northmor, junior (Buckeye Local)
8. Antonio Lecki, Milbury Lake, junior (Lakota)
9. Jacob Poling, Versailles, senior (Troy)
10. Carter Chase, Marion Pleasant, freshman (Buckeye Local)
11. Wyatt Lucas, Arcadia, senior (Lakota)
12. Kyle Keenan, South Range, senior (Garfield Hts.)
13. Joey Buckland, West Jefferson, senior (Buckeye Local)
14. Mason Kline, Rootstown, sophomore (Garfield Hts.)
15. Derik Houser, Columbiana Crestview, senior (Garfield Hts.)
16. Zach Schaller, Swanton, senior (Lakota)

BL – Weaver, Palmer, Ramos, Chase; Buckland

GH – Larue, Keenan, Kline, Houser; Jacob McHood (Mogadore, freshman)

LAK – Dickman, Lecki, Lucas, Schaller; Caden Crawford (Hopewell Loudon, sophomore)

TROY – Brown, Turner, Poling, Garrett Kowalak (Miami East, sophomore); Justin Ritchie (Carlisle, junior)

Seeing a freshman beat a returning state champion during the state series is a relatively uncommon event. The most recent incidence at the Schott came in the 2015 Division I state semifinal at 113 when Jaden Mattox beat Noah Baughman 9-5; Mattox would lose that championship final, go on to win two state titles in four state finals appearance, while Baughman would win his second state title the next year. It could happen this year with Brown and Turner in the same weight class; heck there could be three matchups between the two, as Legacy Christian and Troy Christian are in the same sectional.

Though the freshman Brown went 0-2 at the Ironman, he gave clear signals of being an elite level contender, with the losses coming in overtime to Shawver and 5-2 to Molton from Illinois (both are nationally ranked). He also has four tournament titles on the season, most notable among them at the GMVWA where he beat Hoskins in overtime in the championship match; while also placing fourth at Escape the Rock, beating New Jersey state champ Olivieri 2-0 in the consolation semifinal.

Turner reversed a 4-1 state semifinal loss from his freshman year to knock off Sanchez 3-2 in the tiebreaker to win gold at 113 pounds in 2018. He also took two losses to nationally ranked opponents at the Ironman, but did win two matches as well. Other events in the season include titles at Western Brown and Lima CC, while finishing second when up a weight class at Licking Valley. Based on present composition, there is just one other ranked wrestler at the Troy district in this weight, and that would be Poling, who was 1-2 last year at 120 pounds as a junior at state. Poling's current season includes winning Sidney, taking second at Valley View and Central Crossing, while missing placement at GMVWA by one match.

13 additional returning state qualifiers, six of whom placed last year, make this a highly congested weight class statewide. At the core of that congestion is five ranked wrestlers competing at the Buckeye Local district, three of whom placed last year at state. Said group is led by returning state fifth Weaver, who was champion at the Wayne Invite and New Lexington, runner-up at Top Gun, and then up a weight was third at Nelsonville-York. Returning state sixth Palmer moved down into this weight late in the season after winning the Union Local tournament at 132, while finishing third at Barnesville and the

OVAC also at 132. Ramos placed eighth in this weight last year as a sophomore, and his current season started at 132 with a second at Big Walnut before going 2-2 at Medina, while in this weight class he missed placement at the Gorman by one match and was champion at the Sally George.

The freshman Chase was fourth at Olentangy Liberty, runner-up at both Marion Harding and Horth Union, before taking third at the Sally George (4-3 semifinal loss to Ramos); while Buckland went 1-2 in this state tournament weight last year as a junior, and this year was third at West Jefferson and champion at Nelsonville-York.

The highest returning placer after state champ Turner is the senior Dickman, who was third last year at 120 pounds. He was champion at Bellevue up a weight class, and in this weight was a quarterfinalist at Maumee Bay. Three other ranked wrestlers join Dickman at the Lakota district. Lecki was sixth at 113 as a sophomore last year, while this year he was runner-up at Northwood and Marion Pleasant along with winning titles at Toledo St. John and Woodmore. The senior Lucas was runner-up at Arcadia before winning titles at Findlay, Woodmore (up at 132), and Van Buren; while fellow senior Schaller qualified for state last year, this year he has runner-up finishes at Defiance and Lima CC with a third at Van Buren but a couple of baffling dual meet losses.

Wrapping up the four districts is the field at Garfield Hts. that features four ranked wrestlers led by three-time state placer Larue who went 1-2 at the Ironman and has a pair of tournament wins on the season (Waterloo up a weight and Gorman in this weight). Two-time state qualifier Keenan was champion at Waterloo, Jackson-Milton, and the Hephner while finishing second at Berkshire and fourth at Kenston. The sophomore Kline was sixth at Kenston up a weight class, runner-up at Jackson-Milton, and fifth at the Bill Dies; while the senior Houser was runner-up at Waterloo, third at Jackson-Milton, along with fifth at both EOWL and OVAC. Also in this district weight are four returning state qualifiers outside the rankings: Michael Kucera (Independence, senior), Konnor Duncan (Kirtland, senior), Storm Stanley (Waynedale, sophomore), and Dylan Martin (West Salem Northwestern, junior) – down might be an option for one or two, but going up solves nothing.

132 pounds

1. Cole Mattin, Delta, senior (Lakota)
2. Julian Sanchez, Genoa, senior (Lakota)
3. Klay Reeves, Johnstown Northridge, senior (Buckeye Local)
4. Dakota Blanton, Ashland Crestview, senior (Lakota)
5. Trent Duvall, Rootstown, senior (Garfield Hts.)
6. Isaac Hernandez, Ottawa Glandorf, senior (Troy)
7. Jake White, Manchester, junior (Garfield Hts.)
8. Colton Robins, Reading, senior (Troy)
9. Ethan Hoffman, Arcanum, senior (Troy)
10. Seth Majewski, Brooklyn, senior (Garfield Hts.)
11. Luke Hopkins, Cuyahoga Hts., senior (Garfield Hts.)
12. Chase Trainer, Greenon, sophomore (Troy)
13. Donnell Marshall, Centerburg, sophomore (Buckeye Local)
14. Jake Hurst, Mechanicsburg, freshman (Troy)
15. Chase Caprella, Lima Central Catholic, junior (Troy)
16. Hayden Johnson, Richmond Edison, junior (Buckeye Local)

BL – Reeves, Marshall, Johnson, Austin Amens (Northmor, junior); Ryley Crall (Union Local, senior)

GH – Duvall, White, Majewski, Hopkins; Robert Pinkie (Lutheran West, senior)
LAK – Mattin, Sanchez, Blanton, Zach Rocha (Archbold, senior); Matthew Dewitz (Oak Harbor, junior)
TROY – Hernandez, Robins, Hoffman, Trainer; Hurst, Caprella

Just look to the top of this weight, and one might see why the previous one is so congested. Returning state champion Mattin is joined by returning runners-up in Sanchez and Reeves. Mattin played the role of “giant killer” on Friday night, as for the third straight year a three-time state champion fell at the state tournament after the first 27 went a combined 108-0 in their senior year at state. He beat Hoskins 4-2 in overtime to reverse a regular season loss, and then upended Reeves 9-3 to earn state gold. Cole’s older brother Drew was a three-time state champion and qualified for the NCAA tournament at the University of Michigan as a true freshman last year, while younger brother Zack is the projected champion this year at 106.

The current season for Cole features tournament titles at Medina (4-3 over Sanchez in the final) and Perrysburg, along with runner-up finishes at Olentangy Liberty (3-2 to Collica in the 138 weight class) and Maumee Bay (3-1 to Jordan Decatur). Sanchez is a three-time state placer, finishing runner-up the last two years, and an Army West Point commit; he picked up three wins over state tournament participants on the way to his runner-up finish at Medina. Just one other ranked wrestler joints those two at Lakota, though that would be returning state placer Blanton, who has titles at the Gorman and Lima CC this season.

Reeves is also a three-time state placer, and became the first state finalist in his school’s wrestling history last season. His senior season includes championships at Mount Vernon and New Lexington, while finishing second at Olentangy Liberty and fourth at Medina. Just two other ranked wrestlers join him at Buckeye Local. Marshall was a go-to-state match loser last year as a freshman, while this year he has two tournament titles, along with runner-up finishes at Dublin Scioto and Benjamin Logan, and a third at Marion Harding. Returning state qualifier Johnson went 1-2 last year as a sophomore at 120, while this year was eighth at the OVAC.

Congestion is abound at the Troy district, where there are six ranked wrestlers led by Hernandez, who was third at Defiance, champion at Van Buren, and runner-up at Lima CC. Next in line Robins, state alternate last year up at 138 as a junior, while this year he has a title at Sycmaore to go with runner-up finishes at Madeira and Eaton. Returning state qualifier Hoffman went 1-2 at 126 last year as a junior, while this year was sixth at Eaton and champion at Troy. The sophomore Trainer was champion at Benjamin Logan beating Marshall in the final. The freshman Hurst was champion at Lima Senior over returning state qualifier Caprella, while Caprella was also fourth at the CIT and third at Lima CC.

Rounding things out is four ranked wrestlers at the Garfield Hts. district, a group led by Duval, state alternate last year at 138 pounds as a junior. His current season includes titles at Jackson-Milton and the Hephner, along with a fifth place finish at Bill Dies. Returning state placer White was champion at Waterloo up a weight class before finishing second at the Gorman and sixth at Bill Dies. Majewski is 1-4 in two state tournament appearances with this season featuring a title at the Cobos Classic and placement at North Coast. 2016 state qualifier Hopkins has titles at three tournaments to go with third place finishes at Waterloo (up a weight) and Top Gun. Also in this field is 2017 state qualifier Pinkie.

138 pounds

1. Dylan D’Emilio, Genoa, senior (Lakota)
2. Logan Hursey, Newcomerstown, sophomore (Buckeye Local)

3. Niko Chilson, Rootstown, senior (Garfield Hts.)
4. Jordan Keegan, Milan Edison, senior (Defiance)
5. Parker Watson, Lutheran West, senior (Garfield Hts.)
6. Peyton Lane, National Trail, junior (Troy)
7. Tad Jensen, Oak Harbor, senior (Defiance)
8. Colin Wiley, Caldwell, junior (Buckeye Local)
9. Teryn Debold, Seneca East, senior (Lakota)
10. Austin Awan, Troy Christian, sophomore (Troy)
11. J.T. Brown, Newark Catholic, senior (Buckeye Local)
12. Trey Wonner, Columbiana Crestview, senior (Garfield Hts.)
13. Noah Campbell, Pymatuning Valley, senior (Garfield Hts.)
14. C.J. Smith, Marion Pleasant, freshman (Buckeye Local)
15. Westyn Moyer, Mechanicsburg, freshman (Troy)
16. Zane Jankowski, Eastwood, senior (Lakota)

BL – Hursey, Wiley, Brown, Smith; Niko Christo (Northmor, freshman)

GH – Chilson, Watson, Wonner, Campbell; Wyatt Zimmerman (Orrville, junior)

LAK – D’Emilio, Keegan, Jensen, Debold; Jankowski

TROY – Lane, Awan, Moyer, Austin Flick (Covington, junior); Johnny Schirmer (Blanchester, junior)

Mark Zimmer of Columbus DeSales became Ohio’s first four-time state champion forty years ago on March 10, 1979 with a pin over Scott Adams of Belpre in the 119 pound final. It will be one day before that when D’Emilio is a strong favorite to make it a club of 30 to be four-time state champions. It is a distinguished list that includes stars such as Jim Jordan, Harry Lester, C.P. and Dustin Schlatter, Jeff Jagers, Lance Palmer, David Taylor, Logan Stieber, Dean Heil, Bo Jordan, and Nathan Tomasello.

The Ohio State commit is a three-time Super 32 placer (champion this fall) and a four-time Fargo freestyle All-American (including sixth this past summer). He was fourth at the Ironman losing a pair of matches by one point, finished runner-up at Medina (losing 2-1 to Baughman in the tiebreaker), and champion at Perrysburg. Four ranked wrestlers are after the three additional state spots at the Lakota district.

Said group is led by returning state placer Keegan, who was champion at Milan Edison before going 2-2 at Brecksville, and also losing 13-4 to D’Emilio in a late January dual meet. Jensen qualified for state last year as a junior; while this season he was champion at Bellevue up a weight before missing placement at Medina by a match in this weight, finishing third at Perrysburg, and placing at Maumee Bay. Debold qualified for state last year in this weight class, and was a semifinalist at Van Buren earlier in the season; while the senior Jankowski was fifth at Waterloo, and has placed third in four other tournaments (most notably at Lima CC).

D’Emilio and Keegan are two of five returning state placers in this weight class, while two others are among the four ranked wrestlers at the Garfield Hts. district. Chilson beat Watson for the district title last year at 132, though it was Watson who placed fourth at state to Chilson’s fifth. Chilson was runner-up at both Kenston and the Hephner to returning Division I state placers, won the title at Jackson-Milton, and was third at the Bill Dies; while Watson was fourth at the North Coast Classic and Medina, along with winning titles at Black River and Perry Pin City. Fellow senior Wonner was runner-up at Waterloo and Jackson-Milton before placing fifth at EOWL and missing placement at the OVAC by one match. Yet another senior Campbell was champion at Hawken up a weight class before placing fourth at

Riverside and the EOWL. Also in this weight class, though not ranked is 2017 state qualifier Nick Ciancola (Canton Central Catholic, senior).

The remaining state placer in this field is Hursey, who was sixth as a freshman at 126 last year. His season to date includes three tournament titles plus a third place finish at Top Gun. Three other ranked wrestlers join him at the Buckeye Local district. Wiley qualified for state in this weight last year as a sophomore, while this year he has placed fourth at Barnesville and sixth at OVAC. The senior Brown placed at three tournaments up at 145 before dropping into this weight and making the finals at Lima CC; while the freshman Smith was sixth at Olentangy Liberty, third at Marion Harding, champion at North Union, and fourth at the Sally George.

Rounding things out is a group of three ranked wrestlers at Troy led by returning state qualifier Lane, who was at 145 until the last weekend of January; those results included three tournament titles, a second at Valley View, and a fourth at GMVWA. Awan was a go-to-state match loser last year at 145 as a freshman, and spent more than half the season at 152 before coming into this weight to win the Lima CC title. The freshman Moyer was champion at Lima CC beating Jankowski in the final.

145 pounds

1. Nick Burgard, Ashtabula St. John, senior (Garfield Hts.)
2. Dustin Morgillo, Genoa, junior (Lakota)
3. Ryan Whitten, Troy Christian, senior (Troy)
4. Joey Caprella, Lima Central Catholic, senior (Troy)
5. Brier Marthey, Tuslaw, junior (Garfield Hts.)
6. Devan Hendricks, Greeneview, senior (Troy)
7. Cael Rowland, West Salem Northwestern, senior (Garfield Hts.)
8. Jeremy Tracy, Mapleton, junior (Garfield Hts.)
9. Blake Barrick, Coshocton, senior (Buckeye Local)
10. Shadrick Slone, Milan Edison, freshman (Lakota)
11. Carter Winegarner, West Muskingum, junior (Buckeye Local)
12. Dawson Swicegood, Delta, senior (Lakota)
13. Gunner Endicott, Elmwood, freshman (Lakota)
14. Andrew Halko, Bishop Ready, senior (Buckeye Local)
15. Jackson Hugentobler, Madeira, senior (Troy)
16. Tony Martinez, Northmor, senior (Buckeye Local)

BL – Barrick, Winegarner, Halko, Martinez; Jacob Newell (Sandy Valley, senior)

GH – Burgard, Marthey, Rowland, Tracy; Austin Warrick (Orrville, senior)

LAK – Morgillo, Slone, Swicegood, Endicott; Brennan Short (Archbold, senior)

TROY – Whitten, Caprella, Hendricks, Hugentobler; Cael Bey (Versailles, junior)

Unlike the weights immediately above and below, which look to be coronations for the wrestler from Genoa, this weight class has a rather open four person battle for gold. At the head of that is returning state champion Burgard. The senior from Asthabula St. John was champion at Lima CC (over Whitten), runner-up at Solon, and fourth at Top Gun in this weight while placing seventh at Brecksville up a weight class.

His most direct challenge will come from Morgillo, who lost 8-6 to Burgard last year in the state semifinal as a sophomore; a meeting between the two would happen on Saturday night barring an upset

for either at district. Morgillo's season includes finishing second at Medina and first at Perrysburg, along with going 2-2 at Ironman (both losses to nationally ranked wrestlers). While the other two primary contenders are a pair of seniors in returning state placer Caprella and Whitten, who both exit the Troy district.

Caprella was fifth at state in this weight last year after entering the state semifinal match with an undefeated 42-0 record. He already has two regular season losses this year, 6-5 to Terry in the Defiance final and 4-3 to Whitten in the Lima CC semi; Caprella also has three tournament titles up at 152 and a title at the CIT in this weight class. Whitten competed for Division I Stebbins last year, but did not complete the season, and transferred to Troy Christian; this season includes a third at GMVWA, second at Lima CC, along with titles at Licking Valley and Western Brown. Two other ranked wrestlers are present at this district, returning state placer Hendricks and 2017 state qualifier Hugentobler. Hendricks was champion at Xenia and Beavercreek, while placing seventh at GMVWA and fourth at Lima CC; Hugentobler was champion at Middletown Madison and Madeira before advancing to the finals at Sycamore.

Burgard heads a district at Garfield Hts. that features three additional top eight ranked wrestlers. The junior Marthey has qualified for state in each of his previous two seasons, while this year he has a pair of overtime wins over returning Division II state placers and was one match from placing at the Top Gun. Rowland placed eighth last year at 132 pounds as a junior, and this season was runner-up at Nelsonville-York to Hursey while also beating state qualifier Barrick 2-0 in a dual meet. The junior Tracy has three tournament titles to go with a third at Marion Harding and fourth at the Gorman.

Morgillo is joined by three other ranked wrestlers at Lakota, two of whom are freshmen. Returning Junior High state champion Slone was champion at Milan Edison and one match from placing at Brecksville, along with pinning Barrick in a late January dual meet; while Endicott went 2-2 at Brecksville and placed sixth at Perrysburg. Also ranked is returning state alternate Swicegood, who has placed at four tournaments in this his senior season, most notably third at Perrysburg with a win over Endicott.

The remaining four ranked wrestlers exit the Buckeye Local district, a group led by two-time state qualifier Barrick, who was fifth at Barnesville and champion at Waterloo. Returning state placer Winegarner was fourth at Barnesville, as well as finishing runner-up at Tri-Valley and New Lexington. The senior Halko was a state alternate in this weight last year, was runner-up at Grandview Hts. along with titles at East Knox and Central Crossing; while fellow senior Martinez was state alternate at 160 last year, and this year was champion at Big Walnut up at 152 before placing fourth at the Gorman and third at the Sally George.

152 pounds

1. Kevin Contos, Genoa, junior (Lakota)
2. Ryan Marvin, Swanton, senior (Lakota)
3. Brennan Shirley, Tuslaw, senior (Garfield Hts.)
4. Kerington Martin, Covington, senior (Troy)
5. Billy Luft, Newark Catholic, senior (Buckeye Local)
6. Beau Lefever, Mapleton, senior (Garfield Hts.)
7. Dylan Schenck, Milton-Union, senior (Troy)
8. Tyler Kay, Liberty Center, senior (Lakota)
9. Clayton Schirmer, Blanchester, senior (Troy)
10. Nick Skye, Mogadore, sophomore (Garfield Hts.)

11. Andrew Knaup, West Muskingum, junior (Buckeye Local)
12. Carlton Roberts, Rossford, junior (Lakota)
13. Noah Inboden, Nelsonville-York, junior (Buckeye Local)
14. Peyton Lemon, Waynedale, freshman (Garfield Hts.)
15. D.J. Slone, Willard, junior (Lakota)
16. Wyatt Miller, Oak Harbor, sophomore (Lakota)

BL – Luft, Knaup, Inboden, Coltin Meek (Newcomerstown, sophomore); Brady Crum (Union Local, sophomore)

GH – Shirley, Lefever, Skye, Lemon; Donovan Palmer (Lutheran West, sophomore)

LAK – Contos, Marvin, Kay, Roberts; Slone, Miller

TROY – Martin, Schenck, Schirmer, Travis Howard (Preble Shawnee, sophomore); Dalton Metzger (Adena, junior)

Being a district champion and state semifinalist in Division I at 152 pounds as a freshman is normally an indicator of big things to come. For the junior Contos, that validation has come, but it was a bit delayed. He transferred from Oregon Clay to Genoa before the start of his sophomore season, so he had to sit out the first half, while navigating through an injury made peak performance not realistic. Even so, he still almost got to the state tournament, just losing 3-2 in the quarterfinal and 6-3 in the consolation semifinal.

With a full off-season in place to get everything in order, Contos has been locked in this season. He was one match away from placing at the Ironman and picked up tournament titles at Medina and Perrysburg. Season to date, he has beaten at least four returning/previous state medalists. Five additional ranked wrestlers are after the other three state spots at the Lakota district.

Marvin, eighth last year at 160, is one of just two wrestlers that placed in the 2018 state tournament expected to compete at this weight class. His current season includes a runner-up finish at Defiance along with titles at Van Buren and Lima CC. Fellow senior Kay was a go-to-state match loser last year at 145 pounds, and this season has a 6-1 dual meet win over Marvin as well as placing fifth at Marion Harding, fourth at Perrysburg, and winning the Sally George. Roberts qualified for state in this weight last year as a sophomore; this season he has two tournament titles at 160, a third at Marion Harding in that weight class, before dropping down to this weight and lacing eighth at Perrysburg. The junior Slone was a go-to-state match loser last year at 160, and was champion in that weight class at Loudonville and Mapleton before taking second at Lima Senior in this weight; while the sophomore Miller was runner-up at 160 early on at Bellevue before placing sixth in this weight at both Medina and Perrysburg.

The other state placer in this field from last year is Luft, who was sixth in this weight as a junior. He went 2-2 at Brecksville before finishing second at Licking Valley, winning the CIT, and taking third at Lima CC. Another pair of wrestlers join him in the rankings at the Buckeye Local district. The junior Knaup was champion at Grandview Hts. down a weight, while at this weight he placed third at Barnesville and New Lexington as well as runner-up at Tri-Valley. Two-time state qualifier Inboden placed in 2017 as a freshman, and his current season includes two tournament titles, three runner-up finishes (including at GMVWA), and a fifth at Lima CC. Also in this weight class is returning state qualifier Meek.

Returning state qualifier Shirley leads a group of four ranked wrestlers at Garfield Hts. On the season, Shirley was one match from placing at Brecksville, including a win over Luft, while he also finished runner-up at Top Gun. Another returning state qualifier is the senior Lefever, who has two tournament

titles along with runner-up finishes at Marion Harding and the Gorman; while the sophomore Skye is a third with state tournament participation, and this season includes finishing first at Waterloo, sixth at Bill Dies, and runner-up at the Hephner. The freshman Lemon is also ranked here, he was champion at Cuyahoga Hts., seventh at the Grizzly Invitational, and upset returning state placer Ryder 4-2 at regional duals.

A group of three returning seniors, all state qualifiers round out the rankings at this weight class; they all exit the Troy district. The senior Martin was third at GMVWA, champion at Troy, and runner-up at Lima CC; Schenck was fourth at GMVWA and champion at three other tournaments, most notably at Eaton; while Schirmer was runner-up at Madeira, champion at Sycamore, and fourth at Lima CC.

160 pounds

1. James Limongi, Genoa, senior (Lakota)
2. T.J. Rhamy, Patrick Henry, junior (Lakota)
3. Trevor Franks, Lakota, junior (Lakota)
4. Brady Jaso, Gibsonbug, senior (Lakota)
5. Seth Henderson, Miami Valley Christian Academy, senior (Troy)
6. Kyle Ryder, Tuslaw, senior (Garfield Hts.)
7. Mason Kuneff, Bridgeport, senior (Buckeye Local)
8. Hayden Pummel, Indian Lake, sophomore (Troy)
9. Ethan Ducca, Ashtabula St. John, junior (Garfield Hts.)
10. Chris Anderson, Rootstown, sophomore (Garfield Hts.)
11. Kasyn Schaffner, Archbold, senior (Lakota)
12. Zion Matlock, Youngstown Liberty, senior (Garfield Hts.)
13. Cody Albaugh, Bellaire, junior (Buckeye Local)
14. Clayton Baglia, Chippewa, senior (Garfield Hts.)
15. Dylan Burns, Covington, senior (Troy)
16. Wyatt Stabler, Wayne Trace, senior (Troy)

BL – Kuneff, Albaugh, Chase Goff (Martins Ferry, sophomore), Bryce Keckley (West Jefferson, freshman); Andrew McFee (West Muskingum, junior)

GH – Ryder, Ducca, Anderson, Matlock; Baglia

LAK – Limongi, Rhamy, Franks, Jaso, Schaffner

TROY – Henderson, Pummel, Franks, Stabler; Deontae Davis (Cory Rawson, junior)

Two years ago Limongi won the state title in this weight class as a sophomore with a 1-0 victory over Lance Miller of Covington in the state final. He was one of three Comets champions out of four finalists on that Saturday evening, all of whom happen to be competing this year as well. Last year he was upset 3-1 by Santino Kusic in the state quarterfinal round at this weight class, but would reverse that loss with a 2-0 victory in the third place bout. Limongi missed the first month of this season, but returned to win the title at Perrysburg, and also has a 3-2 dual meet victory over returning Division II state placer Hernandez.

Four additional ranked wrestlers are present at the Lakota district, including three that are returning state tournament participants. Rhamy placed sixth last year at 170 pounds in his sophomore season, but is down here this year where he was runner-up at Defiance and Lima CC, champion at Woodmore, and fifth at Maumee Bay. Fellow junior Franks qualified for state last year at 152 pounds, and this year was champion at Bucyrus, Van Buren, and Lima CC while taking third at Perrysburg. The senior Jaso qualified

for state last year in this weight class, while this season missed placement at Perrysburg by one match before finishing runner-up at Van Buren. Fellow senior Schaffner placed fifth at Defiance, has a dual meet loss to Rhamy, but has a dual meet win over returning state qualifier Murphy.

The senior Henderson, a two-time state qualifier in this weight class, leads a group of four ranked wrestlers at the Troy district. His season to date features placing fifth at SWOWCA, second at Valley, along with championships at Sycamore and Milford. The talented sophomore Pummel is next having won titles at DeSales and Milton Union, while placing third at Defiance and seventh at Maumee Bay. The senior Burns missed placement by one match at the GMVWA before placing fourth at Troy and Lima CC; while fellow senior Stabler was champion at Arcadia, missed placing by one match at Defiance and Lima CC, and finished third at both Troy and Van Buren.

Two-time state qualifier Ryder, fifth last year at 152 as a junior, is one of four ranked wrestlers at the Garfield Hts. district. The junior Ducca competed at Chardon his first two years, where he was a district semifinalist as a freshman when the Hilltoppers were a Division I school; this year he was third at Solon and Lima CC, while winning a title at Perry Pin City and finishing seventh at Top Gun. The sophomore Anderson placed seventh at the Bill Dies and fifth at the Hephner; while the senior Matlock has two tournament titles to go with a second at Loudonville, third at the EOWL, and fourth at the Hephner.

Rounding it out is two ranked wrestlers at the Buckeye Local district, led by two-time state qualifier Kuneff who has titles at Union Local and Waterloo to go with a 3-2 performance at Brecksville and a fourth at the OVAC. Also ranked is the junior Albaugh, who was eighth at the OVAC and third at Watkins Memorial. Falling outside the rankings, but at this district tournament, is returning state qualifier McFee.

170 pounds

1. David Cumberledge, Ashtabula St. John, junior (Garfield Hts.)
2. Brad Mendoza, Gibsonburg, senior (Lakota)
3. Santino Kusic, Bridgeport, senior (Buckeye Local)
4. Conor Becker, Northmor, junior (Buckeye Local)
5. Sevi Garza, Rittman, sophomore (Garfield Hts.)
6. Caden Brown, Defiance Ayersville, junior (Lakota)
7. Clayton Takacs, Grand Valley, senior (Garfield Hts.)
8. Devin Oligee, Middletown Madison, sophomore (Troy)
9. Garrett Wright, Elmwood, senior (Lakota)
10. John Cline, East Clinton, junior (Troy)
11. Gavin Davis, Loudonville, junior (Garfield Hts.)
12. Tyler Gigandet, Versailles, senior (Troy)
13. Jacob Stewart, Genoa, senior (Lakota)
14. Duncan Cooper, Covington, sophomore (Troy)
15. Micah Hershberger, Waynedale, junior (Garfield Hts.)
16. Logan Korpics, Cory Rawson, senior (Troy)

BL – Kusic, Becker, Gavin Baisden (Marion Pleasant, senior), Noah Love (Tuscarawas Valley, junior);
Joshua Newell (Sandy Valley, senior)

GH – Cumberledge, Garza, Takacs, Davis; Hershberger

LAK – Mendoza, Brown, Wright, Stewart; Sam Meyer (Norwalk St. Paul, senior)

TROY – Oligee, Cline, Gigandet, Cooper; Korpics

Things are very top heavy in this weight class with five returning state placers, four finishing in the top four last year, but no other projected participant with state tournament experience. The highest returning placer is Cumberledge, who was runner-up at 152 as a sophomore after poor district Saturday the previous year relegated the 2016 Junior High state champ to a state alternate finish at 160. During the fall season, Cumberledge was a two-way player (including QB on offense) and led his team to a playoff spot in Division VII.

Most of the season has been at this weight class, where he was one match from placing at the Ironman, champion at Perry Pin City and Lima CC, along with runner-up at the Top Gun. He competed down at 160 for Brecksville, where he placed fourth, but more likely than not 170 is in the cards (which enables Ducca to stay down at 160). Four other ranked wrestlers join Cumberledge at the Garfield Hts. district, including Garza, who placed seventh at 160 last year as a freshman.

Garza's sophomore season includes titles at the Wayne Invitational, Loudonville, and Berkshire. Takacs was state alternate last year at 160 as a junior, while this year he was runner-up at Pin City and EOWL before finishing fourth at Top Gun. The junior Davis was also a go-to-state match loser last year at 160, while fellow junior Hershberger was champion at Cuyahoga Hts. and fifth at the Grizzly Invitational.

A pair of returning state placers, Kusic and Becker, are the lone ranked wrestlers at the Buckeye Local district. The senior Kusic was champion at Union Local and Waterloo before extending Smith to overtime in a loss at the OVAC final; while the junior Becker was champion at Big Walnut at the Sally George, along with runner-up finishes at both Medina and the Gorman.

The senior Mendoza has lost in the state semifinal round at this weight class the last two years, battling it back to third place this past year. His current season includes a runner-up finish at Perrysburg and a title at Van Buren. Three additional ranked wrestlers will join him at the Lakota district. The junior Brown placed fourth up a weight class at Defiance in late December, before coming into this weight to win the title at Woodmore and take second at Lima CC; Wright missed placing at Brecksville by one match before taking fifth at Perrysburg then second at Van Buren; while Stewart, the senior from Genoa, rounds out the ranked contingent.

Lastly it's the district at Troy that features five ranked wrestlers, none with state experience, but two that lost in go-to-state bouts last year (Oligee and Cline). The sophomore Oligee has four tournament titles this year, while the junior Cline has three tournament titles along with taking eighth at SWOWCA. The senior Gigandet has two tournament titles and a fifth place finish at Valley View; the sophomore Cooper was champion at Troy, missed placing at Valley View by one match, and was third at Lima CC; while the senior Korpics started the season at 182 before dropping into this weight class to finish fourth at Lima CC.

182 pounds

- 1. Deandre Nassar, Bluffton, senior (Troy)*
- 2. Chris Langguth, Rootstown, senior (Garfield Hts.)*
- 3. Danny Rosales, Ottawa Glandorf, senior (Troy)*
- 4. Brylan Clouse, Barnesville, senior (Buckeye Local)*
- 5. Tanner May, Carey, junior (Lakota)*
- 6. Craig Montgomery, Troy Christian, junior (Troy)*
- 7. Doug Byrne, Wickliffe, senior (Garfield Hts.)*
- 8. Kaden Kidd, Norwayne, sophomore (Garfield Hts.)*

9. Tristan Bush, Johnstown Monroe, senior (Buckeye Local)
10. Kaleb Leeth, Mohawk, sophomore (Lakota)
11. Chase Dyer, Brookville, junior (Troy)
12. Antonio Quezada, Genoa, junior (Lakota)
13. Hunter Morris, Southern Local, sophomore (Garfield Hts.)
14. Richard McFarland, Martins Ferry, junior (Buckeye Local)
15. Eric Weber, Bidwell River Valley, senior (Troy)
16. Chris Cox-Wilson, North Union, senior (Buckeye Local)
17. Mason Babcock, Archbold, junior (Lakota)

BL – Clouse, Bush, McFarland, Cox-Wilson; Shayne Christian (Buckeye Local, senior)

GH – Langguth, Byrne, Kidd, Norris; Mike McKale (Newbury, senior)

LAK – May, Leeth, Quezada, Babcock; Austin Cole (Northwood, junior)

TROY – *Nassar*, Rosales, Montgomery, Dyer, Weber; Gavin McReynolds (Covington, senior)

This weight class and the next one (Division III, 195 pounds) are pretty similar in their surface level profile, four returning state placers and nine state qualifiers. The top two wrestlers in this weight carry similar profiles at the surface, they both took fourth at state last year as juniors, losing to the eventual runner-up in the state semifinal round by one point before losing in the consolation final to the projected state champion.

Competing at 195, Nassar beat Boyle (the projected 220 pound champ from Rootstown) 10-3 in the quarters before losing 5-4 to Dylan Hinton in the semifinal, while in this weight class Rootstown's Langguth lost 4-3 to Sam Stoll in the semifinal. Then in the consolation final, Dalton Hoover beat Nassar 6-1 and Logan Stanley pinned Langguth in the second period.

Given the top of 195 this year, I am surprised one of these two does not move up in weight class. In some ways, one of the next level contenders might ponder such a move, unless they feel that size would be an issue.

Nassar exits the Troy district, one that also features returning state placer Rosales, who was seventh at 170 last year as a junior. Rosales competed one weight class below fellow Ottawa Glandorf wrestler Daniel Beemer, who won state at 182 to become their school's first state champion. This season includes runner-up finishes to Nassar in three tournaments (overtime losses at Defiance and Van Buren, before an 8-2 loss at Lima CC). Three more ranked wrestlers feature at this district: returning state qualifier Montgomery, the junior Dyer, and the senior Weber.

Montgomery won a state tournament match last year at 170 as a sophomore, while this year he started up at the 195 pound weight class placing seventh at GMVWA and second at Licking Valley; down in this weight class, he was runner-up at Western Brown and fourth at Lima CC. Dyer also started at 195, winning at Trenton Edgewood then taking eighth at GMVWA, while in this weight he was champion at Milton-Union and second at Miami Trace. Weber's season includes runner-up finishes at Jackson and Nelsonville-York, a title at Gallia, and a sixth at New Lexington.

The other returning state placer is May, who has placed at state each of his prior two high school seasons, fifth at 170 last year and sixth in this weight the year before. His current season includes a title at Bellevue, making it to the semifinals at Van Buren, and placing third at Lima CC losing 4-3 to Rosales in the semifinal). He exits the district at Lakota, which features three additional ranked wrestlers. The

sophomore Leeth beat May 6-2 at regional duals, but has a couple dual meet losses to lesser opposition; while in tournaments he was runner-up at 195 at Northwood, and then in this weight fourth at Perrysburg and a semifinalist at Van Buren. The junior Quezada was at 170 for part of this season, where he was one match from placing at Medina and seventh at Perrysburg; while in this weight he was runner-up to May at Bellevue opening weekend, and more recently went 9-1 in contested matches at the Napoleon and SMCC Duals. Returning state qualifier Babcock was one match from placing at Defiance in late December.

For Langguth, he is matched with three additional ranked wrestlers in district competition at Garfield Hts. Fellow senior Byrne was runner-up at Kenston, fifth at the Bill Dies, and champion at Berkshire despite competing for a school with about five total kids on its team. Kidd made state last year at 170 pounds as a freshman, while this year he was champion at Xenia, sixth at Medina, and fourth at the Bill Dies despite losing 7-2 to Byrne in the quarterfinal; he also pinned Leeth in a late January dual meet. The sophomore Morris was fifth at Beaver Local and fourth at the OVAC.

It's a group of four ranked wrestlers at Buckeye Local, led by 2017 state alternate Clouse, who went a disappointing 2-2 at district last year as a junior in the 160 pound weight class. His current season includes placing third at the OVAC and winning the title at New Lexington when he beat Vanmeter in overtime. Returning state alternate Bush was fifth at Tri-Valley before winning titles at Sheridan and Utica. McFarland qualified for state at 170 last year as a sophomore, while this year he was fourth at Barnesville and fifth at the OVAC; while Cox-Wilson made state in this weight last year as a junior, and this year took fourth at Nelsonville-York before winning titles at North Union and the Sally George.

195 pounds

Deandre Nassar, Bluffton, senior (Troy)

1. Jake Loar, Tuslaw, senior (Garfield Hts.)
2. Caleb Carpenter, Liberty Center, senior (Lakota)
3. Wil Morrow, Patrick Henry, junior (Lakota)
4. Drake Dobson, Martins Ferry, senior (Buckeye Local)
5. Garrett Neth, Allen East, junior (Troy)
6. Levi Morris, Greenon, senior (Troy)
7. Jake Sage, Oak Harbor, senior (Lakota)
8. Jacob Brewer, Milan Edson, junior (Lakota)
9. Isaac Grillot, Versailles, junior (Troy)
10. Brian Martin, Genoa, senior (Lakota)
11. Major Stratton, West Liberty-Salem, senior (Troy)
12. Nathan Whitehead, Columbiana, senior (Garfield Hts.)
13. Sam Lowe, Southern Local, sophomore (Garfield Hts.)
14. Quinton Brown, Middletown Madison, junior (Troy)
15. Mitch Sanders, Newbury, junior (Garfield Hts.)
16. Matt Schmersal, Ottawa Glandorf, senior (Troy)

BL – Dobson, Ian Joyce (Trimble, junior), Wyatt Moyer (Sandy Valley, freshman), Jordan Sanders (Newcomerstown, sophomore); TBD

GH – Loar, Whitehead, Love, Sanders, Logan Penix (Mogadore, senior)

LAK – Carpenter, Morrow, Sage, Brewer; Martin

TROY – Nassar, Neth, Morrison, Grillot, Stratton; Brown, Schmersal

The four returning state medalists in this weight class all placed between sixth and eight last year in varying weight classes. It's led by a pair of wrestlers who took sixth last year as juniors, Loar at 182 and Carpenter at 220. Projected to win state is Loar, whose tournament placings this year were sixth at Brecksville and fifth at Top Gun.

The other three returning state placers all exit out of the Lakota district. Carpenter qualified for state as a freshman and sophomore in this weight class before taking sixth last year at 220 pounds. This season includes titles at Perrysburg and the Sally George. Morrow qualified for state at 182 each of his first two high school seasons, including a seventh place finish last year; this season includes titles at Defiance, Woodmore, and Van Buren along with finishing second at Maumee Bay. Sage was eighth in this weight last year as a junior, was champion at Woodmore up at 220, has placed fifth in two tournaments (Bellevue at 220 and Perrysburg in this weight class), along with missing placement at Maumee Bay by one match in this weight.

There are two other ranked wrestlers at the Lakota district, the junior Brewer and the senior Martin. Brewer pinned Martin in a late January dual meet, while losing 3-1 to Carpenter at the regional duals. Martin was champion up a weight class at Bellevue, and then in this weight class placed third at Perrysburg after going 0-2 at Medina.

Congestion is abound at Troy, where there are two returning state qualifiers among the six ranked wrestlers; a third returning state qualifier (Gage Kerrigan, Covington, junior) competes for a school in this district, but he is most likely done for the year due to injury. Returning state qualifier Neth leads this group, and his season features a title at Van Buren along with finishing runner-up at Lima CC. The senior Morrison also won a state tournament bout last year, and this year took third at Xenia before earning titles at McClain and Benjamin Logan.

The junior Grillot was champion this year at Sidney and Central Crossing, while also placing sixth at GMVWA and second at Valley View. Stratton was state alternate in this weight last year as a junior, and this season was champion at Milton-Union also finishing sixth at Perrysburg and third at Lima CC. Brown was state alternate last year at 182 as a sophomore, and this year has titles at Middletown Madison and Bellbrook to go with a fourth at Miami Trace. Lastly Schmersal was a go-to-state match loser in this weight last year as a junior, and this year was third at Defiance before taking fourth at Van Buren and Lima CC.

Circling back to Loar, three other ranked wrestlers join him at the Garfield Hts. district. Whitehead did not wrestle last year after winning a district match as a sophomore, and this year was runner-up at Kenston before taking fourth at the EOWL. Lowe was a go-to-state match loser last year in this weight class at Division II Beaver Local, and this year was runner-up at the Beaver Local tournament before finishing eighth at OVAC; while Sanders was a go-to-state match loser in this district weight last year as a sophomore, and this year won titles at Hawken and Waterloo before finishing third at Kenston and fifth at the EOWL.

Lastly there exists just one ranked wrestler and not much overall depth at the Buckeye Local district. Dodson won a state tournament match last year at 182 pounds as a junior, while this season features titles at Barnesville and New Lexington sandwiched around a third at the OVAC.

220 pounds

1. Hudson Jump, Grandview Hts., senior (Buckeye Local)

2. Ryan Boyle, Rootstown, senior (Garfield Hts.)
3. Nick Baker, Troy Christian, senior (Troy)
4. Brenden Dalton, Miami East, senior (Troy)
5. Kaleb Snodgrass, Van Buren, junior (Lakota)
6. Austin Kohlhofer, Delta, freshman (Lakota)
7. Hunter Braithwaite, West Jefferson, senior (Buckeye Local)
8. Dylan Sargent, Columbus Grove, junior (Troy)
9. Will Bechstein, Elmwood, junior (Lakota)
10. Anthony Czap, South Range, junior (Garfield Hts.)
11. James Peters, Blanchester, junior (Troy)
12. Dalton Rice, Shenandoah, senior (Buckeye Local)
13. Zac Cesario, Buckeye Local, junior (Buckeye Local)
14. Dylan Thompson, North Union, senior (Buckeye Local)
15. Cole Maxson, Huntington, junior (Troy)
16. Luke Clymer, Independence, junior (Garfield Hts.)

BL – Jump, Braithwaite, Rice, Cesario; Thompson

GH – Boyle, Czap, Clymer, Justin Bell (Columbia, senior); Joe Connors (Cuyahoga Hts., junior)

LAK – Snodgrass, Kohlhofer, Bechstein, Travis Degler (Defiance Ayersville, senior); Alex Duran (Genoa, senior)

TROY – Baker, Dalton, Sargent, Peters; Maxson

One of the more underappreciated talents statewide is the Grandview Hts. senior Jump, who has placed three times at the state tournament in weight classes at or above 182 pounds, including his state title last year at 195 pounds. His state tournament run last year featured a 5-0 decision, two pins early in the second period, and a 9-0 major decision in the championship match; at the district level it was two pins, a 6-5 semifinal win over Dalton Hoover (who was runner-up at NHSCA Senior Nationals in the 220 weight class subsequent to last year's state tournament), and a technical fall in the final. Jump dominated his way to titles at Medina and Top Gun this season; four pins and a major decision in the final of Medina, while at Top Gun it was three technical falls and a pin (the technical falls in the semifinal and final coming against returning state qualifiers).

The most direct challenger to will come from the senior Boyle, a two-time state placer. He has titles at Kenston and the Hephner, along with finishing fourth at the Beast (both losses coming by one point to nationally ranked out-of-state opponents) and runner-up at the Bill Dies losing to Stein in overtime. Only two ranked wrestlers join Boyle at Garfield Hts. for district competition. Czap was a state alternate two years ago as a freshman, while this season features titles at three tournaments along with finishing fourth at the EOWL and fifth at the Hephner. Fellow junior Clymer did not place at North Coast, was fifth at Waterloo, and champion at the CVC.

Wrestlers ranked third and fourth in this weight class, returning state alternate Baker and returning state qualifier Dalton, exit the Troy district along with three other ranked wrestlers. The senior Baker was one match from placing at the GMVWA before winning titles at Licking Valley, Western Brown, and Lima CC (where he pinned Dalton in the final). Fellow senior Dalton won a state tournament bout in this weight class last year, and his current season includes a third at Troy and second place at Lima CC. Sargeant qualified for state in this weight class last year as a sophomore, while his current season includes two tournament titles, a fifth at Defiance, and quarterfinal appearance at Lima CC. Fellow

junior Peters was champion at Madeira and Sycamore before finishing third at Lima CC, while the junior Maxson has titles at Clear Fork and Huntington.

Going back to Jump, there are five total ranked wrestlers at Buckeye Local (i.e. four in addition to Jump). That group is led by the senior Braithwaite, a returning state qualifier in this weight class; his current season features titles at West Jefferson and Nelsonville-York. The senior Rice placed third at Union Local, fifth at Barnesville, and seventh at the OVAC. Cesario was a go-to-state match loser at 195 last year as a sophomore, and this year was runner-up at Union Local, sixth at Barnesville, and seventh at the OVAC; while the senior Thompson is a returning state qualifier, finishing third this year at Nelsonville-York up at 285 before dropping into this weight to take second at North Union and fifth at the Sally George.

Rounding it out is a group of three ranked wrestlers at Lakota, led by the junior Snodgrass who was third at Arcadia and runner-up at Woodmore before winning titles at Perrysburg and Van Buren. The freshman Kohlhofer placed third at Olentangy Liberty and Perrysburg, while finishing runner-up at Medina and being one match from placement at Maumee Bay. Rounding it out is the junior Bechstein, who went 2-2 at Brecksville before placing fourth at Perrysburg and third at Van Buren.

285 pounds

1. Noah Price, Fremont SJCC, senior (Lakota)
2. Noah Koch, Genoa, senior (Lakota)
3. Donovan McCollister, Nelsonville-York, senior (Buckeye Local)
4. Caden Hill, Ashland Crestview, junior (Lakota)
5. Kain Brossia, Elmwood, senior (Lakota)
6. Liam Kirkpatrick, Newark Catholic, senior (Buckeye Local)
7. Chet Loar, West Jefferson, senior (Buckeye Local)
8. Joe Warren, Smithville, senior (Garfield Hts.)
9. Jeff Meyer, Columbus Grove, sophomore (Troy)
10. Ryan Elrod, Ashtabula St. John, freshman (Garfield Hts.)
11. Raven Brant, Willard, senior (Lakota)
12. Dalton Richard, Delta, senior (Lakota)
13. Jacob Backhaus, Sherwood Fairview, senior (Lakota)
14. John Hill, Arcadia, senior (Lakota)
15. Brennan Davies, Allen East, junior (Troy)
16. *Ty Stevenson, Preble Shawnee, junior (Troy)*
17. William Lindsey, Hawken, junior (Garfield Hts.)

BL – McCollister, Kirkpatrick, Lohr, Billy Reed-Bodey (Fairbanks, sophomore); Sheldon Harter (West Muskingum, senior)

GH – Warren, Elrod, Lindsey, Coddie Phillips (Orrville, junior); Simi Moananu (Youngstown Liberty, junior)

LAK – Price, Koch, C. Hill, Brossia; Brant, Richard, Backhaus, J. Hill

TROY – Meyer, Davies, *Stevenson*, Hunter Ross (Milton-Union, senior), Jon Mitchell (Brookville, junior); Chase Jordan (Greeneview, senior)

The district at Lakota in this weight class is absurdly loaded, as it is led by two wrestlers that placed third at state last year. Also featured in the district are two other wrestlers ranked within the top five of the

division plus four additional ranked wrestlers. The result is going to be one meatgrinder of a district weight class, one that could arguably be tougher than the state tournament itself.

Price placed third at 220 last year before finishing eighth in that weight at the NHSCA Junior Nationals. This season features no losses that I can detect, along with tournament titles at Northwood, Woodmore, Van Buren, and Lima CC; it includes wins over four of the next eight ranked wrestlers in this weight class. Price has yet to face the second ranked wrestler Koch, last year third place in this weight class, but they could see each other three straight weeks in championship bouts (sectional-district-state). Koch was third at Medina before winning gold at Perrysburg, and also has a win over projected Division II state placer Leroux.

The junior Hill of Crestview, a placer at the Ironman, and returning state qualifier Brossia are also in this district tournament. In addition to placing at Ironman, Hill was third at both the Gorman and Lima CC; while the senior Brossia placed third at Perrysburg and took second at Van Buren. Brant lost a go-to-state match in this weight last year as a junior, and this year has tournament titles at Loudonville and Lima Senior. Richard qualified for state at 220 last year as a junior, this year winning the title at Olentangy Liberty before fifth place finishes at Medina and Maumee Bay, sandwiched by a fourth at Perrysburg. Fellow senior Backhaus was champion at Findlay and sixth at Defiance, with dual meet losses coming against Koch and Brossia; while fellow senior Hill of Fairview was champion at Arcadia, second at Findlay, along with placing third at Woodmore and Van Buren.

Returning state fifth at 220 McCollister is the lone top five ranked wrestler not from the Lakota district. His current season includes titles in four tournaments, along with placing fourth at the GMVWA and second at Lima CC (4-2 loss to Price). It's two additional ranked wrestlers present at Buckeye Local, the seniors Kirkpatrick and Lohr. Returning state alternate Kirkpatrick has titles at the Kilted Klassic and Licking Valley to go with a seventh at Brecksville, as well as fourth place finishes at CIT and Lima CC. Lohr has titles at Xenia and West Jefferson to go with a runner-up finish at Nelsonville-York.

The senior Warren is the fourth and final returning state placer in this field, placing eight last year in his second state tournament appearance at this weight class. His current season includes two tournament titles, a runner-up finish at West Salem Northwestern, and a fourth at the Grizzly Invitational. The freshman Elrod's older brother Derek was a state finalist last year, losing in overtime to eventual state champion Brian Stears before sliding back to sixth; Ryan's current season includes a runner-up finish at Solon before missing placement at Brecksville and Top Gun by one bout. The junior Lindsey was champion at Hawken, Waterloo, and Berkshire along with taking third at the North Coast Classic.

Rounding it out is a group of two or three ranked wrestlers at the Troy district, led by Meyer who won a match in consolation last year in this state tournament weight class as a freshman. His current season includes a title at Milton Union, second place at Arcadia, along with fifth place finishes at Defiance, Van Buren, and Lima CC. The junior Davies was champion at Allen County, second at Sidney, fourth at Van Buren, and seventh at Lima CC; while Stevenson was a go-to-state match loser last year as a sophomore at 220 pounds, but has missed a good chunk of this season.

Team – based on a state scoring model per ranking position

1. Genoa (Lakota)
2. Rootstown (Garfield Hts.)
3. Troy Christian (Troy)
4. Tuslaw (Garfield Hts.)

5. Delta (Lakota)
6. Milan Edison (Lakota)
7. Ashtabula St. John (Garfield Hts.)
8. Legacy Christian (Troy)
9. Covington (Troy)
10. Oak Harbor (Lakota)