

2013: State of the Wrestling State

Twenty-four years ago, Mark Zimmer from Columbus DeSales became the first wrestler in Ohio high school history to win four state titles. Now, here in 2013, we sit ready to see three more wrestlers likely to become four-timers. Should Dean Heil (St. Edward), Nathan Tomasello (CVCA), and Bo Jordan (St. Paris Graham) accomplish what is expected of them come Saturday, March 2nd, that total will be up to twenty-five.

Interestingly it was thirty years ago that Bo Jordan's father, Jeff Jordan, won his fourth state title. Jeff, the third wrestler to accomplish the feat, is now the head coach at St. Paris Graham, which has a dynastic program that is favored to win its 13th consecutive state title.

In addition to the three wrestlers seeking fourth state titles, three seniors in Division I seek to become three-time state champions, while a single wrestler in Division II and Division III are juniors and on pace to win their fourth state titles next year. Those Division I seniors are Solon teammates Brandon Thompson and Anthony Collica, along with Domenic Abounader (St. Edward). The elite juniors seeking third state titles, and a fourth next year, would be Micah Jordan (St. Paris Graham) – who is Bo Jordan's younger brother – and Jacob Danishek (Dayton Christian). The lone sophomore that won state last year as a freshman is Cameron Kelly (Bellbrook).

The three seniors seeking fourth state titles, along with three seeking a third state title, mean that this is a banner group of seniors in the Buckeye State. The most recent InterMat grade-level rankings show six Ohio natives in the top 24 overall for the Class of 2013: Bo Jordan, who is ranked first; Dean Heil; two-time state finalist Edgar Bright (St. Edward); Domenic Abounader; Nathan Tomasello; and Anthony Collica. State runner-up Markus Scheidel (St. Edward) and state champion B.J. Toal (Troy Christian) are also within the top 100. Additional seniors returning as state champions include Brandon Thompson, Joe Tayse (Massillon Perry), Chris Moore (Clyde), Josh Lehner (Lexington), Jordan Marshall (Troy Christian), Zach Mays (Nelsonville-York), and 2011 state champion Michael Rix (SVSM).

In addition to the obvious – Heil, Tomasello, and Bo Jordan – the following other seniors seek a fourth state placement medal: Aaron Assad (Brecksville), Edgar Bright, Noah Forrider (Marysville), and Michael Rix. It will be a tough good bye when we bid adieu to the Class of 2013 on March 2nd.

This year marks the initiation of the new team wrestling championship, whose final eight in each division will take place at St. John Arena on February 9th. This dual meet tournament will be an interesting event to eye over the next week-plus. It will also be interesting to see what differences in terms of champions, and top teams, one sees between the dual meet and individual bracket tournaments. In my opinion, this is an excellent complement to the individual championships and should be embraced.