

Introduction

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

One of the first observations – at least to me – about this season in Ohio is, “where have the stars gone?” Well, there are two shining lights this year: Micah Jordan (St. Paris Graham) and Jacob Danishek (Dayton Christian). Both wrestlers are ranked among the best in the country at their weight classes, made their second Walsh Ironman finals this December, and earned the title in that prestigious tournament. Additionally, each wrestler will be after a fourth state title come Saturday, March 1.

However, in comparison to previous years, the top end talent behind those two wrestlers (on a national scale) seems to be lacking this year. As of the most recent national weight class rankings (InterMat on January 22), 22 wrestlers hold a national weight class ranking, but only four are in the top five of their respective weight classes. In the recent past, it seemed that more wrestlers were nationally ranked (about 25-30) and more were within the top five of their weight as well.

The analysis for why this is the case is beyond the scope of this report. However, it's not due to a lack of defending state champions. The number of defending and previous state champions in this year's state tournament series (18 defending, 21 if accounting for previous year titles) is pretty much in line with patterns of recent history. That number has been as low as 17 defending/previous champs in 2009/2013, and as high as 24 in 2010/2012.

Furthermore, it is not for the lack of excellent teams within the state of Ohio this year. The most recent national team rankings (InterMat on January 22) have five Ohio teams nationally ranked, which is very much in line with (if not higher than) previous years. There should be a very interesting team race within Division I (four teams in the hunt for the top two positions), the potential for a team race in Division III, and two teams with very impressive performances in Division II though no race is to be expected.

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 ten 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)

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

2nd- 71, 3rd- 35, 4th- 15, 5th- 10, 6th- 2, 7th- 3, 8th- 3, 9th- 1, >10- 3

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 in each of the district tournaments, as one of the key points of interest heading into the post-season is who will qualify for the state tournament (four wrestlers in each of the four districts earn the distinction). Then, finally is the commentary, which provides an analysis of the weight class as a whole, the top wrestlers in the weight class, as well as some relevant and/or tangential commentary. After each weight class is presented in the division, a team ranking is presented based on a formula that is intended to replicate scoring at the state tournament.

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

Please note that this report is a reflection of the information acquired based on wrestling through the weekend ending January 18th updating done after the weekend of wrestling ending January 25th. There are two more weekends of wrestling left in this regular season, one of them being state dual meet championship Saturday. In addition, the state dual meet regional semifinals and finals happened after the major construction of the report; some of those results will be captured, others won't be.

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 February 27th through March 1st.

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

All others ... there are no guarantees. As the TMQ column on Page2 of ESPN.com states, "All predictions guaranteed to be wrong or your money back!" (just kidding)

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

Even though this past year was an “enrollment year” for the OHSAA, and any number of teams changed between the divisions (i.e. D1 to D2, D2 to D1, D3 to D2, D2 to D3), the compositions of the district tournaments remain relatively the same.

Division I still had an all Northeast district (4 sectionals), a mixed Northeast (2 sectionals) and Northwest (2 sectionals) district, an all Central district (4 sectionals), and an all Southwest district (4 sectionals). Division II still features an all Northeast district (4 sectionals); a mixed district held in the Northwest (2 all northwest sectionals, one mixed northwest/northeast sectional, and one southwest sectional); a mixed district in the Southwest (2 all southwest sectionals, one mixed southwest/southeast sectional, and one southeast sectional); and a combined Central (2 sectionals) and East (2 sectionals) district. Division III still features an all Northeast district (4 sectionals), an all Northwest district (4 sectionals), a mixed Southwest (3 sectionals) and Northwest (1 sectional) district, and a mixed Central/East/Southeast district (2-1-1 for sectional distribution).

The only possible exception on a broad basis is in Division II, where again two of the southwest district sectionals will have an allocation process to determine which schools feed to the Northwest district, and which feed to the Southwest district (11 each). Based on last year, the general pattern is that most of the better teams will choose to stay in the Southwest district, as the existing teams in that district are weaker than those in the Northwest.

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 (Mentor)

2013: 120-101, 54.3% (overall); 67-51, 56.8% (championship only); 10 (two-and-out)

2012: 120-96, 55.6%; 71-49, 59.2%; 10

2011: 137-102, 57.3%; 72-51, 58.5%; 7

2010: 103-110, 48.4%; 48-53, 47.5%; 13

DIV I - Combined Northeast (2)/Northwest (2) < Cleveland State University >

2013: 119-100, 54.3% (overall); 62-52, 54.4% (championship only); 9 (two-and-out)

2012: 122-94, 56.5%; 65-51, 56.0%; 13

2011: 127-96, 57.0%; 76-51, 59.8%; 7

2010: 130-93, 58.3%; 86-48, 64.2%; 8

Note – The combined Northeast/Northwest configuration is the same, as it has been for the previous four years presented here. The Medina sectional is joined by the Lorain sectional in going to the combined district; while sectionals at Massillon Perry, Willoughby South, Austintown Fitch, and North Royalton form the all Northeast district

DIV I - All Southwest (now Kettering Fairmont)

Note: This used to be only four of the five sectionals, this year and the two previous years all schools consolidated into four sectionals

2013: 91-111, 45.0% (overall); 41-53, 43.6% (championship only); 19 (two-and-out)

2012: 99-117, 45.8%; 42-55, 43.3%; 9

2011: 86-108, 44.3%; 30-55, 35.3%; 21

DIV I - All Central (Hilliard Darby)

Note: This used to be three central sectionals with one southwest sectional, this year and the two previous years what had been three sectionals is stretched into four sectionals

2013: 90-108, 45.5% (overall); 40-54, 42.6% (championship only); 18 (two-and-out)

2012: 79-113, 41.1%; 32-55, 36.8%; 24

2011: 70-114, 38.0%; 32-53, 37.6%; 21

DIV II - All Northeast (Alliance)

2013: 131-105, 55.5% (overall); 63-51, 55.3% (championship only); 9 (two-and-out)

2012: 122-107, 53.3%; 54-53, 50.5%; 9

2011: 110-105, 51.2%; 62-52, 54.4%; 12

2010: 118-99, 54.4%; 50-52, 49.0%; 11

DIV II - Combined Central (2)/East (2) <now Claymont>

2013: 80-108, 42.6% (overall); 37-55, 40.2% (championship only); 19 (two-and-out)

2012: 88-112, 44.0%; 41-56, 42.3%; 16

2011: 95-118, 44.6%; 37-56, 39.8%; 16

2010: 73-116, 38.6%; 32-56, 36.4%; 23

DIV II – primary Northwest district (Bowling Green)

2013: 107-102, 51.2% (overall); 57-52, 52.3% (championship only); 15 (two-and-out)

2012: 134-89, 60.0%; 87-48, 64.4%; 9

2011: 120-103, 53.8%; 54-55, 49.5%; 9

NOTE: 2011 had 3 NW sectionals, 1 NE sectional; 2012 had 2 NW sectional, 1 NE (some NW) sectional, 1 SW sectional (northern-most, included St. Paris Graham, et al); 2013 had 2 NW sectional, 1 NE (some NW) sectional, 1 SW sectional (teams chose whether to attend NW or SW district)

DIV II – primary Southwest district (now Wilmington)

2013: 102-105, 49.3% (overall); 53-52, 50.5% (championship only); 13 (two-and-out)

2012: 76-112, 40.4%; 28-53, 34.6%; 22

2011: 95-94, 50.3%; 57-47, 54.8%; 19

NOTE: 2011 had 3 SW sectionals (one with some SE), 1 SE sectional; 2012 had 2 SW sectionals, 1 all SE sectional, 1 SE (with some SW) sectional; 2013 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

DIV III - All Northeast (Garfield Hts)

2013: 117-103, 53.2% (overall); 59-51, 53.6% (championship only); 10 (two-and-out)

2012: 128-104, 55.2%; 57-53, 51.8%; 8

2011: 132-102, 56.4%; 66-52, 55.9%; 9

2010: 117-98, 54.4%; 68-52, 56.7%; 9

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

2013: 104-109, 48.8% (overall); 49-52, 48.5% (championship only); 13 (two-and-out)

2012: 84-110, 43.3%; 40-54, 42.6%; 18

2011: 77-113, 40.5%; 39-55, 41.5%; 19

2010: 96-113, 45.9%; 35-56, 38.5%; 16

DIV III - Combined Southwest (3)/Northwest (1) <now Troy>

Note: for 2010 and 2011, it was a 2+2; 2012 and 2013 it has the present composition. In 2010 and 2011, there were two southwest sectionals, for the last two years those same teams are in three sectionals

2013: 109-100, 52.2% (overall); 58-52, 52.7% (championship only); 18 (two-and-out)

2012: 99-99, 50.0%; 58-51, 53.2%; 15

2011: 103-104, 49.8%; 46-53, 46.5%; 14

2010: 112-102, 52.3%; 55-51, 51.9%; 12

DIV III - All Northwest (Bowling Green)

Note: For 2010 and 2011, it was four of the six northwest sectionals at this site; while the last two years, it was four of the five northwest sectionals present here

2013: 90-108, 45.5% (overall); 44-55, 44.4% (championship only); 15 (two-and-out)

2012: 109-107, 50.5%; 55-52, 51.4%; 15

2011: 108-101, 51.7%; 59-50, 54.1%; 14

2010: 94-106, 47.0%; 52-51, 50.5%; 19

Division One – Rankings and Analysis

106 pounds

1. Noah Baughman, Wadsworth, sophomore (Cleveland State)
2. Anthony Jagel, Middletown, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
3. Allan Hart, St. Edward, freshman (Cleveland State)
4. Thomas Genetin, Massillon Perry, senior (Mentor)
5. Devione Edwards, Lorain, sophomore (Cleveland State)
6. Jarrod Brezovec, Aurora, freshman (Mentor)
7. Jarod Bronstrup, Brecksville, sophomore (Cleveland State)
8. Trent Gill, Hilliard Davidson, senior (Hilliard Darby)
9. Daniel Roth, Lakota East, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
10. Harry Feuer, Mayfield, sophomore (Mentor)
11. Jackson Lasko, Grove City Central Crossing, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
12. Zack Donathan, Mason, freshman (Kettering Fairmont)
13. Eric Beck, Cincinnati LaSalle, freshman (Kettering Fairmont)
14. Nick Henneman, Oregon Clay, freshman (Cleveland State)
15. Noah Wakser, North Canton Hoover, sophomore (Mentor)
16. C.J. Campbell, Hilliard Bradley, junior (Hilliard Darby)

CSU – Baughman, Hart, Edwards, Bronstrup; Henneman

HD – Gill, Lasko, Campbell, Austin Oberly (Worthington Kilbourne, senior); Brackan Mead (Olentangy Liberty, freshman)

KF – Jagel, Roth, Donathan, Beck; Remigio Velasquez (Princeton, junior)

MEN – Genetin, Brezovec, Feuer, Wakser; Drew Fairbanks (Austintown Fitch, freshman)

Traditionally the opening weight has been thought of as a bastion of freshman, a place where emerging stars come to form in their debut season. However, in the eight prior state tournaments, only once has a freshman won the Division I state title at either 103 or 106 pounds. That was Dean Heil of St. Edward in 2010, who used that platform to catapult into becoming a four-time state champion.

This pattern of non-freshmen winning state at the opening weight should continue in 2014, as there are only two ninth graders ranked among the top ten at this weight class. The lead contender is the sophomore Baughman, who went 2-2 in a last year's loaded Cleveland State district, which saw L.J. Bentley not even make it to the state tournament. Baughman again anchors a rather deep district tournament, with four of the top seven ranked wrestlers present here – and a fifth within the overall top sixteen. This year, Baughman has shared time between 106 and 113. In this weight, he placed third at Medina and first at Wadsworth; while up at 113, he was runner-up at North Canton.

The freshman Hart is next in line at the Cleveland State district, as he made his name onto the scene with a fifth place finish at the Walsh Ironman, including a win over Genetin along the way. He additionally finished fifth at Medina, losing twice to Baughman. Returning district placer Edwards won this weight at North Canton, and was third at Oregon Clay, losing only 5-4 to the projected Division II state champion Lucas. The other projected state qualifier is the sophomore Bronstrup, a FILA Cadet freestyle All-American, who was behind state runner-up Assad last year; this year, he placed sixth at Brecksville and won the Bill Dies. Also ranked is Henneman, who was third at Solon and seventh at Oregon Clay.

Only two wrestlers in this weight class have state tournament experience, and both exit the Kettering Fairmont district. While neither won a match at state last year, Jagel has been much more impressive this season. He was champion at SWOWCA, beating Roth (the other state qualifier) 17-7 in the final; was third at the GMVWA; first at Fairfield; and fourth at Top Gun, splitting matches with Genetin and losing by one to the nationally ranked Mejia from California. The aforementioned Roth was second at SWOWCA, eighth at Brecksville, and runner-up at Fairfield where he again lost 9-3 to Jagel.

The other two ranked wrestlers at Kettering Fairmont are a pair of freshman, Donathan and Beck. Donathan was third at SWOWCA, losing 12-6 to Roth, and champion at two tournaments this season. Beck was one match from placing at Brecksville, and placed seventh at the Top Gun.

Another group of four ranked wrestlers will exit the Mentor district, including Genetin, who is somewhat of a contender for a state title in his senior season. Genetin has been on the bench behind Bavery (second/first) and Rodriguez (first) the last three seasons. This season, he has shown steady progress. Genetin started 2-2 at the Ironman, one match from placing at the Beast, second at Medina, and third at Top Gun. The other top ten ranked freshman is Brezovec, who was champion at Aurora, Hudson, and Perry – with a fifth place finish at Brecksville. The sophomore Feuer has titles at Riverside and Kenston, along with a fourth place finish at Oregon Clay, which included two losses to Edwards; while fellow sophomore Wakser was fourth at North Canton and a match away from placing at Top Gun.

Rounding out the four districts is the one at Hilliard Darby, which only brings three ranked wrestlers to the table, all at eight or below. The senior Gill was a state alternate last year, and has a title at Pickerington North to go with a seventh at Brecksville. The sophomore Lasko was a district placer last year, losing to Gill in the alternate match, and this season lost in OT to Gill at Pickerington North and was fifth at Oregon Clay. Rounding out the ranked wrestlers is the junior Campbell, who was fifth at the GMVWA.

113 pounds

1. Jose Rodriguez, Massillon Perry, junior (Mentor)
2. L.J. Bentley, St. Edward, junior (Cleveland State)
3. Hayden Lee, Marysville, senior (Hilliard Darby)
4. Mario Guillen, Perrysburg, sophomore (Cleveland State)
5. Shakur Laney, Groveport Madison, junior (Hilliard Darby)
6. Jake Donahue, Massillon, sophomore (Mentor)
7. Garrett Lambert, Strongsville, sophomore (Cleveland State)
8. Patrick Kearney, Mason, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
9. Kyle Jenkins, Stow, sophomore (Mentor)
10. Daniel Clement, Solon, senior (Mentor)
11. Gage Branson, Glen Este, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
12. Luke Nace, Teays Valley, senior (Hilliard Darby)
13. Andrew Coghill, Nordonia, senior (Cleveland State)
14. Chris Doyle, Green, senior (Mentor)
15. Troy Barklay, Centerville, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
16. Andre Herron, North Royalton, senior (Mentor)

CSU – Bentley, Guillen, Lambert, Coghill; Ethan Rivera (Brunswick, freshman)
HD – Lee, Laney, Nace, James Wimer (Grove City Central Crossing, sophomore); James Transue (Dublin Jerome, senior)
KF – Kearney, Branson, Barklay, Blake Biteman (Tecumseh, sophomore); Ryan Boulton (Springboro, junior)
MEN – Rodriguez, Donahue, Jenkins, Clement; Doyle, Herron

An interesting note is that both of the Massillon Perry wrestlers who won the opening weight class in the 21st Century – David Bavery (2012) and Sam White (2007) – failed to win state the next season; Bavery was third last year at 120, while White saw his state title win avenged by Jamie Clark in the 2008 state final. While Rodriguez is the pick here to repeat as champion, he did miss just over a month of competition after sustaining an injury at the Walsh Ironman. In addition, during his first competition back, he lost 3-0 to Hayden Lee in the Top Gun final.

However, Rodriguez is the wrestler in this weight class with the broadest base of productivity. To augment the state title, he is a two-time Super 32 Challenge place-winner, a FILA Cadet freestyle All-American, and a Cadet National freestyle All-American. In addition to the win over top ranked Rodriguez, two-time Indiana state placer Lee beat the second ranked Bentley in a mid-January dual meet. Also on the season, Lee was one match away from placing at the Walsh Ironman, third at Brecksville, and champion at SWOWCA.

The previously mentioned Bentley failed to make state last year, losing an absolute stunner in the consolation semifinal on a miracle broomstick by Mario Guillen late in the match. During the championship semifinal, Bentley had scored the only takedown of the bout against two-time state champion Assad, but could not get out from bottom during his choice period in regulation; then losing in the 30/30 tiebreaker. This season, Bentley placed fifth at the Ironman and beat three state placers on the way to a Medina Invitational title.

Guillen joins Bentley as two of the four ranked wrestlers from the Cleveland State district. This season, returning state fifth placer Guillen went 2-2 at the Ironman (losses to Warner and Stickley), was runner-up at Brecksville, and champion at Perrysburg with a 1-0 victory over DII state runner-up Beard. Also ranked at this site are Lambert and Coghill. The sophomore Lambert was champion at Solon and Kenston, while the senior Coghill was third at Solon, seventh at Brecksville, and sixth at the Top Gun.

Rodriguez heads the deepest of the four districts, as five other top 16 ranked wrestlers compete here. Donahue and Jenkins both went 1-2 at the state tournament last year in the 106 weight class. This year Donahue was runner-up at the Gorman and Oregon Clay, with a title at Smithville; while Jenkins has spent the bulk of the season up at 120 pounds before making the late drop. Two-time district placer Clement was runner-up at Solon, and sixth at Brecksville and the North Coast Classic. District placer Doyle was fifth at North Canton and fourth at the GMVWA, while Herron made a late drop to this weight class and won the Hephner at Austintown Fitch.

Both the Hilliard Darby and Kettering Fairmont district tournaments only have three ranked wrestlers. Lee leads the way at Hilliard Darby, and is joined by returning state fourth placer Laney (fourth at Medina this year); as well as returning state qualifier Nace, eighth at Brecksville and second to Laney at Pickerington North.

State alternate Kearney is the highest ranked wrestler at Kettering Fairmont, and this season he has runner-up finishes at Olentangy Liberty and SWOWCA to go with a title at Mason. District placer Branson was third at three tournaments, including SWOWCA where he lost to Kearney in the semis. Round it out is Barklay, who was fourth at SWOWCA (losing there to Branson for third), a match away from placing at Brecksville, and runner-up at Mason (with a win over Branson).

120 pounds

1. Austin Assad, Brecksville, junior (Cleveland State)
2. Corey Shie, Cincinnati LaSalle, freshman (Kettering Fairmont)
3. Alex Mackall, Walsh Jesuit, sophomore (Mentor)
4. Armando Torres, Elyria, senior (Cleveland State)
5. Jonathan Furnas, Olentangy Liberty, junior (Hilliard Darby)
6. Jake Newhouse, Massillon Perry, junior (Mentor)
7. Josh Heil, Brunswick, sophomore (Cleveland State)
8. Conner Ziegler, Cincinnati Moeller, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
9. Santino DiSabato, Westerville North, senior (Hilliard Darby)
10. Antwon Pugh, Copley, freshman (Cleveland State)
11. Brandon Tucker, Loveland, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
12. Mason Daugherty, St. Edward, sophomore (Cleveland State)
13. Moises Guillen, Perrysburg, freshman (Cleveland State)
14. Jeremy Rezabek, Strongsville, sophomore (Cleveland State)
15. Tristan Bean, Trenton Edgewood, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
16. Noah Schaub, Green, junior (Mentor)

CSU – Assad, Torres, Heil, Pugh; Daugherty, Guillen, Rezabek

HD – Furnas, DiSabato, Cameron Latham (Teays Valley, sophomore), Rob McGrath (Hilliard Bradley, senior); Thomas Cooper (Upper Arlington, junior)

KF – Shie, Ziegler, Tucker, Bean; Dylan Sharp (Vandalia Butler, junior)

MEN – Mackall, Newhouse, Schaub, Andre Stowers (Maple Hts, sophomore); Hunter Deshon (North Canton Hoover, sophomore)

The junior Assad has finished second each of the last two years in the opening weight class. If he is to jump that extra step on the podium, it won't be an easy path as there are six other returning state placers in the weight class. In addition, there is a freshman sensation and a Cadet freestyle All-American that has sat behind state champions the last two years. For the season, Assad finished third at the nation's two toughest tournaments (Beast of the East and Ironman), before winning titles at Brecksville and the Bill Dies.

Life in the district tournament at Cleveland State, which Assad leads, will not be easy. Furthermore, four of those ranked wrestlers exit the same sectional at Medina; those being Assad, Heil, Pugh, and Rezabek (Torres and Daugherty compete at Lorain, while the freshman Guillen is at Mansfield). Torres joins Assad as a returning state runner-up, having lost to the older Assad (Aaron) in last year's 113 pound state final. Those two wrestled five times last year, with Aaron winning every one narrowly. They've already wrestled once this season, Assad winning an extremely controversial match in the tiebreakers during the Brecksville semifinal. For the season, Torres was a match from placing at the Ironman, fourth at Brecksville, and fifth at the Bill Dies (losing to Heil in the semifinal in overtime despite leading 4-1 with ten seconds left in regulation).

Heil placed third at 106 last year, and this season was champion at North Coast Classic, lost to Newhouse in the Medina final, and lost 3-1 to Assad in the Bill Dies final. The freshman Pugh was champion at Lorain, third at the Bill Dies (got majored by Assad), and perplexingly finished fourth at the Hephner. Daugherty, backup last year to Bentley at 106, placed sixth at Medina. The younger Guillen went 2-2 at both Ironman and Brecksville before finishing runner-up at Perrysburg. To round out the ranked group at Cleveland State, Rezabek was third at Solon, first at Kenston, and seventh at the Top Gun.

Ranked second in this weight class at present is the freshman Shie, a Junior High state runner-up last year and Cadet freestyle All-American this summer. During this season, he was champion at SWOWCA, runner-up to Assad (3-2) at Brecksville, and champion at Top Gun with notable wins over Mackall and Dustin Warner. He leads a contingent of four ranked wrestlers at the Kettering Fairmont district. Next on the ladder is returning state placer Ziegler, who went 2-2 at the Ironman (including a win over Newhouse), was fourth at SWOWCA, and champion at the CIT. Two-time state qualifier Tucker has been mostly out of the lineup this year, but is ready to go now. Last among the ranked group is returning district placer Bean, champion at Edgewood, runner-up at SWOWCA, and one match away from placing at GMVWA.

Two returning state seventh placers make up the ranked contingent at the Hilliard Darby district, which is the least challenging of the four (in this weight class). Furnas has shown vast improvement from last year, splitting matches with Torres in finishing third at Brecksville; while DiSabato was third at Medina.

Returning state seventh placer Mackall leads three ranked wrestlers at the Mentor district. His in-season performance, as well as the Cadet freestyle All-American finish last year, show that state finish was lower than a reflection of his abilities. This year, he was champion at Solon, sixth in loaded weight classes at Ironman and Powerade, and a runner-up to Shie at Top Gun. Fellow Cadet freestyle All-American Newhouse has been excellent as well, beating Heil to win a title at Medina, beating DIII state champ Hancock to win at Delaware Hayes, and only losing to Mackall (2-1) in a third place finish at Top Gun. District placer Schaub is the other ranked wrestlers, and he was fourth at North Canton, sixth at the Bill Dies, and a match away from placement at the GMVWA.

126 pounds

1. David Bavery, Massillon Perry, senior (Mentor)
2. Josh Wimer, Grove City Central Crossing, senior (Hilliard Darby)
3. Giuseppe Penzone, Olentangy Liberty, senior (Hilliard Darby)
4. Jarrad Lasko, Madison, junior (Mentor)
5. Josh Parrett, Kettering Fairmont, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
6. Connor Borton, Cincinnati Moeller, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
7. Alec Cotton, Uniontown Lake, senior (Mentor)
8. Jared Davis, Oregon Clay, senior (Cleveland State)
9. Zac Tupps, Ashland, senior (Cleveland State)
10. Greg Brusco, Delaware Hayes, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
11. Ryan Gordon, St. Xavier, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
12. Justin Demicco, Brecksville, sophomore (Cleveland State)
13. David Erdelac, Strongsville, junior (Cleveland State)
14. Brett Thomas, Brunswick, senior (Cleveland State)
15. Tyler Workman, Parma, junior (Mentor)
16. Nico O'Dor, Elyria, sophomore (Cleveland State)

CSU – Davis, Tupps, Demicco, Erdelac; Thomas, O’Dor

HD – Wimer, Penzone, Brusco, Kyle Dooley (Teays Valley, junior); Tyler Hogue (Pickerington Central, senior)

KF – Parrett, Borton, Gordon, Andrew Sams (Cincinnati LaSalle, freshman); Deante Evans (Lakota East, junior)

MEN – Bavery, Lasko, Cotton, Workman; Micah Shorts (Shaker Hts, senior)

Remember that note two weight classes ago about Massillon Perry wrestlers to win the opening weight one year but not win state the next? Well, the other wrestler in that note (Sam White) went on to win a state title the next year, in his senior year at 125 pounds. Bavery is favored to accomplish a similar feat this year, and to end his career with a track of 2-1-3-1, which is darn impressive here in Ohio’s big-school division. This season, he placed at both Ironman and the Beast of the East before winning titles at Medina and the Top Gun. Bavery also impressed with a win over Kolodzick in a home dual meet.

While Bavery is a clear favorite, the two closes to him in the rankings exit the Hilliard Darby district. The senior Wimer placed fifth at state two years ago, before being precluded from competing in last year’s state tournament after qualifying. During this season, he was a match away from placing at the Ironman, a semifinalist at Medina before being forced to default out, and a champion at Oregon Clay. Fellow senior Penzone is also a two-time state qualifier, and was fifth in last year’s state tournament; for this season, he was third at Brecksville to go with titles at Olentangy Liberty and Wadsworth. Returning state placer Brusco missed the first half of the season due to injury before placing eighth at Top Gun in his return. A fourth state experienced wrestler in this weight class is the junior Dooley, who won a match at state last year, but has missed much of this season. While he beat Brusco in a regional final dual tonight, that result was not in time for the ranking process.

The deepest of the four districts is at Cleveland State, one featuring six ranked wrestlers. It is led by two-time state qualifier Davis, a state placer in 2012. This season, he was champion at Solon, fifth at Brecksville, and second at Oregon Clay. Tupps is next in line, placing fourth last year in this weight class in Division III; while this season he was sixth at Brecksville and runner-up at Marion County. Returning state qualifier Demicco has been up-and-down this season, failing to place at Brecksville. Between the Beast and Ironman, he went 5-4; while he also pinned two-time Michigan state placer Zdebski earlier this month. The junior Erdelac was runner-up to Davis at Solon, champion at Kenston, and third at the Top Gun. Returning state alternate Thomas was champion at North Coast, and fourth at Medina and the Bill Dies; while the sophomore O’Dor placed seventh at Brecksville.

Bavery leads a Mentor district with three other ranked wrestlers. Lasko joins Bavery as one of eight past state placers in this field, having placed fourth in this weight last year. During this season, he was one match away from placing in a loaded 132 bracket at Brecksville, and finished third in this weight at the Bill Dies. The senior Cotton also made state last year, winning a match, and this year was champion at the Hephner, second at North Canton, and third in the Top Gun. Rounding out the ranked group is state alternate Workman, who was fifth at the Bill Dies.

Returning state placer Parrett, a three-time state qualifier, leads three ranked wrestlers at the Kettering Fairmont district. The senior Parrett missed the first half of the season, but has won a title at Mason since his return. The junior Borton, a returning state qualifier, went 3-2 at the Ironman, was champion at SWOWCA, and runner-up at the CIT; while the senior Gordon was a state alternate last year, runner-up to Borton at SWOWCA, champion at Troy, and third at the CIT.

132 pounds

1. Nick Boggs, Painesville Riverside, senior (Mentor)
2. Nolan Whitely, Walsh Jesuit, senior (Mentor)
3. Bobby Smith, Hilliard Davidson, senior (Hilliard Darby)
4. Richie Screptock, Oregon Clay, junior (Cleveland State)
5. Hunter Ladnier, St. Edward, sophomore (Cleveland State)
6. Jacoby Ward, Cincinnati Moeller, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
7. Austin Hiles, Brecksville, sophomore (Cleveland State)
8. Brandon Selmon, Princeton, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
9. Jason Spencer, Massillon Perry, junior (Mentor)
10. Justyn Bostic, Massillon Jackson, junior (Mentor)
11. John Shirkey, Cincinnati LaSalle, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
12. Alec Benedetti, North Royalton, senior (Mentor)
13. Nick Kiussis, Brunswick, freshman (Cleveland State)
14. Chris Wymer, Solon, senior (Mentor)
15. Jared Ferguson, Pickerington North, senior (Hilliard Darby)
16. Nick Broyles, Northmont, senior (Fairfield)

CSU – Screptock, Ladnier, Hiles, Kiussis; Jesse Orantek (Elyria, senior)

HD – Smith, Ferguson, Nick Durieux (Westerville North, senior), Andrew Lieb (Watkins Memorial, junior); Matteo Lybarger (Mt. Vernon, junior)

KF – Ward, Selmon, Shirkey, Broyles; Kyle Ramsey (Lebanon, senior)

MEN – Boggs, Whitely, Spencer, Bostic; Benedetti, Wymer

Like the Brecksville Holiday Tournament field in this weight class, and many other tournaments in Ohio this season, the big-school division here is a maze of balance. Picking someone to win the title is an inexact process. However, my choice is the senior Boggs, who placed fifth in this weight last year after winning his district and losing in the semifinals of state. This season, Boggs was runner-up at Solon and Medina in the 138 weight classes, while winning the title in this weight class at the Top Gun.

He leads the deepest of the four district tournaments in this weight class, one that features five other wrestlers ranked in the top 16 (as we all know, only four can make the state tournament). Next in line is returning state placer Whitely, who was fourth in Division II in this weight last year. This season, he was a semifinalist at Solon, fifth in the Powerade, and third at the Top Gun (losing 3-1 to Boggs). The junior Spencer went 2-2 last year at district three weight classes below, but has been much improved this season. He went 2-2 at both Ironman and the Beast of the East, finished a disappointing seventh at Medina; but has responded with a fifth at Top Gun, second at Delaware Hayes, and two dual meet wins over the MIT runner-up (Bostic). Bostic, who made state down three weight classes, has been effective this year with titles at North Canton and the Hephner to his credit, along with a runner-up at Medina and being a match away from placing at Top Gun.

The senior Benedetti was a state alternate last year, and also had the option to drop to 126. However, he's been at 132 all year; winning the North Coast Classic, second at Perrysburg, fourth at the Hephner, and a match away from placing at Brecksville. Fellow senior Wymer was third at Solon splitting matches with Screptock, and sixth at North Coast splitting matches with Lasko.

The highest returning state placer here is returning runner-up Smith, who leads the weakest of the four districts at Hilliard Darby; one that features only one other ranked wrestler. For the season, Smith was champion at Delaware Hayes, runner-up at Pickerington North losing to Fausz from Kentucky, and fourth at Brecksville. The other ranked wrestler here is the senior Ferguson, who was champ at Mason, third at Pickerington North, and fifth at Medina with two wins over Spencer.

Three projected state placers feature among the four ranked wrestlers at Cleveland State. Said group is led by two-time state placer Sreptock, who was seventh at the Ironman, sixth at Brecksville, fourth at Solon, and champion at both Oregon Clay and Wadsworth. Next in line here is the sophomore Ladnier, who last year was a backup to state placer Driscoll and four-time state champion Heil. This season, he went 2-2 at the Ironman, including a 7-2 win over state placer Ward; finished third at Medina; and has dual meet wins over state placers Moore and Hagan. Returning state qualifier Hiles upset Burcher up a weight class in the season opening dual meet, but then failed to have a winning record at the Ironman or Beast of the East. However, his response has been a runner-up finish at Brecksville with two wins over two-time state placers and a title won at the Bill Dies. The other ranked wrestler here is the freshman Kiussis, a Junior High state champ, who this season placed third at North Coast (split with Lasko) and fourth at Medina.

The Kettering Fairmont district features a quartet of ranked wrestlers, including three with state tournament experience. The group is led by the sophomore Ward, who was eighth at state last year. Despite going 1-2 at the Ironman, the win came over a two-time Delaware state finalist; and he also responded with a title at SWOWCA. Next in line is returning state qualifier Selmon, who was fourth at the GMVWA and runner-up at SWOWCA. The junior Shirkey was third in Kentucky last season, and has placed in three major Ohio tournaments this season; third at SWOWCA (losing 10-9 to Selmon), eighth at Brecksville, and fourth at the Top Gun (splitting with Spencer). Rounding out the ranked list is the senior Broyles, a state alternate last year. He has spent the bulk of his time at 126 this season, but may end up here.

138 pounds

1. Michael Kostandaras, Walsh Jesuit, senior (Mentor)
2. Dominick Demas, Dublin Coffman, freshman (Hilliard Darby)
3. Nick Steed, Massillon Perry, junior (Mentor)
4. Tim Rooney, Columbus St. Charles, senior (Hilliard Darby)
5. David Sparks, Marysville, senior (Hilliard Darby)
6. Sonny Lucas, Brecksville, junior (Cleveland State)
7. Shawn Williams, Bedford, senior (Mentor)
8. Evan Morgan, Cincinnati Elder, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
9. Matt Sicurella, Glen Este, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
10. Gavin Nelson, Oregon Clay, senior (Cleveland State)
11. Lane Hinkle, Mt. Vernon, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
12. Drew Hobbs, Cincinnati Moeller, freshman (Kettering Fairmont)
13. Ben Heyob, St. Xavier, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
14. Yassir Abdel-Salem, Lakewood, senior (Cleveland State)
15. Cody Notestine, Pickerington North, junior (Hilliard Darby)
16. D.J. Campos, Trenton Edgwood, senior (Kettering Fairmont)

CSU – Lucas, Nelson, Abdel-Salem, Joey Ciacchi/Jack Conway (St. Edward, senior/sophomore); Adam Salti (Olmsted Falls, senior)

HD – Demas, Rooney, Sparks, Hinkle; Notestine

KF – Morgan, Sicurella, Hobbs, Heyob; Campos

MEN – Kostandaras, Steed, Williams, Ryan Montgomery (Madison, junior); Maverick Meeks (New Philadelphia, senior)

As is the case from the previous weight, there is kind of a muddle here. However, the muddle is playing out with a few less kids. This season's revelation has been the freshman Demas, who shocked the landscape with a 17-2 technical fall in mid-December over returning state placer (and three-time state qualifier) Sparks. The system shock continued with a 22-4 technical fall over Fausz in the GMVWA quarterfinal. He finished runner-up in the tournament, beating state runner-up Bowshier 6-2 in overtime before losing 4-3 to state runner-up Hoskins in the final.

Older brother Josh, who is redshirting this year at Ohio State, burst onto the scene at the state tournament as a freshman. He was runner-up in 2007, while competing for Division III Marion Pleasant at the 130 pound weight class. In the case of Dominick, it will be interesting to see if he can use big moves to carry the day; or if the tigher matches of the post-season favor the more experienced contenders.

The projected state champion here, Kostandaras, certainly qualifies as experienced. He placed as a freshman and sophomore at state, before falling victim to an absolutely loaded Alliance DII district last year at 126 pounds (the four qualifiers finished top six). This year, he was champion at Solon, third at the Top Gun, and a match away from placing at both Ironman and Powerade. He leads what is a relatively thin district with only two other ranked wrestlers.

One of them is third ranked in this weight (Kostandaras first, Demas second), the junior Steed, who was runner-up at the Top Gun in his first major tournament of the season; transferring from Glen Oak, where he made state last year, Steed had to sit out the month of December. Wrestling up a weight this evening, Steed lost 2-1 in the tiebreaker to the third ranked 145 Carson. The other ranked wrestler here is returning state qualifier Williams, who placed at Medina.

Demas leads one of the two districts to have five ranked wrestlers, and two of those at Hilliard Darby are returning state placers, a pair of seniors in Rooney and Sparks. Rooney placed fourth at state last year and is a two-time state qualifier, who this season was champion at Marion Harding and fourth at the CIT; while Sparks was runner-up to Hinkle at SWOWCA, fourth at Brecksville, and fifth at Top Gun (beating Kostandaras in the quarters). The sophomore Hinkle won a match at state last year, was champion at SWOWCA, eighth at Brecksville, and champion at Oregon Clay. Rounding out that ranked group is the junior Notestine, who was sixth at Medina and third at Mason.

The other district to have five ranked wrestlers is at Kettering Fairmont, though only returning state qualifier Morgan is in a projected placement position. This season Morgan competed at 145 until mid-January, placing second at SWOWCA and eighth at Brecksville; while in this weight class, he was fifth at the CIT. A pair of junior wrestlers won a match at state last year, and is among the field in this weight class: Sicurella and Heyob. Sicurella was eighth at the GMVWA and second at Mason, while Heyob was fifth at SWOWCA. The freshman Hobbs has impressed this season, winning two matches at the Ironman, finishing fourth at SWOWCA, and sixth at the CIT (including a 3-1 win over Heyob). Rounding out the ranked group is returning district placer Campos, a senior who was champion at Edgewood and third at SWOWCA.

Clearly the weakest of the four districts is at Cleveland State, which only has one returning state qualifier among the three ranked wrestlers. The junior Lucas somehow placed fourth at state last year. Showing his inconsistency he won three matches up at 145 at the Ironman, but went 1-2 at the Beast in this weight classes. Subsequent to that are a title at the Bill Dies and a runner-up finish at Brecksville. State alternate Nelson was fifth at Solon, 3-2 at the Ironman, third at Brecksville, second at Oregon Clay, and champion at Wadsworth. Rounding out the ranked contingent is the senior Abdel-Salem, who has titles at Avon Lake, Willoughby South, and Berea-Midpark to his credit. A footnote to this report should be made for the sophomore Mikah Price, who pinned Hinkle in the regional semi of state duals, but did not make the ranking structure. Given the nature of qualifying spots at Cleveland State beyond the first two, he has as good a chance as anyone of making state.

145 pounds

1. Kade Kowalski, Tri-Valley, junior (Hilliard Darby)
2. Trey Grine, Fremont Ross, senior (Cleveland State)
3. Zac Carson, Uniontown Lake, junior (Mentor)
4. Taleb Rahmani, Marysville, junior (Hilliard Darby)
5. Mike Decesare, Nordonia, senior (Cleveland State)
6. Tanner Miller, Lancaster, junior (Hilliard Darby)
7. Bo Ransom, Madison, senior (Mentor)
8. Grayson Davis, Brecksville, senior (Cleveland State)
9. Austin Phillips, Massillon Perry, junior (Mentor)
10. Jacob Keller, Beaver creek, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
11. Mario Graziani, Boardman, sophomore (Mentor)
12. Ray Barr, St. Edward, senior (Cleveland State)
13. Kyle Workman, Parma, senior (Mentor)
14. Dejon Moss, Maple Hts, senior (Mentor)
15. Dillon Leneave, Fairfield, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
16. Garrett McIlvain, Hilliard Davidson, senior (Hilliard Darby)

CSU – Grine, Decesare, Davis, Barr; Jake Paul (Westlake, junior)

HD – Kowalski, Rahmani, Miller, McIlvain, Ben Hoof (Thomas Worthington, junior); Logan Broskie (Olentangy Orange, freshman)

KF – Keller, Leneave, Cameron Earley (Springboro, senior), Campbell Morton (Cincinnati Moeller, senior); Dakota Stephens (St. Xavier, senior)

MEN – Carson, Ransom, Phillips, Graziani; Workman, Moss

Massive graduation of core talent from last year's big-school state tournament has yielded a slew of pretty open weight classes, and this is another one. Arguments could be made for any of the first three ranked wrestlers to be ranked first. However, it will be Kowalski who takes the catbird seat. The junior placed third at state last year in Division II, and was champion at Brecksville this year. While Kowalski only went 1-2 at the Ironman, the two losses were by a single point to wrestlers that have appeared in the national rankings at various points of the season.

He exits a Hilliard Darby district, which features two other returning state qualifiers. The first of which is two-time state placer Rahmani, only a junior. This season, he was sixth at Brecksville, runner-up at the Top Gun, and champion at SWOWCA. The other is fellow junior Miller, who was champion at Mt. Vernon and runner-up at Medina and the Hephner. Rounding out the ranked contingent is the senior McIlvain, who was champion at Pickerington North and seventh at Brecksville.

Returning state runner-up Carson ranks third in this weight class, and he exits the deepest district in this weight class at Mentor. Interestingly for Carson, he has finished fourth at the district level in both his freshman and sophomore years before winning his first round bout at state anyway. Five other ranked wrestlers join him in the district weight class. The group is led by the senior Ransom, who qualified for state in 2012, and has appeared in three weight classes this season. To open the season, Ransom won the North Coast Classic at 160; while at 152, Ransom was seventh at Brecksville and first at Perry; and in this weight, he beat Davis 1-0 to win the Bill Dies (a third victory over Davis on the season). Returning state qualifier Phillips, a junior, is next in line; he placed third at Medina this year. The sophomore Graziani follows with a title at Kenston, a third place finish at the Hephner, and a fifth at Top Gun to his credit this season. State qualifier Workman and state placer Moss are ranked, but fall outside the projected state qualification ladder.

Last year's state fourth placer in this weight class, Grine leads the four ranked wrestlers in the Cleveland State district. This year's projected state runner-up has titles at Tiffin Columbian and Oregon Clay to his credit. Next in line is returning state qualifier Decesare, who was second at Solon and fourth at the Top Gun, though he did lose to Davis in the regional semifinal tonight (Decesare did beat Davis in a go-to-state match last year). Davis follows in the rankings, and was a state alternate last year. He started the season up at 152 pounds, where he placed eighth at Brecksville, and dropped into this weight with a runner-up finish at the Bill Dies (including a technical fall over Workman). Rounding out the ranked group is the senior Barr.

152 pounds

1. Casey Sparkman, Massillon Perry, senior (Mentor)
2. J.P. Newton, Perrysburg, senior (Cleveland State)
3. Jairod James, Bedford, senior (Mentor)
4. Andrew McNally, Uniontown Lake, junior (Mentor)
5. Ben Darmstadt, Elyria, sophomore (Cleveland State)
6. Aaron Yarger, Pickerington Central, senior (Hilliard Darby)
7. Kevin Leonhardt, Lakota West, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
8. Lucas Staten, Mt. Vernon, junior (Hilliard Darby)
9. Jordan Paul, Loveland, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
10. Robbie Bosley, Wadsworth, senior (Cleveland State)
11. Heath Phillibert, Nordonia, senior (Cleveland State)
12. Jimmy Thompson, Lancaster, freshman (Hilliard Darby)
13. Luke Strnad, Brecksville, freshman (Cleveland State)
14. Hunter Bryant, Piqua, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
15. Joseph Miller, Huber Hts. Wayne, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
16. David Celinski, Garfield Hts, senior (Mentor)

CSU – Newton, Darmstadt, Bosley, Phillibert; Strnad

HD – Yarger, Staten, Thompson, Colton Carroll (Teays Valley, sophomore); Caleb Llana (Westerville South, senior)

KF – Leonhardt, Paul, Bryant, Miller; Nick King (Trenton Edgewood, senior)

MEN – Sparkman, James, McNally, Celinski; David Docherty (Parma, senior)

For the opening ten weights, if you took Blair Academy out of the equation, one could easily argue that Massillon Perry has the country's best lineup. A lynchpin in that group is the senior Sparkman, a returning state placer, who has been excellent this year. He finished seventh at the Ironman, as well as third at both the Beast of the East and Medina, before winning titles at the Top Gun and Delaware Hayes. Sparkman's leg attack offense is an impressive sight, and one that overwhelms most opposition.

Two of those top contenders exit the Mentor district along with him. The senior James is a returning state placer, who was champion at North Canton and fourth at Medina (losing 6-2 to Sparkman). The junior McNally is a returning state qualifier, who won a North Canton title up at 160, was champion at the Hephner in this weight, and finished third in the Top Gun (losing by fall to Sparkman while getting blown out). The other ranked wrestler at this district is the senior Celinski, a district placer last year, who was champion at Kenston in the 160 weight class and third at the Bill Dies in this weight class.

The projected runner-up in this weight class is the senior Newton, who was third in this weight class last year. In the consolation semifinal at state, Newton upended Sparkman's teammate Tony Dailey; and at FILA Cadet freestyle this spring, Newton did beat Sparkman, so it's not like Sparkman has a free ride to state gold. While Sparkman was placing at the Ironman, Newton went 2-2, losing to a pair of wrestlers from Illinois that do not register on the national landscape. Since then, Newton took Danishek to overtime in finishing second at Brecksville, and won a title at his home tournament.

Newton is joined by four other ranked wrestlers at the Cleveland State district, including a pair of returning state qualifiers in Darmstadt and Phillibert. Darmstadt qualified for state (and won a match) in the 120 pound weight class last year as a freshman. This season, he went 2-2 at the Ironman and finished fifth at Brecksville, including a 13-10 quarterfinal loss to Newton. The senior Phillibert went two-and-out at 132 pounds, and this year was runner-up at Solon before failing to place at either Brecksville or the Top Gun. Fellow senior Bosley was a district placer last year, has a dual meet victory over Phillibert to his credit and has placed in four tournaments this season. Rounding out the ranked group is the freshman Strnad, who was champion at Riverside and was runner-up at the Bill Dies.

The remaining returning state placer in this weight class, Yarger, exits the weakest of the four districts in this weight class. There are only two other top 16 ranked wrestlers at Hilliard Darby. For the season, Yarger was champion at Dublin Scioto and third at the GMVWA. Next in line is the junior Staten – a state qualifier two years ago as a freshman – who was runner-up at Mt. Vernon, fourth at SWOWCA, a match from placing at Brecksville, and a champion at Oregon Clay. Rounding out the ranked group at Hilliard Darby is the freshman Thompson, who was champion at Mt. Vernon, splitting matches with Staten, before placing seventh at Medina and second at the Hephner.

Returning state qualifier Leonhardt leads a group of four ranked wrestlers at Kettering Fairmont. This season, he was runner-up at SWOWCA. Next in line is the sophomore Paul, a district placer last year, who was seventh at SWOWCA and champion at Troy. The sophomore Bryant was champion at Edgewood with a 2-1 semifinal victory over Miller, a returning state qualifier who also was sixth at the GMVWA and second at Troy.

160 pounds

1. Tony Dailey, Massillon Perry, senior (Mentor)
2. A.J. Kowal, Princeton, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
3. Michael Coleman, Hudson, senior (Mentor)
4. Austin Strnad, Brecksville, senior (Cleveland State)
5. Nick Stencel, Oregon Clay, senior (Cleveland State)
6. Sean Black, Hilliard Darby, senior (Hilliard Darby)
7. Cody Pollitt, Olentangy, senior (Hilliard Darby)
8. Alex Bair, Centerville, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
9. Scott Deluse, Lancaster, senior (Hilliard Darby)
10. Mike Wearsch, Amherst, senior (Cleveland State)
11. Taylor Workman, Elyria, senior (Cleveland State)
12. Jordan Collins, Mason, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
13. Peyton Geary, Fremont Ross, senior (Cleveland State)
14. Russell Porter, Willoughby South, senior (Mentor)
15. Jake Conners, Cincinnati Elder, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
16. Raymond Simpson, Delaware Hayes, senior (Hilliard Darby)

CSU – Strnad, Stencel, Wearsch, Workman; Geary

HD – Black, Pollitt, Deluse, Simpson; Keith Neely (Upper Arlington, junior)

KF – Kowal, Bair, Collins, Conners; Austin Bohenek (Cincinnati Moeller, senior)

MEN – Dailey, Coleman, Porter, Hunter Massey (Stow, senior); Jacob Bostic (Green, senior)

Even though the final two days of last year's state tournament were a (relative) disappointment for Dailey, it has not led to a deterioration of form. In fact, one could led it has created an opposite effect. One month later, he was champion over an excellent field at the NHSCA Junior Nationals in the 160 pound weight class (up one from the in-season). Things have continued this season, as Dailey placed fourth at the Ironman, and has titles at Medina, Top Gun, and Delaware Hayes to his credit.

Even though he'll exit the softest of the four districts in this weight class at Mentor, there is one other prime contender in that district weight. Coleman placed fourth at state in this weight class last year, and was runner-up at Medina to Dailey (5-2 loss). He also was champion at Riverside and a runner-up at Hudson (losing 6-4 to projected DII/152 champion Whisler). Those two will be joined by fellow senior Porter, a very late (and smart) dropper into this weight. He was champion at Solon and Willoughby South up at 170, along with a third at the Hephner and fifth at Marion County.

Sandwiched between Dailey and Coleman in the rankings, is two-time state qualifier Kowal. Even though he's never placed at state, the senior did place seventh in the Super 32 this fall and has been excellent between the 160 and 170 weights this season. Kowal was runner-up to the nationally ranked Garcia, losing 8-6, in the Holt (Mich.) invite and champion at the GMVWA while at 170; and was champion at SWOWCA in this weight class. Three other ranked wrestlers join him at the Kettering Fairmont district.

The senior Bair is a returning state qualifier, who went 0-2 at state despite winning district last year. This year, he was champion at Mason, second at SWOWCA, and seventh at Brecksville. The junior Collins was champion at Olentangy Liberty, second at Mason, and third at SWOWCA. Rounding out that ranked group is the senior Connors, who was fifth at SWOWCA and third at the CIT.

Two of the other returning state placers exit the Cleveland State district. Both Strnad and Stencel placed fifth at state last year, with Strnad winning in overtime when the two met in this year's Brecksville final. Outside of that tournament, Strnad won six matches across the Ironman and Beast despite not placing, and was third at the Bill Dies; while Stencel was third at Solon, 2-2 at the Ironman (like Strnad), second at Oregon Clay, and first at Wadsworth. They are joined by three other ranked wrestlers in this district tournament weight class. Wearsch and Geary are returning state qualifiers, while Workman was a district placer. On the season, Wearsch placed eighth at Brecksville and third at Oregon Clay; Geary was runner-up at Tiffin Columbian and sixth at Oregon Clay; while Workman was sixth at Brecksville, while failing to place at the Bill Dies.

Rounding out the field is the Hilliard Darby contingent, which features four ranked wrestlers, including two with state experience. In terms of the rankings, the senior Black leads the way. A returning state qualifier, Black was a quarterfinalist at Medina before having to default and he was runner-up at Wadsworth. Next in line is returning state alternate Pollitt, a fellow senior, who was third at North Canton and Medina before taking second at Top Gun. Another senior, Deluse, placed seventh at state last year; this season he has a runner-up at the Hephner as well as fourth at Medina (losing twice to Pollitt) to his credit. Rounding out the ranked group is the senior Simpson, who was third at Mt. Vernon and fifth at the Top Gun.

170 pounds

1. Joe Heyob, St. Xavier, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
 2. Quinton Rosser, Cincinnati Moeller, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
 3. Isaac Bast, Massillon Perry, senior (Mentor)
 4. Tim Knipl, Wadsworth, junior (Cleveland State)
 5. Tyler Maloy, North Canton Hoover, senior (Mentor)
 6. James Caniglia, Loveland, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
 7. Troy Lang, Brecksville, senior (Cleveland State)
 8. Craig Sloan, Garfield Hts, senior (Mentor)
 9. Jesse Palser, Mansfield, junior (Cleveland State)
 10. Mark Barrow, New Philadelphia, senior (Mentor)
 11. Cameron Rezapourian, Austintown Fitch, senior (Mentor)
 12. Jake Stratton, Hilliard Bradley, senior (Hilliard Darby)
 13. Kevin Khoma, St. Edward, senior (Cleveland State)
 14. Jacob Hinz, Westerville North, junior (Hilliard Darby)
 15. Clayton Ray, Hamilton Township, junior (Hilliard Darby)
 16. Ronnie Williams, Sycamore, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
- *Blake Reid, Upper Arlington, senior (Hilliard Darby) is reportedly out for the year with injury. If he comes back, slot him in the 8th position, slide others accordingly.

CSU – Knipl, Lang, Palser, Khoma; Michael Bekeny (Brunswick, junior)

HD – Stratton, Hinz, Ray, Chris Martinez (Delaware Hayes, sophomore); Eric Deluse (Lancaster, sophomore)

KF – Heyob, Rosser, Caniglia, Williams; Julian Daniels (Cincinnati Northwest, junior)

MEN – Bast, Maloy, Sloan, Barrow; Rezapourian

Sometimes it can be a highly unfortunate circumstance that catapults one to success going forward. One could say that failing to make the state tournament as a junior, after placing sixth at state the year before and being viewed as a legitimate state championship contender, fits the bill. For the senior Heyob, he sat in a semifinal bout on district Saturday with two chances to make the state tournament. However, his first chance went by the wayside in an 8-6 loss to Detuan Smith, who would go on to place third at state (and beat the state champion at both section and district). The second chance would be a consolation semifinal bout against Jacob Globke, a wrestler in consolation due to an overtime loss to the eventual state champion; that bout was lost 3-2.

Moving forward from that, Heyob was a silver medalist at the Disney Duals, losing only one match from about ten against national competition during the summer; and then placed sixth at the Super 32 Challenge this fall. Furthermore, he's undefeated on the season with titles at SWOWCA, Troy, and the CIT to his credit. He'll exit a district at Kettering Fairmont with three other ranked wrestlers, including two with state experience.

Returning state finalist Rosser missed the first month due to football and lingering injuries. In his first major event of the season, Rosser was 2nd at the CIT losing 4-3 to Heyob. However, this week he was upended 12-11 by Cangilia in the regional semifinal of state duals. Caniglia is a returning state qualifier, who has lost twice to Heyob (major decision in SWOWCA final and 5-1 in Troy final) and placed third at Brecksville. Rounding out that ranked group is the senior Williams, who was fourth at SWOWCA and third at Fairfield.

Two-time state placer Bast is also a contender in this weight class, as he has placed in five tournament this season. It includes a fourth at the Ironman with two wins over Ohio state champions, an eighth at the Beast, a runner-up at Medina, and titles at Top Gun and Delaware Hayes. He'll exit a deep Mentor district that features four other ranked wrestlers, two who were state qualifiers last year and another two that were state alternates. State alternate Maloy leads that "trail group", and on the second was third at Medina and Top Gun before a runner-up finish at Wadsworth. Next in line is returning state placer Sloan, who was runner-up at Kenston and fourth at the Bill Dies. Barrow, a state qualifier last year in Division II, follows with a title at Hudson and runner-up finish at Perrysburg to his credit. Finishing it off is state alternate Rezapourian, runner-up at the Hephner and sixth at Top Gun.

Another four ranked wrestlers exit the Cleveland State district, one which is anchored by returning state qualifier Knipl. The junior has competed at both 170 and 182 on the season, and in this weight class placed fifth at Medina and first at Wadsworth. Fellow returning state qualifier Lang beat Caniglia at the Ironman, though Caniglia was a week off of winning a state football title; was a semifinalist at Brecksville; and finished third at the Bill Dies. The junior Palser has been mostly excellent this year in winning titles at North Canton, Pickerington North, the Gorman, and Marion County. Rounding out the group is the senior Khoma, who placed eighth at Medina, and also has a dual meet win over returning state qualifier Hinz.

Last here are the three ranked wrestlers at the Hilliard Darby district, two of whom are returning state qualifiers. The senior Stratton placed fourth at the GMVWA, while the junior Hinz went 2-2 at the Medina Invitational. Also ranked here is Ray, a Division II state alternate last year. Missing from the list is returning state qualifier Reid, a senior who placed fourth at Medina and third at Dublin Sicoto; but is most likely out for the year due to injury.

182 pounds

1. Rocco Caywood, Perrysburg, senior (Cleveland State)
2. Anthony McLaughlin, St. Ignatius, senior (Mentor)
3. Dakota Sizemore, Cincinnati Moeller, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
4. Matt Stencil, Oregon Clay, sophomore (Cleveland State)
5. Michael Weber, Loveland, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
6. Gabe Dzuro, St. Edward, senior (Cleveland State)
7. Kyle Schmidt, Miamisburg, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
8. Nate Hall, Olentangy, junior (Hilliard Darby)
9. Traevon Dickerson, Mansfield, senior (Cleveland State)
10. Trevor Parker, Hilliard Darby, senior (Hilliard Darby)
11. Mike Lewis, Parma, junior (Mentor)
12. Gary Traub, Sycamore, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
13. Adam Tonkin, Centerville, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
14. Shawn Johnson, Delaware Hayes, senior (Hilliard Darby)
15. Kevin McGraw, Troy, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
16. Drew Fenton, Lakota West, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)

CSU – Caywood, Stencel, Dzuro, Dickerson; Eric Claren (Nordia, senior)
HD – Hall, Parker, Johnson, George Dial (Pickerington North, senior); Lucky Shaut (Worthington Kilbourne, senior)
KF – Sizemore, Weber, Schmidt, Traub; Tonkin, McGraw, Fenton
MEN – McLaughlin, Lewis, Connor Rigsby (Painesville Riverside, senior), Drew Schiemann (Madison, senior); Mike Mauser (Willoughby South, senior)

Despite picking Caywood to win last year's muddle at 170 pounds, and seeing him go 0-2 in the state tournament after placing fourth at district, my faith will not waver. It'll either prove to be golden, or I'll look like an idiot yet again (no comments from the peanut gallery please). Yet again, he's had a highly impressive regular season, finishing runner-up at the Ironman with two wins over nationally ranked wrestlers. He also was third at Brecksville (lost 2-1 to McLaughlin on a late reversal, but out-placing him anyway) and first at Perrysburg.

His district tournament at Cleveland State features three other wrestlers within the top nine of this weight class. The sophomore Stencel was a go-to-state match loser last year, and has competed with aplomb this year. He was second at Solon (1-0 loss to McLaughlin), 3-2 at the Ironman, second at Brecksville, and champion at both Oregon Clay and Wadsworth. The senior Dzuro is a returning state qualifier, who was one match away from placing at the Ironman, losing both matches by a point, and was third at Medina. Fellow senior Dickerson finished as an alternate last year, but won a match at the state tournament anyway, and this season was champion at North Canton, second at the Gorman, and third at Pickerington North.

Defending state champion Sizemore is ranked third, and leads an absolutely loaded Kettering Fairmont district. The prior two years have seen Sizemore have uneven regular seasons, then thrive in the state series (third as a sophomore, champ last year). Hopefully for him, it's more of the same this year. He missed the first month-plus recovering from football and an injury, which still lingers. While on the mat, he was runner-up at the CIT losing 3-1 to McLaughlin in the final.

Two-time state placer Weber is next in line at that district, and on the season, won SWOWCA as well as defaulting back to sixth after a semifinal loss to Stencel. Fellow senior and state placer Schmidt is also ranked to place in the weight class. Positioned as the fourth state qualifier is the sophomore Traub, was third at SWOWCA and first at Sycamore. Returning state qualifier Tonkin was fourth at SWOWCA, two losses to Traub, and seventh at Brecksville; and he has been testing the waters some at 195. Fellow state qualifier and senior McGraw was fifth at Pickerington North, sixth at the GMVWA, and second at Troy. Finally in this loaded district weight class is the sophomore Fenton, seventh at the GMVWA and first at Mason.

The fourth, and last, returning state placer in this weight class is McLaughlin, who was first at Solon and the CIT. He also placed fifth at Brecksville and seventh at Ironman, and leads a rather shallow Mentor district in this weight class. It's one where the only other ranked wrestler is the junior Lewis, who was runner-up to Linton at both Aurora and the Bill Dies, and has a title at Kenston to his credit.

Finally among the districts is the one at Hilliard Darby, which carries three returning state qualifiers as the ranked wrestlers. The junior Hall was the only one to actually win a match at state, and on the season was runner-up at North Canton, Medina, and Top Gun. Both seniors, Parker and Johnson, went two-and-out in their junior year state tournament campaign. This year, Parker placed seventh at Medina and third at Wadsworth; while Johnson placed sixth at Top Gun.

195 pounds

1. Kyle Conel, Ashtabula Lakeside, senior (Mentor)
2. Tegray Scales, Colerain, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
3. Josh Murphy, Brecksville, senior (Cleveland State)
4. Gunner Gambill, Loveland, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
5. Jerry Thornberry, Cincinnati Moeller, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
6. Ross Lonsway, Holland Springfield, senior (Cleveland State)
7. Matthew Lybarger, Mt. Vernon, senior (Hilliard Darby)
8. Lenn's Kamba, Olentangy Orange, senior (Hilliard Darby)
9. Kadin Llewelyn, Perrysburg, senior (Cleveland State)
10. Cole Jones, St. Xavier, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
11. Matt Sannella, Kings, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
12. Adam Kuchta, Lorain, senior (Cleveland State)
13. Dennis Breeding, Amherst, senior (Cleveland State)
14. Mike O'Malley, St. Edward, sophomore (Cleveland State)
15. Clayton Brandenburg, Wadsworth, senior (Cleveland State)
16. Chris Meffert, Uniontown Lake, senior (Mentor)

CSU – Murphy, Lonsway, Llewelyn, Kuchta; Breeding, O'Malley, Brandenburg

HD – Lybarger, Kamba, Nick Kramer (Westerville North, junior), Colton Richard (Delaware Hayes, senior);
Robbie Fusner (Grove City Central Crossing, sophomore)

KF – Scales, Gambill, Thornberry, Jones; Sannella

MEN – Conel, Meffert, Chad Ely (Painesville Riverside, senior), Monterol Johnson (Maple Hts, senior);
Michael Delsanter (Hudson, junior)

The value of scheduling is a conversation that seems to come up on a yearly basis, especially around state time. Is a rigorous schedule an absolute must in order to thrive at the state tournament? Different people have different answers. The dynamic of this weight class might yield insight, though be on "small sample size" alert. Returning state runner-up Conel was undefeated up to the state final on a relatively invisible schedule (Kenston was his toughest tournament, and a district finals win over Joe Tayse the quality win). This year, it's more of the same, and he was pushed to a 3-2 finals win by DII state qualifier Jackson of Crestwood.

Four state placers sit behind Conel in the rankings, all of whom competed at the Ironman along with other higher end tournaments. Three of those wrestlers (all two-time state placers), and two others in the rankings, exit the Kettering Fairmont district. By virtue of that, one top 11 wrestler will not be in the state tournament (at least). Two-time state placer Scales is more known for his football exploits, where he was Defensive Player of the Year statewide in Division I as a linebacker. The Ironman runner-up, and champion at SWOWCA, Breckville, and Fairfield will be playing on Saturday's at Indiana University starting next fall. Next in line is Gambill, a two-time state placer who is an excellent football player in his own right. He was a fullback for a state championship football team and stepped right back on the mat to place eighth at the Ironman and second at SWOWCA. Fellow senior Thornberry competed in the Ironman at 220, where he placed third, but was champion at the CIT in this weight class.

Rounding out the ranked wrestlers at Kettering Fairmont in this weight class are returning state alternate Jones, who was third at SWOWCA and second at the CIT; and district placer Sannella, runner-up at 182 at SWOWCA and champion in this weight at Sycamore.

The other returning state placer in this weight class is the senior Murphy, who also placed at the NHSCA Junior Nationals and in Junior freestyle during the past offseason. This regular season, he was fifth at Ironman and the Beast of the East before finishing second at Brecksville and first at the Bill Dies. Murphy exits a Cleveland State district tournament with six other ranked wrestlers, which means some quality kids will be going home (though only one other holds a top eight position). The top eight wrestler would be the senior Lonsway, who has four tournament titles this season.

Next in line at Cleveland State is returning district placer Llewelyn, who was third at Brecksville and first at Perrysburg. Kuchta, a state qualifier in Division III last year, has a title at Avon Lake (3-1 over Breeding), a runner-up at North Canton (7-4 loss to Lonsway), and fifth place finish at Oregon Clay to his credit. District placer Breeding was runner-up at Avon Lake, seventh at Brecksville, and a match away from placing at Oregon Clay. The sophomore O'Malley placed sixth at Medina, while the senior Brandneburg was seventh in that tournament and has two other titles to his credit this season.

The other two projected placers, both seniors, are returning state qualifiers from the Hilliard Darby district. Lybarger was at 220 for the first half of the season where he was fifth at SWOWCA and fourth at Brecksville, before dropping to this weight class in a third place finish at Oregon Clay. Kamba was first at Pickerington North and sixth at Brecksville. The other two qualification spots from this district will be earned by non-ranked wrestlers.

Rounding it out is the Mentor district, which beyond Conel is the Meh-ntor district. Only the senior Meffert is ranked, and he's 16th. For the season, Meffert was third at North Canton and fourth at the Hephner.

220 pounds

1. Chalmer Frueauf, Cincinnati Moeller, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
2. Austin Pfarr, Marysville, senior (Hilliard Darby)
3. Alex Woichevich, Nordonia, senior (Cleveland State)
4. Devin Nye, Springfield, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
5. Tinashe Bere, Sycamore, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
6. Parker Knapp, St. Edward, junior (Cleveland State)
7. Seth Brennock, Loveland, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
8. Andrew Sierawski, Delaware Hayes, senior (Hilliard Darby)
9. Andy Struttman, Westerville North, senior (Hilliard Darby)
10. Marquise Copeland, Bedford, junior (Mentor)
11. Garrett Snyder, North Royalton, senior (Mentor)
12. Stefano Millin, Massillon Perry, senior (Mentor)
13. Matt Kuhlmann, St. Xavier, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
14. Alonzo Jewell, Hamilton Township, senior (Hilliard Darby)
15. Rudy Ware, Cuyahoga Falls, senior (Cleveland State)
16. Mark Dellas, Perrysburg, senior (Cleveland State)

CSU – Woichevich, Knapp, Ware, Dellas; Connor Kamczyc (Elyria, senior)

HD – Pfarr, Sierawski, Struttman, Jewell; Chandler Evanichko (Grove City, senior)

KF – Frueauf, Nye, Bere, Brennock; Kuhlmann

MEN – Copeland, Snyder, Millin, Anthony Kastelic (Garfield Hts, junior); Grant Martin (Uniontown Lake, sophomore)

Sport can be a very humbling experience. One move, one sequence can turn a champion into not such. Conversely one move can turn an underdog into a star. However, the analysis for ranking has to be done on a larger scale. One is trying to predict what is likely to happen. In the case of defending state champion Frueauf, I am choosing to view his loss by fall in the regional semifinal of the state duals as a "one off".

While the result demonstrates that he isn't "untouchable", the overall resume for Frueauf dominates this field. Twice fourth at state, and a state champion last year, all at 215/220 is impressive. Keep in mind that Frueauf is going to be playing football at an FBS school next year, after being an impact defensive lineman for back-to-back state title teams in football.

Moving on with things, he is the anchor wrestler in an excellent field at the Kettering Fairmont district. It is one that features four other ranked wrestlers. Fellow senior Nye placed fifth in this weight class last year, but should seriously consider moving up to 285, where he would have a much greater chance of winning. Next in line is another senior in returning state qualifier Bere, who will be playing linebacker for Duke next year. This season, Bere was runner-up at SWOWCA, losing to Pfarr after beating Brennock and Lybarger. Brennock, the giant killer of Frueauf, is obviously a big move guy and one to watch for. This season he placed fourth at Ironman, third at SWOWCA and Brecksville, and first at Troy. Finally it's another senior in Kuhlmann, a district placer last year, who was fourth at SWOWCA, third at Troy, and second in the CIT.

Beyond Frueauf, the wrestler with the highest probability of winning this weight class is returning state placer Pfarr, a runner-up at the Ironman and champion at SWOWCA, Brecksville, and the Top Gun this season. Titles at Brecksville and the Top Gun came with victories over Woichevich. Pfarr anchors a district at Hilliard Darby featuring three other ranked wrestlers. Next in line is fellow senior Sierawski, who placed first at Mt. Vernon, seventh at Top Gun, first at Delaware Hayes with a pin over Millin, and pinned Struttman in the state dual meet regional semifinal round. Returning state qualifier Struttman was runner-up at Medina, but also lost by fall to Knapp in a dual meet the next week; while Division II state qualifier Jewell was champion at Marion Harding up at 285 before dropping here.

The just mentioned Woichevich leads four ranked wrestlers at the Cleveland State district. This season, he has runner-up finishes at Brecksville and Top Gun on the resume. Next in the rankings is returning state qualifier Knapp, a junior who was a Junior freestyle All-American in Fargo over the summer. This season, he placed eighth at the Ironman and third at Medina, but lost to Pfarr in dual meet competition. Go-to-match losers Ware and Dellas round out the ranked group in this weight class, with Ware finishing second at Hudson and third at the Bill Dies (losing to projected DII champ Rutherford in both tournaments).

Rounding it out is a shallow group at Mentor with only three ranked wrestlers, none at present in a projected placement position. North Canton champion Copeland, who was fourth at Medina, leads the group. He is followed by state alternate Snyder, who was champion at North Coast and the Hephner, second at Perrysburg, and fifth at Medina. Finishing it off is two-time state qualifier Millin, who placed at Ironman, Beast of the East and Medina; but failed to place at Top Gun and lost to Sierawski in the Delaware Hayes final.

285 pounds

1. Cale Bonner, Perrysburg, junior (Cleveland State)
2. Geno Rollo, Pickerington North, senior (Hilliard Darby)
3. Andrew Alten, Loveland, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
4. Chris Crumb, Olentangy, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
5. Kevin Vough, Elyria, freshman (Cleveland State)
6. Antonio Zapata, Oregon Clay, senior (Cleveland State)
7. Mickey Crum, Hamilton Township, senior (Hilliard Darby)
8. Conan Jennings, Centerville, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
9. Ralph Nichols, St. Edward, senior (Cleveland State)
10. John-Morgan Cunningham, Bedford, senior (Mentor)
11. Alex Dalton, Troy, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
12. Nick Nader, Gahanna Lincoln, senior (Hilliard Darby)
13. C.J. Kinzer, Teays Valley, senior (Hilliard Darby)
14. Tristan Roberts, Glen Oak, junior (Mentor)
15. Jordan Lee, Olmsted Falls, senior (Cleveland State)
16. Josh Burger, Aurora, junior (Mentor)

CSU – Bonner, Vough, Zapata, Nichols; Lee

HD – Rollo, Crumb, Crum, Nader; Kinzer

KF – Alten, Jennings, Dalton, Joe Hensley (Cincinnati Moeller, sophomore); Tristan Taylor (Tecumseh, junior)

MEN – Cunningham, Roberts, Burger, Antonio Weatherspoon (Maple Hts, senior); Seth Maylor (Massillon Perry, senior)

Go back ten years to the big-school division at 215 pounds. Remember how there were multiple matches over the three week state series between Dave Noga, Paul Burger, Lenny Trusnik, and Luke Busson. Every time they met it seemingly went to the tiebreaker, with some vagary of luck deciding the winner (Noga won the state title). It feels that this 285 pound weight class could come down to a total crap shoot. It won't matter who the best wrestler is, just the one that strings together four consecutive wins against the wrestlers laid out in front of them.

Even with the ultimate tiebreaker loss in the regional semifinal round of the state duals, I'm still going to rate Bonner as the most likely wrestler to win the state title. This season, he was runner-up at Ironman and Oregon Clay, losing both finals to nationally ranked wrestlers, and champion at Perrysburg.

Tonight's loss was to Zapata, a wrestler he beat in the tiebreaker in the Oregon Clay semifinals. Zapata will join Bonner in a loaded Cleveland State district. In this season, he beat second-ranked Rollo to win Solon, went 2-2 at the Ironman, was eighth at Brecksville, third at Oregon Clay, and eighth at Wadsworth. Additionally, he has two dual meet losses to the freshman Vough, who also exits this district. On the season, the freshman was one match from placing at the Ironman, was fifth at Brecksville, and second at the Bill Dies. He also beat Alten 5-3 in a January dual meet, after losing twice in December. Rounding out the five ranked wrestlers here are a pair of seniors in Nichols and Lee. Nichols was a district placer last year, and this year placed fourth at Medina; while Lee was champion at Willoughby South, runner-up at Medina, and fifth at the Bill Dies.

Five ranked wrestlers also exit the Hilliard Darby district, including three projected state placers. The group is led by Rollo, who was second at Solon and champion at Medina and Pickerington North. Returning state alternate Crumb, only a sophomore, was third at North Canton, Medina, and the Top Gun this season. 2012 state qualifier in Division II Crum is next on the list, but he's been in-and-out of the lineup this season after missing last year with injury. Rounding out the ranked group are seniors Nader and Kinzer. Nader was runner-up at Olentangy Liberty and Marion County, while Kinzer was fourth at Pickerington North and seventh at Brecksville.

Three ranked wrestlers are featured in the Kettering Fairmont and Mentor districts. The one at Kettering Fairmont has two projected placers in Alten and Jennings, who are 2-2 against one another on the season. Alten was seventh at the Ironman, champion at SWOWCA and Troy, and third at Brecksville; while Jennings was third at SWOWCA and fourth at Brecksville. The other ranked wrestler at Kettering Fairmont is fellow senior Dalton, a returning state alternate, who was fourth at the GMVWA and runner-up at Troy and Pickerington North.

The Mentor district is led by returning state qualifier Morgan-Cunningham, who was second at North Canton and seventh at Medina. Next in line is Roberts, the champion at North Canton, who then finished seventh at the Bill Dies; while fellow junior Burger rounds it out working off a championship at Hudson and runner-up finish at Aurora.

Team Standings

1. Massillon Perry (Mentor)
2. Moeller (Kettering Fairmont)
3. Brecksville (Cleveland State)
4. St. Edward (Cleveland State)
5. Perrysburg (Cleveland State)
6. Loveland (Kettering Fairmont)
7. Marysville (Hilliard Darby)
8. Oregon Clay (Cleveland State)
9. Walsh Jesuit (Mentor)
10. Wadsworth (Cleveland State)
11. Elyria (Cleveland State)
12. Uniontown Lake (Mentor)

Division Two – Rankings and Analysis

106 pounds

1. Tyler Warner, Claymont, sophomore (Claymont)
2. Hunter Lucas, Lima Shawnee, sophomore (Bowling Green)
3. Justin Stickley, St. Paris Graham, sophomore (Wilmington)
4. Tony Decesare, Padua, sophomore (Alliance)
5. Josh Venia, Toledo Central Catholic, sophomore (Bowling Green)
6. Jake Martinez, Licking Valley, freshman (Claymont)
7. Bruce Hrynciw, Oak Harbor, freshman (Bowling Green)
8. Hunter Kosco, Canal Fulton Northwest, freshman (Alliance)
9. Dante Ginnetti, Poland, sophomore (Alliance)
10. Alex Potts, East Liverpool, junior (Claymont)
11. Terrell Grant, Tallmadge, junior (Alliance)
12. Noah Jay, Whitehall, senior (Claymont)
13. Skylar St. Peter, Athens, senior (Wilmington)
14. Tyler Adkins, Western Brown, junior (Wilmington)
15. Charles Nash, Norwalk, sophomore (Bowling Green)
16. Alec Schopfer, West Branch, junior (Alliance)

ALL – Decesare, Kosco, Ginnetti, Grant; Schopfer

BG – Lucas, Venia, Hrynciw, Nash; Tyler Capodice (Sandusky Perkins, sophomore)

CLMT – Warner, Martinez, Potts, Jay; Logan Ball (Cambridge, freshman)

WIL – Stickley, St. Peter, Adkins, Jarred Stevens (Gallia, freshman); Jaylin Cameron (Urbana, sophomore)

Going back over a stretch of 20 years, one can find four wrestlers that have won back-to-back titles with both coming in the opening weight class. Those would be Nathan Tomasello (CVCA, 2010-11), David Taylor (St. Paris Graham, 2006-07), Levi Wyant (Triad, 2002-03), and Shawn Adkins (Coventry, 1996-97). This year, it's Tyler Warner seeking to accomplish that feat, and he's a solid favorite to do so. The most likely blockade will probably be weight control in as much as anything. During this season, he was champion at Ironman and Medina with a runner-up finish at Top Gun.

The rankings suggest the primary challenge to Warner will come from the sophomore Lucas, who was one match away from placing at the Super 32 Challenge in October. During the regular season, he was champion at Marion Harding over returning DIII placer Vidika, and beat projected DIII champ Mattin to win the Oregon Clay title. Lucas exits a Bowling Green district with three other ranked wrestlers. Next in line is Cadet National double All-American Venia, a runner-up at Solon, fourth at Brecksville, and champion at CIT during the season. The freshman Hrynciw was fourth at Medina and third at Perrysburg; while the sophomore Nash was runner-up at the Gorman and third at Kenston.

The other notable challenge will come from Stickley from Graham, who was behind his brother Eli in the lineup last year. On the season, Justin was champion at GMVWA and New Lexington, and has a 2-0 win over Hart of St. Edward in a dual meet. He'll exit a shallow Wilmington district, which has only two other ranked wrestlers. The first of whom is the senior St. Peter, a state alternate that placed fourth at the GMVWA before winning titles at Athens and Miami Trace. The junior Adkins is next in line, and on the season has titles at Middletown Madison and Bellbrook.

The deepest of the four district by the rankings is at Alliance, with five here, led by returning Division I state placer Decesare. He was forced to miss the first half of the season due to transfer, and in his debut tournament lost 6-0 to Venia in the championship bout at the CIT. The freshman Kosco is next in line, and he has placed in three tournaments this year (second at Cambridge, third at North Canton, and sixth at Top Gun). Returning state qualifier Ginnetti was runner-up at Kenston and also placed at Top Gun. The junior Grant was champion at the Hephner and Smithville, and runner-up at Aurora and the Bill Dies; while fellow junior Schopfer was a state alternate last year, but has slid back this year.

In terms of Warner at the district level, he'll exit a Claymont district with four total ranked wrestlers. Next on the ladder is the freshman Martinez, who was champion at Cambridge this year. The junior Potts was champion at the OVAC tournament; while the senior Jay was a state alternate last year after making state two years ago.

113 pounds

1. Eli Stickley, St. Paris Graham, junior (Wilmington)
2. Seth Beard, Napoleon, sophomore (Bowling Green)
3. Tariq Wilson, Steubenville, sophomore (Claymont)
4. Ana Abduljelil, Whitehall, sophomore (Claymont)
5. Trent Duffy, Miami Trace, senior (Wilmington)
6. Cory Simpson, Field, sophomore (Alliance)
7. Paul Petras, Padua, junior (Alliance)
8. Levi Congleton, Vincent Warren, junior (Wilmington)
9. Zach Bussard, Valley View, junior (Wilmington)
10. Thurston Dyer, Upper Sandusky, sophomore (Bowling Green)
11. Lane Peters, Claymont, sophomore (Claymont)
12. Corey Marshall, Dover, senior (Claymont)
13. Nick Berry, Dayton Carroll, sophomore (Bowling Green)
14. Dylan Mansor, Oak Harbor, freshman (Bowling Green)
15. Jack Dawson, Beaver Local, junior (Claymont)
16. Eli Yoho, Woodridge, freshman (Alliance)

ALL – Simpson, Petras, Yoho, Joseph Brennan (Marlington, sophomore); Colin Langer (Lake Catholic, freshman)

BG – Beard, Dyer, Berry, Mansor; Keysean Amison (Sandusky Perkins, freshman)

CLMT – Wilson, Abduljelil, Peters, Marshall; Dawson

WIL – Stickley, Duffy, Congleton, Bussard; Matt West (Hillsboro, senior)

Last year I projected Stickley to win the 106 weight class. As we all know, he did not win. He finished third after losing 4-2 to Beard in the state semifinal. Based on some sort of faith, as well as maybe trusting broad productivity (Ironman third this year after winning it last year, and a two-time Super 32 placer) or the "Graham push", Stickley is still the pick this year.

He'll exit a Wilmington district that features four ranked wrestlers in all, including returning state placer Duffy, who was fourth at Top Gun and first at Miami Trace. Returning state qualifiers Congleton and Bussard are the other ranked wrestlers in the district field. For this season, Bussard was third at Franklin and fourth at Pickerington North.

Beard exits at Bowling Green district with four ranked wrestlers as well. After finishing runner-up at state last year, losing in the ultimate tiebreaker to Tyler Warner, Beard has been runner-up in two tournaments this year. Losses came 3-2 to Bentley in the Medina final, and 1-0 to Guillen at Perrysburg. Dyer, a qualifier for state last year, in Division III leads that trail pack. For this season, he was champion at Tiffin Columbian and runner-up at Marion Pleasant. Next in line is the sophomore Berry, who was runner-up at Franklin and fourth at the CIT; while the freshman Mansor, third at Perrysburg and Oregon Clay, rounds it out.

The next two ranked wrestlers in this weight class, both placing at state last year as freshmen, exit the Claymont district. Wilson placed sixth at state last year and this year has titles at North Canton and the OVAC; while Abduljelil placed fifth in this state tournament weight class last year. Fellow sophomore Peters is next in line, and he placed seventh at the Top Gun after getting into the lineup when Dustin Warner (prudently) moved up one weight class. Two other wrestlers, Marshall and Dawson, are ranked at this site. The senior Marshall made state last year, and this year was a match away from placing at Top Gun; while the junior Dawson finished third at Cambridge, second at Lorain, and fourth at the OVAC.

Lastly, it's extremely shallow at the Alliance district with only three ranked wrestlers, including returning state placer Simpson, who was fifth at Top Gun and runner-up at Wadsworth. Also ranked here is district placer Petras, who was runner-up at the CIT; and the freshman Yoho, a runner-up at the Bill Dies.

120 pounds

1. Dustin Warner, Claymont, senior (Claymont)
2. Ryan Bennett, CVCA, junior (Alliance)
3. Collin Dees, Perry, senior (Alliance)
4. Mario Kastl, St. Paris Graham, sophomore (Wilmington)
5. Korey Frost, Canfield, senior (Alliance)
6. Brad Taton, Lake Catholic, senior (Alliance)
7. Colin Ingram, Lima Bath, senior (Bowling Green)
8. Raymond Raimo, River Valley, senior (Claymont)
9. Mike Stewart, Sparta Highland, senior (Claymont)
10. Nick Hoffman, Amanda Clearcreek, senior (Claymont)
11. Ryan Kelley, Hillsboro, junior (Wilmington)
12. Juwan Minnefield, Sandusky Perkins, sophomore (Bowling Green)
13. Cole Woods, West Holmes, sophomore (Claymont)
14. Brogan Lovejoy, Ravenna, junior (Alliance)
15. Rosendo Beltran, Toledo Central Catholic, sophomore (Bowling Green)
16. Josh Gunter, Coventry, junior (Alliance)

ALL – Bennett, Dees, Frost, Taton; Lovejoy, Gunter

BG – Ingram, Minnefield, Beltran, Marcus Cruz (Clearview, senior); Gage Campbell (Wauseon, sophomore)

CLMT – Warner, Raimo, Stewart, Hoffman; Woods

WIL – Kastl, Kelley, Kyle Bussard (Valley View, junior), Andrew Spicer (New Lexington, sophomore); Seth D'Allessandris (Springfield Shawnee, junior)

In the narrative of the previous weight class, we talked about the prudent mid-season movement up in weight class for the senior Warner. Now we see why. He's still favored in this weight class, and residually it helps get a teammate into a more optimal position. On a tangential point, at times the focus on weight management and weight making can suck the life and joy out of the sport for many.

Last season Warner was finally in an optimal weight class, as he was stuck behind Burcher and Langdon for two seasons, and placed third at state. This year, he was sixth at Ironman and third at Medina in the 113 weight class. Then, he moved up to 120, where he placed at the Top Gun.

Four of the next five ranked wrestlers in this weight class exit the Alliance district, a field that includes another two ranked wrestlers as well. Making 120 was a struggle for two-time state placer Bennett during the first half of the year, he missed it in their season opening triangular and couldn't hit it for the second day at Medina. However, his form is much better now, and he placed fifth at Top Gun losing only to Mackall and Newhouse. Next in line is returning state placer Dees, a two-time state qualifier in his own right. This season, he placed seventh at Brecksville, first at Perry, and second at Oregon Clay. 2012 state qualifier Frost, who missed much of last season with injury, has bounced back excellently placing third at Perry and fourth at the Bill Dies. In the state dual meet series, he has picked up one point wins over Taton and Dees (though Dees beat him by one at Perry). Rounding the first four out is two-time state placer Taton, who was runner-up at Solon and CIT, and eighth at Brecksville.

The other two ranked wrestlers at Alliance are a pair of juniors, Lovejoy and returning state alternate Gunter. Lovejoy placed fourth at Kenston and was a match from placing at Top Gun, while Gunter was one match from placing at the Bill Dies.

While Warner won't truly be challenged at the district level, his Claymont district does feature four other ranked wrestlers, which means one won't advance to state. Three of them are returning state qualifiers: senior Raimo and Hoffman (who was DIII last year), and the sophomore Woods. Woods was 3-2 at both Medina and the Top Gun but failed to place. Also ranked here is the junior Stewart, a state alternate, who was runner-up at Sparta Highland, eighth at Medina, and third at New Lexington.

The fourth ranked wrestler in this weight class is the sophomore Kastl, who is making a steep cut after making the heavy bump up last year, while finishing as a state alternate at 126. During this season, Kastl was fifth at the GMVWA (pinning Ingram), and has titles at Valley View and New Lexington. His Wilmington district site is extremely shallow here with only Kelley as a ranked wrestler. For the season Kelley was champion in the 126 weight class at Franklin, and has won titles at Bellbrook and Western Brown in this weight.

Returning DIII state placer Ingram is one of only three ranked wrestlers in this weight at Bowling Green. For the season he was sixth at the GMVWA and third at Oregon Clay. Other ranked wrestlers are sophomores Minnefield and Beltran. Minnefield was a state alternate last year, and this year was runner-up at the Gorman and fifth at Marion County; while Beltran finished third at the CIT.

126 pounds

1. Anthony Tutolo, Lake Catholic, senior (Alliance)
2. Eli Seipel, St. Paris Graham, junior (Wilmington)
3. Cameron Kelly, Bellbrook, junior (Wilmington)
4. Cole Tawney, Gallia Academy, junior (Wilmington)
5. Chandler Minnard, Bloom Carroll, junior (Claymont)
6. Georgio Poullas, Canfield, freshman (Alliance)
7. Devin Rogers, Springfield Northwestern, junior (Bowling Green)
8. Walker Chieffe, University School, senior (Alliance)
9. Kollin Clark, Claymont, senior (Claymont)
10. Elijah Cochran, Kenton Ridge, senior (Wilmington)
11. Matthew Steer, West Branch, freshman (Alliance)
12. Bryson Leynaud, Lexington, junior (Bowling Green)
13. Hayden Matheney, McConnellsville Morgan, senior (Claymont)
14. Tyler Jenkins, Meadowbrook, junior (Claymont)
15. Billy Shannon, Amanda Clearcreek, senior (Claymont)
16. C.J. Ball, Rossford, senior (Bowling Green)

ALL – Tutolo, Poullas, Chieffe, Steer; Joe Koontz (Akron SVSM, freshman)

BG – Rogers, Leynaud, Ball, Luke Leonard (Fostoria, junior); Connor Avalon (Clyde, junior)

CLMT – Minnard, Clark, Matheney, Jenkins; Shannon

WIL – Seipel, Kelly, Tawney, Cochran; Shawn Murphy (Washington C.H., junior)

Even though it is not common to see multiple state champions in a weight class, it is something that does happen on a year-to-year basis. Over the previous six state tournaments, it has happened in four of them. Even rarer is it to have three wrestlers in a weight class that have stood on top of the state podium before. In fact the last time that happened was in 2008 with the Division III 145 pound weight class. Zach Toal (Troy Christian) and David Stiltner (Waynedale) were defending state champions, with Zach Nelson (Madison Plains) having won in 2006. That year Toal beat Nelson in the final, while Stiltner failed to place.

The year, Tutolo and Seipel and defending state champions with Kelly winning it the prior year. In fact, Seipel beat Kelly 3-2 in last year's state final. I guess one could see Kelly drop to 120, though it hasn't happened yet. Both Kelly and Seipel will exit the Wilmington district, while means it's likely that the loser will have to face Tutolo in the state semifinal round. They'll be joined in that district tournament by returning state placer Tawney and returning state qualifier Cochran.

On the season, Seipel was runner-up at the Ironman and champion at the GMVWA ,Valley View, and New Lexington tournaments. Kelly's season saw a delayed start after an injury at the Super 32 Challenge, but since his return, he did win a title at Bellbrook. Tawney has titles at Gallia, Nelsonville York, and Western Brown; while Cochran was third at the GMVWA, losing 12-2 to Seipel.

Though Tutolo should not be challenged at the Alliance district, it is deep, as four other ranked wrestlers appear there (obviously one won't make it to state, at least). Three freshmen are among the group, Poullas, Steer, and Koontz. Poullas was champion at Perry and beat returning state placer Lasko on the way to a runner-up finish at the Bill Dies; Steer was champion up at 132 at Riverside, and second at Kenston and sixth at Top Gun in this weight; while Koontz was runner-up at Perry and Perrysburg, eliminated by Steer in failing to place at Top Gun, and finished third at the Hephner. Returning state qualifier Chieffe is the other ranked wrestler, and he was fourth at North Canton, third at Kenston, and runner-up at Wadsworth.

The other deep district is at Claymont, where five ranked wrestlers will also exit. That group is led by two-time Division III state placer Minnard, who was champion at Sheridan, a match from placing at Brecksville, and champion at the Bill Dies. Next in line is the senior Clark, who was fifth at both Medina and Top Gun. Returning state alternate Matheney was runner-up at Cambridge and Nelsonville York, while missing placement by one match at the GMVWA. The junior Jenkins was champion at the OVAC tournament, winning 10-4 in the final over returning state qualifier Jason Keyes (Beaver Local, sophomore). Returning Division III state qualifier Shannon rounds out the ranked contingent.

Just two ranked wrestlers are in the field at Bowling Green, the junior Rogers and returning state qualifier Ball. Rogers was third at both North Canton and Marion Harding, the latter of which included an 11-5 victory over the senior Ball in the third place match.

132 pounds

1. Brent Moore, St. Paris Graham, sophomore (Wilmington)
2. Wade Hodges, Wauseon, junior (Bowling Green)
3. Aaran Gessic, Perry, senior (Alliance)
4. Nate Hagan, Toledo Central Catholic, junior (Bowling Green)
5. Connor Nemec, Crestwood, senior (Alliance)
6. Garrett Carter, Akron SVSM, junior (Alliance)
7. Joey Baitt, Jefferson, senior (Alliance)
8. Bryson Laytart, Miami Trace, junior (Wilmington)
9. Nate Boggs, Sandusky Perkins, senior (Bowling Green)
10. Seth Cochran, Kenton Ridge, senior (Wilmington)
11. Bret Yutzy, Jonathan Alder, senior (Claymont)
12. Kevin Beal, Fairfield Union, sophomore (Wilmington)
13. Jordan McKnight, Carlisle, senior (Wilmington)
14. Hayden Bullard, Johnstown Monroe, sophomore (Claymont)
15. Dylan Dolph, Canton South, senior (Alliance)
16. Austin Shields, Coventry, senior (Alliance)

ALL – Gessic, Nemec, Carter, Baitt; Dolph, Shields

BG – Hodges, Hagan, Boggs, Zane Speelman (Mansfield Madison, junior); Rhett Peterson (Oak Harbor, sophomore)

CLMT – Yutzy, Bullard, Ben Van Wey (John Glenn, junior), Jesse Hubbard (Steubenville, freshman); Samuel Grashel (River View, senior)

WIL – Moore, Laytart, Cochran, Beal; McKnight

We sit here in 2014 looking at St. Paris Graham as prohibitive favorites to win a 14th straight state title in Division II. It has become a personal playground for their program. One has to wonder if it doesn't get boring after awhile, if it isn't totally anti-climactic. Even so, winning that first state title as an individual is a true memory that is cherished.

That is the position of the sophomore Moore, who is favored in this weight class after placing third last year at 120 as a freshman. On this season, he was third at the Ironman (including an OT win in the consolation semifinals over the second-ranked Hodges), and champion at Valley View and New Lexington. He'll exit a district with four other ranked wrestlers, though none pose a legitimate challenge for him. Laytart qualified for state two years ago, but was an alternate last year. This year, he was 3-2 at Brecksville and a match from placing at Top Gun before winning a title at Miami Trace. The senior Cochran placed sixth at the GMVWA. The sophomore Beal was champion at Nelsonville York and Athens, while the senior McKnight was a match away from placing at the GMVWA.

As previously mentioned, Hodges is ranked second in this weight, and will exit a Bowling Green district that features only two other ranked wrestlers. For this season, the two-time state placer Hodges was sixth at Ironman, champion at Brecksville and Perrysburg, and third at Oregon Clay. He'll be joined two-time state qualifier Hagan, a 2012 state placer and Cadet freestyle All-American this past summer, who was champion at Solon and the CIT and fifth at Brecksville. The other ranked wrestler here is the senior Boggs, a district placer, who was fifth at the Gorman, eighth at Medina, and third at Marion County.

The deepest of the districts is at Alliance, with six ranked wrestlers, including four of the top seven. Leading that group is two-time state placer Gessic, who was a match away from placing at Ironman before placing third at Brecksville, first at Perry, and second at Oregon Clay (which did include a semifinal win over Hodges). Returning state placer Nemece is a two-time state qualifier, and was runner-up at both Solon and Kenston. He does have a certification at 126, and has competed down there, but I'm not sure why he'd pursue that track.

Another returning state placer is the junior Carter, who was runner-up at Perry and the Hephner, while placing sixth at the Top Gun. The senior Baitt was champion at Lorain, while finishing third at Riverside and the Bill Dies. Rounding out the ranked group is Hephner placer Dolph and Bill Dies fourth placer Shields.

Clearly the weakest of the sites in this weight class is the one at Claymont, which features only two ranked wrestlers, none of them projected to place. The senior Yutzy was champion at Marion Pleasant in this weight, and placed in two different tournaments up at 138; while the junior Van Wey is also ranked after winning two district tournament matches last year.

138 pounds

1. Kyle Lawson, St. Paris Graham, freshman (Wilmington)
2. Ryan Skonieczny, Akron SVSM, senior (Alliance)
3. Cody Burcher, Claymont, senior (Claymont)
4. Preston Bowshier, Kenton Ridge, senior (Wilmington)
5. Jake Zemaitis, Crestwood, senior (Alliance)
6. Josh Mossing, Toledo Central Catholic, junior (Bowling Green)
7. Andy Dobben, CVCA, junior (Alliance)
8. Tyler Knul, Circleville, senior (Wilmington)
9. Jimmy Kubitza, Field, senior (Alliance)
10. Dashawn Haynes, Buckeye Valley, senior (Claymont)
11. Daniel Hasson, Beaver Local, junior (Claymont)
12. Wes Smiddy, Springfield Shawnee, sophomore (Wilmington)
13. Zach Johnson, Wilmington, senior (Wilmington)
14. Drew Kinzel, Clear Fork, junior (Bowling Green)
15. Jon Watkins, Lexington, junior (Bowling Green)
16. Christian Price, Granville, junior (Claymont)

ALL – Skonieczny, Zemaitis, Dobben, Kubitza; Chris Dynowski (Streetsboro, senior)

BG – Mossing, Kinzel, Watkins, Seth Boggs (Sandsuky Perkins, sophomore); Gene Porter (Sandusky, senior)

CLMT – Burcher, Haynes, Hasson, Price; Kody Driggs (McConnellsville Morgan, senior)

WIL – Lawson, Bowshier, Knul, Smiddy; Johnson

Normally this type of logjam with four wrestlers carrying top two/three finishes in the state is solved by a shift in weight class. Up is not a realistic option with Micah Jordan seeking a fourth state title at 145, while down has yet to be in reach for any of these four wrestlers (except for Lawson, as teammate Moore is there). The freshman Lawson is ranked in the top position. He comes into high school having finished runner-up in the Kentucky high school state tournament as an eighth grader, and placing sixth in the Super 32 Challenge in October. During the season, he placed sixth at the Ironman, third at the GMVWA, and won titles at Valley View and New Lexington.

Lawson will be joined by fellow state runner-up Bowshier in the Wilmington district along with three other ranked wrestlers for a total of five in all, and all carry state tournament experience on their resumes. Bowshier was fourth at the GMVWA losing in overtime to Demas in the semis and 3-0 to Lawson in the consolation final. Two-time state qualifier and 2012 state placer Knul is next in line, and he has won two tournaments this season. After that is the sophomore Smiddy, who was champion at Middletown Madison and Lima Senior; while the senior Johnson rounds it out, having won titles at Bellbrook and Sycamore to go with a runner-up finish at Miami Trace.

The other members of this logjam are a pair of three-time state placers in Skonieczny (8-3-2) and Burcher (2-2-3). Skonieczny is ranked second in the weight, and exits an Alliance district featuring four state ranked wrestlers. On the season, he was one match from placing at Ironman, sixth at Powreade, and has titles at Perry, Top Gun, and the Hephner on his resume. Next in line at Alliance is two-time state qualifier Zemaitis, a 2012 state placer, who was third at Solon and champion at Kenston. Returning state placer Dobben follows that, as he has been a bit up-and-down on the season, including a seventh place finish at Medina. Rounding out the ranked group is returning state alternate Kubitza, who was a match away from placing at Top Gun and finished as runner-up at Wadsworth.

Burcher is ranked third in this weight class, and exits a Claymont district with four state ranked wrestlers. For the season, he was one match from placing at the Ironman, first at Medina, and fourth at the Top Gun. Given the climate in this weight class, it is possible that Burcher could be left to regret the missed opportunities in state title matches during his freshman and sophomore years. Returning state placer Haynes is next in line at the district, and on the season he was champion at Nelsonville York and sixth at the Top Gun. State qualifier Hasson follows, and the junior was champion at Cambridge and Lorain before finishing third in the OVAC meet. Closing out the ranked group here is the junior Price, who was runner-up at Marion County and New Lexington.

Last and least in this weight class is a Bowling Green district that features only three ranked wrestlers, with just the junior Mossing as a projected placer. For the season, Mossing was fourth at Solon, fifth at Brecksville, and champion at the CIT. Returning state qualifier Kinzel was fourth at the Gorman and North Canton tournaments, while Boggs was fifth at the Gorman and Medina.

145 pounds

1. Micah Jordan, St. Paris Graham, senior (Wilmington)
2. Beau Minnick, Clyde, senior (Bowling Green)
3. Kyle Kaminski, Padua, junior (Alliance)
4. Heath Lange, Indian Lake, senior (Wilmington)
5. Walter Gibson, Akron SVSM, senior (Alliance)
6. Caden Herron, Claymont, senior (Claymont)
7. Dalton Harsthorn, Minerva, junior (Claymont)
8. Nick Wrobel, Crestwood, junior (Alliance)
9. Tristan Stallard, Carrollton, senior (Claymont)
10. Spencer Nagy, Alliance, junior (Alliance)
11. Richard Jackson, Toledo Central Catholic, sophomore (Bowling Green)
12. Zack Lake, Coventry, junior (Alliance)
13. Tyler Wiederholt, Bellbrook, sophomore (Wilmington)
14. Tyler Sowards, Kenton Ridge, junior (Wilmington)
15. Jake Kluding, Norwalk, senior (Bowling Green)
16. Colin Wilson, Lemon Monroe, junior (Bowling Green)

ALL – Kaminski, Gibson, Wrobel, Nagy; Lake

BG – Minnick, Jackson, Kluding, Wilson; Derek Kuhlman (Lima Shawnee, junior)

CLMT – Herron, Hartshorn, Stallard, Logan Johnson (Licking Valley, senior); Bailey Jenkins (Meadowbrook, sophomore)

WIL – Jordan, Lange, Wiederholt, Sowards; Dillon Hunick (McClain, senior)

Many words have been written in these types of reports about the Jordan family legacy. I'll try to keep it brief as Micah Jordan is prohibitively favored to win his fourth state title. Micah's father Jeff and uncle Jim both won four state titles. In college, Jim was a three-time All-American and two-time national champion, while Jeff was a two-time All-American.

Jim, now a member of Congress, had two sons Ben and Isaac, who had the gall (sarcasm alert) to only win three state titles respectively. Ben was a one-time All-American at Wisconsin, while Isaac is well-positioned to earn All-American honors in this his redshirt freshman season. Jeff, the head coach at Graham, has had two sons come through high school so far; Bo was a four-timer, and is redshirting this year in his first year at Ohio State, while Micah seeks his fourth this year. A third son for Jeff starts high school next year, Rocky, and he is ranked in the top 15 among all junior high wrestlers nationally.

Having went through that exposition, Micah is ranked No. 1 nationally at this weight class and exits a Wilmington district with four ranked wrestlers. That group is led by returning state placer Lang, who was third at Oregon Clay in this weight and second up a weight class at Dublin Scioto. The sophomore Wiederholt, last year a state alternate, placed second at Edgewood and fifth at the GMVWA (splitting matches with Sowards) before winning a title at Bellbrook. The junior Sowards, a returning state qualifier, was sixth at the GMVWA.

Among the challenge pack to Jordan – if one wishes to call it that – the leader is returning state placer Minnick, a three-time state qualifier. For the season, he was runner-up at Brecksville with a pair of high quality wins on the way to the final. Minnick will exit a Bowling Green district with three other ranked wrestlers. The sophomore Jackson was a district placer last year, and this year was third at the CIT after going 3-2 at Brecksville. The senior Kluding was champion at Milan Edison and the Gorman and a runner-up at Kenston, while the junior Wilson was champion at Madeira.

Ranked third in this weight class is the junior Kaminski, a returning state placer, though he has considered the trek down to 138 (I know the why, but I still don't get it). He'll lead a deep Alliance district featuring five wrestlers ranked inside the top 16. For the season, Kaminski went 3-2 at the Ironman, was fourth at Brecksville, and champion at the CIT. Two-time state qualifier Gibson was champion at Perry, sixth at the Top Gun, and fourth at the Hephner. The junior Wrobel was a district placer last year, missed the first half of this season due to his transfer to Crestwood, and lost by fall to Harsthorn in tonight's state dual regional semifinal round. Fellow junior Nagy beat Harsthorn very early in the season, and placed at the Top Gun; while to round it out, another junior Lake was a state alternate last year and finished third at the Bill Dies.

Finally, we have the Claymont district that features three ranked wrestlers, all with state experience, and all inside the top nine. That means there is one very open state qualification spot. 2012 state qualifier Herron fell short of placement at Medina by a match before placing seventh in the Top Gun (beat Nagy there), and earned a major decision over Stallard in a regional semifinal of the state duals. Returning state qualifier Harsthorn dropped just this week into the weight class (again, not sure why); while at 152, he was champion at Cambridge and fifth in the Top Gun. Rounding it out, Stallard was another late dropper; his drop I get, as he went 1-2 in the Top Gun up at 152.

152 pounds

1. David-Brian Whisler, Warren Howland, junior (Alliance)
 2. Alex Mossing, Toledo Central Catholic, senior (Bowling Green)
 3. Jeff Hojnacki, CVCA, senior (Alliance)
 4. Blake Miller, Clyde, senior (Bowling Green)
 5. Garrett Jordan, St. Paris Graham, sophomore (Wilmington)
 6. Mason Correll, Tiffin Columbian, senior (Bowling Green)
 7. Kenon Bowling, Western Brown, senior (Wilmington)
 8. Andrew Dunn, Hamilton Ross, senior (Wilmington)
 9. Jack Peura, Tippecanoe, sophomore (Bowling Green)
 10. Steven Fearnow, Amanda Clearcreek, senior (Claymont)
 11. Reyse Wallbrown, Indian Lake, senior (Wilmington)
 12. Eric Fasnacht, Padua, sophomore (Alliance)
 13. Collin Rollison, River Valley, senior (Claymont)
 14. Connor Rogers, Springfield Northwestern, junior (Bowling Green)
 15. Marcus Howells, Crestwood, junior (Alliance)
 16. Evan Schenk, Perry, freshman (Alliance)
- *Ashden Gibson, Whitehall, senior (Claymont), if he competes, would be ranked 10th

ALL – Whisler, Hojnacki, Fasnacht, Howells; Schenk

BG – Mossing, Miller, Correll, Peura; Rogers

CLMT – Fearnow, Rollison, Nico Moray (Steubenville, sophomore), Kevin Scrudders (Cambridge, senior); Ethan Fout (Licking Valley, freshman)

WIL – Jordan, Bowling, Dunn, Wallbrown; Corey Williams (Greenon, junior)

These proverbial sandwich weights, the ones between a pair of obvious stars (i.e. here with Jordan below at 145, and Marinelli above at 160) normally look more deep than this one. Even with a defending state champ in Mossing not holding the projected champion position, there are still only four returning state placers present and eight having state tournament experience. It's hard to speculate on why, but maybe there is some movement pending (late droppers to 145 come back up to here, or somebody drops from 160, who knows for sure).

In terms of the top of this weight class, you have a pair of wrestlers that placed at the Ironman; Mossing seventh down at 145, and Whisler eighth up at 160. Mossing, having previously won Solon at 145, then made the move up to 152 where he finished third at Brecksville (loss to Newton in the semifinal); while Whisler would add a title at Hudson (6-4 over Coleman in the final), and make the drop to 152 for his title at Wadsworth this past weekend.

The other two returning place finishers in this weight class are Miller and Hojnacki. Miller has twice qualified for state, placing sixth last year; while Hojnacki is a two-time placer, finishing sixth last year. This year, Miller was fourth at Brecksville; while Hojnacki was runner-up at Top Gun and Wadsworth. In combination, Whisler and Hojnacki lead the show at Alliance; while Mossing and Miller anchor at Bowling Green. Each site features five ranked wrestlers.

The dynamic at Alliance is one where the other three wrestlers are ranked 12-16, which means it's a true battle for two spots between them and some outside the rankings. The sophomore Fasnacht was runner-up at North Coast Classic and the CIT, missing placement at Brecksville by one match in the interim. Though Howells and Schenk are ranked, their position here is more a function of the mediocrity of this weight class across the state and district.

It's slightly different at Bowling Green, as Correll is one of the other four to have state tournament experience. For this season, he was champion at Tiffin Columbian and runner-up at Oregon Clay. The sophomore Peura was a state alternate last year, and this season was champion at his home tournament; while the junior Rogers was a district placer, this year finishing fourth at North Canton and runner-up at Marion Harding.

Two state tournament experienced wrestlers are in the field at Wilmington, the pair of seniors in Bowling and Dunn. Bowling has titles at Bellbrook and Western Brown this year, while Dunn was runner-up at Franklin and champion at Fairfield. However, it's the sophomore Garrett Jordan, that has emerged as the leader of this district after finishing runner-up at the GMVWA and Valley View (OT loss to two-time DIII placer Mays in that final). Rounding out the ranked quartet is the senior Wallbrown, who was champion at Dublin Scioto and fifth at Medina up at 160 before dropping to this weight in taking third at Oregon Clay.

Last, and also least, in this weight class is a Claymont district that features just two ranked wrestlers, neither a projected state placer. The senior Fearnow was a state qualifier in Division III last year at 160, while the senior Rollison was runner-up at Olentangy Liberty and Nelsonville York this season. Here's a climate ripe for movement or some sort of step-up performance for state qualification.

160 pounds

1. Alex Marinelli, St. Paris Graham, sophomore (Wilmington)
2. Ben Schram, Bellbrook, junior (Wilmington)
3. Kordell Ford, Hillsboro, senior (Wilmington)
4. Dain Steffeny, Granville, senior (Claymont)
5. Alex Kenner, Upper Sandusky, senior (Bowling Green)
6. Tony Rupert, Marlinton, junior (Alliance)
7. Jordan Radich, Warren Howland, junior (Alliance)
8. Tre Campbell, Wauseon, sophomore (Bowling Green)
9. Hannibal Tate, Mifflin, senior (Claymont)
10. Matt Ludwig, Lake Catholic, junior (Alliance)
11. Alonzo Turner, Painesville Harvey, senior (Alliance)
12. Lucas Beauch, Toledo Central Catholic, junior (Bowling Green)
13. Troy Stalder, Athens, junior (Wilmington)
14. Travis Grooms, Miami Trace, junior (Wilmington)
15. Caleb Horn, Amanda Clearcreek, senior (Claymont)
16. Owen Shoemaker, London, senior (Claymont)

ALL – Rupert, Radich, Ludwig, Turner; Anthony Audi (Poland, sophomore)

BG – Kenner, Campbell, Beauch, Aldin Leaker (Eaton, senior); Cole Smith (Tippecanoe, junior)

CLMT – Steffeny, Tate, Horn, Shoemaker; Brendan Scherer (River View, junior)

WIL – Marinelli, Schram, Ford, Stalder; Grooms

While I'm sure it's not just the case in this specific weight class, going back five state tournaments, St. Paris Graham has won the title at 160 pounds in four of them. The other time was in 2010, when defending state champion Kyle Ryan finished second to Brad Wukie. Should Marinelli win it this year, which he is favored to do, it would make four successive titles for a Falcons wrestler in this weight. During this season, the sophomore Marinelli finished as runner-up at the Ironman for a second straight time, while adding titles at the GMVWA, Valley View, and New Lexington tournaments to the ledger.

Marinelli's immediate competition will come from his district field at Wilmington. Wrestlers in that district rank second and third, with two others also in the top sixteen. Competition for the title, and the secondary competition for state qualification, will be rigorous. Ranked second is the junior Schram, who was one match away from placing at the Ironman after earning a fifth place finish at the Super 32 Challenge. Subsequently, he won titles at Edgewood and Bellbrook (beating Ford in OT) and was runner-up to Marinelli at the GMVWA (losing 3-0). The senior Ford, who was fourth at state in 2012, is ranked third in this weight class. Interestingly, Ford extended Marinelli in a 6-5 loss during the district semifinal, but then had to pull out of the state tournament after qualifying. This season, he was runner-up at Bellbrook and champion at Western Brown.

Returning state qualifier Stalder and state alternate Grooms are those two other ranked wrestlers. These two met in a go-to-state match last year, Stalder winning 5-3, which was a reversal of the sectional final. This year, Stalder beat Grooms in the Miami Trace final. In other competition Stalder was champion at Athens, while Grooms placed sixth at Top Gun.

Only two other wrestlers in this weight class have a past state podium on the resume, the seniors Kenner and Shoemaker. Shoemaker, eighth at state last year, is fourth of four ranked wrestlers on the ladder from the Claymont district. Leading that ladder is 2012 state qualifier Steffeny, who was champion at Marion County and runner-up at New Lexington. Returning state qualifiers Tate and (from Division III) Horn fill out the group.

Kenner heads the shallowest district of the four in this weight class, the one at Bowling Green, which has only three ranked wrestlers. For the season, Kenner was champion at Tiffin Columbian and Marion Pleasant with a fourth place finish at Marion County on the resume. He's joined by the sophomore Campbell and junior Beauch. Campbell was fifth at Brecksville, second at Perrysburg, and fourth at Oregon Clay; while Beauch missed placement at Brecksville, going 3-2, but was first at the CIT.

Rounding out the districts is the one at Alliance, which has a pair of wrestlers with state experience – Radich and Turner – among the four in the rankings. The junior Rupert leads the list though, as he was runner-up at North Canton and champion at the Hephner. Next in line is returning state qualifier Radich, who finished third at Wadsworth in this weight, while taking second at Hudson at 152 before him and Whisler flip-flopped. Returning state alternate Ludwig was champion at Solon, with a 7-2 win over Turner, and runner-up at the CIT (losing 3-1 to Beauch); while 2012 state qualifier Turner, a state alternate last year, was second at Solon and first at Perry.

170 pounds

1. Seth Williams, Tiffin Columbian, senior (Bowling Green)
2. Aaron Schuette, Wauseon, senior (Bowling Green)
3. Alec Schenk, Perry, senior (Alliance)
4. Jimmy Sandlin, Carlisle, senior (Wilmington)
5. Lane Thomas, St. Paris Graham, senior (Wilmington)
6. Russell Miller, Miami Trace, junior (Wilmington)
7. Mike Audi, Poland, senior (Alliance)
8. L.J. Henderson, Indian Lake, senior (Wilmington)
9. Zeck Lehman, Revere, junior (Alliance)
10. Kaz Struna, Lake Catholic, senior (Alliance)
11. Matt Dennis, Claymont, senior (Claymont)
12. Dylan Hefner, Lima Shawnee, sophomore (Bowling Green)
13. Zach Gibson, Bloom Carroll, senior (Claymont)
14. Dallas Lazear, Athens, senior (Wilmington)
15. Brock Nagel, Bryan, senior (Bowling Green)
16. Alec Eisnnicher, Big Walnut, senior (Claymont)

ALL – Schenk, Audi, Lehman, Struna; Brendan Winning (Ravenna, junior)

BG – Williams, Schuette, Hefner, Nagel; Austin Robbins (Tippecanoe, junior)

CLMT – Dennis, Gibson, Eisnnicher, Will Navin (Granville, senior); Brandon Jones (Steubenville, junior)

WIL – Sandlin, Thomas, Miller, Henderson; Lazear

The weight above Marinelli is the one that feels a logjam with four returning top three finishers in the field at present, and two other that placed top five at state last year. The favorite at present is three-time state placer Seth Williams (6-3-2), who was runner-up to Marinelli last year at 152 pounds. This season he was champion at Tiffin Columbian and Oregon Clay, which included an 8-5 win over Schuette in the final. Speaking of Schuette, he was runner-up to Bo Jordan last year at 160, and augments the Oregon Clay runner-up finish with titles at Brecksville and Perrysburg. Those two both exit the district at Bowling Green, which features two other ranked wrestlers in the sophomore Hefner and the senior Nagel. Hefner was a state alternate last year, and this year was champion at Allen County, third at Marion Harding, and fourth at Oregon Clay; while Nagel qualified for state last year, and this year was runner-up at the Gorman and third at Marion County.

The first of those third place finishers is Sandlin, who did so in Division III, and exits a district with five ranked wrestlers. On the season Sandlin was first and Edgewood and Fairfield, while finishing third at the GMVWA. Leading that challenge group is Thomas, who finished fifth at state last year, and this year was runner-up at the GMVWA and a champion at Valley View and New Lexington. The junior Miller is next in line, and was runner-up at Top Gun to go with a title at Miami Trace. Returning state placer Henderson follows, and he was champion at Dublin Scioto while finishing sixth at Medina and fifth at Oregon Clay. Finally, it's two-time state qualifier Lazear, who may end up exploring things at the 182 pound weight class after losing to Miller in the Miami Trace final. Though that weight has quantity at Wilmington, it doesn't have the quality of this weight.

Finally among the placer group is Schenk, who was third at state last year. He has spent time at both 170 and 182 this season. While at 182, he was one match from placing at the Ironman, fourth at Brecksville with a win over McLaughlin, and champion at Perry with a 3-1 victory over defending state champion Adkins. Coming down to 170 at Oregon Clay, he finished third losing in the semifinal to Schuette by 10-2 major decision. Schenk exits an Alliance district that features three other ranked wrestlers, which is led by returning state qualifier Audi. This season, he was fourth at the Top Gun and first at the Hephner in this weight class. Another returning state qualifier is here in Lehman, who missed placement by a match at the Bill Dies losing to a pair of Division I state qualifiers; but he did beat Thomas 3-1 in a December dual meet. Rounding it out is state alternate Struna, who was fourth at Brecksville and third at the CIT in this weight class.

Last among the districts is the one at Claymont, which features four returning state qualifiers, but only three within the top sixteen. The senior Dennis leads the way, as he missed placement by a match at both Medina and Top Gun. Next in line is the senior Gibson, a two-time Division III state qualifier, who was runner-up at Brecksville and the Bill Dies; while fellow senior Eisnicher rounds it out.

182 pounds

1. Jack Harris, Urbana, sophomore (Wilmington)
2. Aaron Adkins, Akron SVSM, senior (Alliance)
3. Jacob Kasper, Lexington, junior (Bowling Green)
4. Colt Crall, Claymont, senior (Claymont)
5. Jacob Worthington, Keystone, junior (Bowling Green)
6. Ahmad Khatib, Revere, senior (Alliance)
7. Stan Socha, Canfield, senior (Alliance)
8. Dylan Hermes, Sandusky Perkins, senior (Bowling Green)
9. Nick Svarda, Carlisle, sophomore (Wilmington)
10. Jordan Leasure, Amanda Clearcreek, sophomore (Claymont)
11. Jake Hartman, Padua, senior (Alliance)
12. Evan Hickey, Wilmington, senior (Wilmington)
13. Nick Jackson, Norwood, junior (Wilmington)
14. Kanan Sarver/Hayden Bronne, St. Paris Graham, freshman/junior (Wilmington)
15. Mitchell Wells, Richmond Edison, junior (Claymont)
16. Tobin Anderson, Washington C.H., junior (Wilmington)

ALL – Adkins, Khatib, Socha, Hartman; Jason Huelskamp (Geneva, senior)

BG – Kasper, Worthington, Hermes, Cody Wright (Bay, senior); Alec Vonier (Wauseon, senior)

CLMT – Crall, Leasure, Wells, John Mercer (Cambridge, junior); Steven Frazier (Philo, senior)

WIL – Harris, Svarda, Hickey, Jackson; Sarver/Bronne, Anderson

Here comes a second weight class in Division II where a returning state champion is not being picked to repeat (technically that number is three, but at 126 there are multiple returning state champions). The pick here is the sophomore Harris, who lost 11-6 to eventual state champion Adkins in last year's state semifinal round. However, his overall form this year has been better than the senior defending champ. Though Harris did not place at Ironman, he beat McLaughlin 4-3 on the front side before losing by fall to a pair of nationally ranked wrestlers. He augmented that with a title at the GMVWA, where he pinned Robinson in the final.

After transitioning back from football, Adkins has performed relatively well in recent weeks with titles at the Top Gun and the Hephner. In earlier tournaments, he was fifth at Powerade, runner-up to Schenk (3-1 loss) at Perry, and runner-up to Caywood (5-3 loss) at Perrysburg. Adkins anchors an Alliance district with four ranked wrestlers, all within the top 11. Khatib was champion at Beachwood and third at the Bill Dies; state alternate Socha was third at Perry and fourth at the Bill Dies; while Hartman was third at the CIT.

Harris is in the deepest of the four districts at Wilmington, one with six ranked wrestlers, though four of those are in the back five spots of the top 16. Fellow sophomore Svarda was a district placer last year in Division III, and this year finished third at Edgewood and was champion at Fairfield. The senior Hickey was champion at Miami Trace and Edgewood, while finishing second at Bellbrook and Sycamore. The junior Jackson was a state alternate last year.

While only three ranked wrestlers populate the field at Bowling Green, they are all in projected placement positions. The junior Kasper has been excellent this year in winning at title at the Gorman after finishing fourth at Medina. Returning Division III state placer Worthington, also a junior, has titles at Milan Edison (up at 195), Avon Lake, and Lorain to his credit. The senior Hermes, a district placer last year, was fourth at the Gorman, champion at Marion County, and seventh at the Top Gun after failing to place at Medina.

Also with just three ranked wrestlers is the field at the Claymont district, though only returning state alternate Crall holds a ranked position. The senior was fifth at Medina and fourth at the Top Gun. Leasure qualified for state in Division III in this weight class last year as a freshman, while the junior Wells was champion at the OVAC after finishing as runner-up at Nelsonville York.

195 pounds

1. Bailey Faust, Lexington, junior (Bowling Green)
2. Tyler McClellan, CVCA, senior (Alliance)
3. Jhulyis Monroe, Marion Franklin, senior (Claymont)
4. Kenny Jackson, Crestwood, senior (Alliance)
5. Kyle Kremiller, Perry, junior (Alliance)
6. Tyler Dodd, Carrollton, junior (Claymont)
7. John Workman, Sandusky Perkins, senior (Bowling Green)
8. Clayton Bullard, Johnstown Monroe, senior (Claymont)
9. Andy Eckhart, Field, senior (Alliance)
10. Isaiah Margheim, Sandusky, junior (Bowling Green)
11. Blake Owens, Licking Valley, senior (Claymont)
12. Marshall Messer, Clyde, sophomore (Bowling Green)
13. Josh Couchman, St. Paris Graham, junior (Wilmington)
14. Tyler Rowland, Streetsboro, junior (Alliance)
15. Dylan Robertson, Upper Sandusky, senior (Bowling Green)
16. Jeremiah Jones, Miami Trace, junior (Wilmington)

ALL – McClellan, Jackson, Kremiller, Eckhart; Rowland

BG – Faust, Workman, Margheim, Messer; Robertson

CLMT – Monroe, Dodd, Bullard, Owens; John Miscuk (East Liverpool, senior)

WIL – Couchman, Jones, Isaac McFann (New Lexington, senior), James Ritchie (Carlisle, senior); Wyatt Hilliard (Franklin, freshman)

Many times in scholastic wrestling, a big deal is made about excellence coming in pairs. That theme applies here, as the junior Faust was somewhat of an understudy the last two years to Josh Lehner, winner of the last two state titles in this weight class. He was closed out of the state series lineup as a freshman, while he was up at 220 last season while Lehner finished as undefeated state champ giving up only one offensive score all year.

Faust qualified for state, but went 0-2. However, he's been competing and thriving in his more optimal weight since. Eighth in the FloNationals at 195, a Disney Duals silver medalist at 195 (only one loss in about ten duals against national competition), and a Cadet National double All-American at 195. During this season, he has titles at Medina and the Gorman in mostly dominant fashion. Faust will anchor a group of five ranked wrestlers at the Bowling Green district.

Returning state alternate Workman is next on the ladder; this season he was fifth at Medina and the Gorman, before finishing third at Marion County and fourth at the Top Gun. Margheim, last year's state runner-up, has looked anything but so far this season. He was third at Tiffin Columbian and Wadsworth with a fourth place finish at Oregon Clay. Messer qualified for state last year as a freshman, was 1-2 at Brecksville in late December, but upended Workman 4-1 in the regional semifinal of the state duals. Returning Division III state qualifier Robertson was runner-up at Tiffin Columbian and Marion Pleasant.

Three of the prime challengers to Faust exit the Alliance district, one that also includes five ranked wrestlers overall. Second overall in this weight class is returning state placer McClellan, who won a title at the Top Gun but lost by fall to Faust in the Medina final. Returning state qualifier Jackson is ranked fourth, and this year he was champion at Solon before losing a 3-2 decision in the Kenston final to the projected DI state champ Conel. The junior Kremiller, last year a district placer, is ranked fifth having placed second at the North Coast Classic and Oregon Clay, fourth at Brecksville, and first at Perry. Other ranked wrestlers include the senior Eckhart, who upset Margheim by major decision at Wadsworth on the way to a runner-up finish after missing placement at Top Gun by one match; along with the junior Rowland, who was champ at Aurora and Hudson, third at Kenston, and second at the Bill Dies.

Four ranked wrestlers, including three projected state placers, exit the district tournament at Claymont. That group is led by returning state qualifier Monroe, who was more known for his football exploits. It's followed by returning state qualifier Dodd, who was fifth at the Top Gun; and the top eight group is capped by returning Division III state placer Bullard, who was champion at New Lexington. The other ranked wrestler at Claymont is another returning state qualifier in Owens, who was champion at Cambridge.

Last, and in this case least, is the pair of ranked wrestlers at Wilmington. They sit at 13 and 16 in the rankings, so it's pretty much anyone can make the district finals or anyone can be left at home. The junior Couchman was a state alternate last year, and was runner-up at the GMVWA and New Lexington (major decision loss to Bullard) this season. Fellow junior Jones placed seventh at Top Gun and won a title at Miami Trace.

220 pounds

1. Sean Rutherford, Norton, junior (Alliance)
2. Harrison Hoppel, Minerva, senior (Claymont)
3. Garrett Harding, Claymont, senior (Claymont)
4. Troy Caldwell, Jonathan Alder, junior (Claymont)
5. Deaken McCoy, Galion, junior (Bowling Green)
6. Tylor Pritchard, Upper Sandusky, senior (Bowling Green)
7. Kordell Chaney, Sandusky Perkins, sophomore (Bowling Green)
8. Austin Bentley, Carrollton, senior (Claymont)
9. Mason Hilling, Woodridge, senior (Alliance)
10. Beau Swank, Benjamin Logan, senior (Bowling Green)
11. Mike Bell, Warren Howland, junior (Alliance)
12. Devin King, Sheridan, senior (Wilmington)
13. Michael Crockett, Franklin, junior (Wilmington)
14. Mario Bell, Thurgood Marshall, senior (Bowling Green)
15. Dustin Baker, Sparta Highland, junior (Claymont)
16. Jacob Esarco, Canfield, sophomore (Alliance)

ALL – Rutherford, Hilling, Mi. Bell, Esarco; Chris Williams (Painesville Harvey, senior)

BG – McCoy, Pritchard, Chaney, Swank; Ma. Bell

CLMT – Hoppel, Harding, Caldwell, Bentley; Baker

WIL – King, Crockett, Reece Human (Carlisle, freshman), Aaron Leciejewski (Greenon, sophomore);

Daylen Neece (Meigs, junior)

The junior Rutherford was excellent coming through Junior High state as an upper-weight, and that form has extended into his high school career, as he's already a two-time state placer (7th and 3rd). He's been dominant this year, with lots of pins, including titles at Hudson and the Bill Dies. Rutherford exits a district tournament with four ranked wrestlers in all, including returning state qualifier Hilling, who was runner-up to Rutherford at the Bill Dies and sixth at Brecksville. State alternate Bell has dropped into this weight class after a runner-up finish at Hudson up at 285, and was champion at Wadsworth here. The sophomore Esarco has wrestled well season to date, including a title at Perry and sixth place finish at the Bill Dies.

Four of the other projected state placers will exit the Claymont district. That group is led by the senior Hoppel, who finished fifth at 195 last year, and this year was first at Cambridge and fourth at the Top Gun. Next in line is returning state alternate Harding, a senior who was champion at Medina and fifth at the Top Gun. The junior Caldwell was a returning state qualifier, and carries titles at Nelsonville York and Marion County on the resume, along with a runner-up finish at Marion Pleasant. Last among the projected state placers is another returning state qualifier in the senior Bentley, who was sixth at the Top Gun, but also beat Harding 2-1 in the regional semifinal round of state duals. The junior Baker is also ranked here, and on the season was runner-up at Marion Harding losing in OT to McCoy.

The other three projected state placers exit from the Bowling Green district, a site with five ranked wrestlers in all. Leading that is the junior McCoy, a returning state qualifier, who has titles at the Gorman and Marion Harding along with a fourth place finish at Marion County. Division III state qualifier Pritchard is next, as he was fifth at Marion County losing 3-1 to McCoy but winning at Marion Pleasant (2-1 over Caldwell in the final). Chaney placed sixth at state as a freshman, but has been rather uneven with his match-to-match and in-match performance this year. He was fifth at Medina, second at Marion County, and eighth at the Top Gun. Returning state qualifier Swank was runner-up at Franklin to go with titles won at Tippecanoe and Madeira. Rounding out the ranked group is the senior Mario Bell, who was runner-up at Tippecanoe to Swank.

The Wilmington district is very shallow in this weight class with only the 12th and 13th ranked wrestlers in this field. Returning state alternate King was champion at Sheridan and Miami Trace, runner-up at Cambridge, but failed to place at the Bill Dies. The junior Crockett was runner-up to King at Sheridan and third at the GMVWA.

285 pounds

1. Billy Miller, Perry, senior (Alliance)
2. Chase Henderson, Franklin, senior (Wilmington)
3. Logan Sharp, West Branch, senior (Alliance)
4. Evan Loughman, Sheridan, junior (Wilmington)
5. Drek' Brumley, Akron SVSM, junior (Alliance)
6. Kostas Parrish, University School, senior (Alliance)
7. T.J. Lawrence, Oak Harbor, junior (Bowling Green)
8. Kyle Henry, Claymont, senior (Claymont)
9. J'Quan Fisher, Toledo Central Catholic, junior (Bowling Green)
10. Gavin Peacock, Hamilton Ross, senior (Wilmington)
11. Cody Hawkins, Ravenna, senior (Alliance)
12. Josh Rohrbacher, Sandusky Perkins, senior (Bowling Green)
13. Jaqui Vanmeter, Licking Valley, sophomore (Claymont)
14. Jacob Smith, Minerva, senior (Claymont)
15. Mike Holzworth, Mansfield Madison, senior (Bowling Green)
16. Charles Broderick, Bellbrook, senior (Wilmington)

ALL – Miller, Sharp, Brumley, Parrish; Hawkins

BG – Lawrence, Fisher, Rohrbacher, Holzworth; Grant Moyer (Bellevue, junior)

CLMT – Henry, Vanmeter, Smith, Cody Martsof (Beaver Local, senior); Josh Kempf (River View, senior)

WIL – Henderson, Loughman, Peacock, Broderick; Pahl (Vincent Warren, junior)

Miller went 45-2 on the way to a state title in this weight class last year. He is undefeated on this season, and is the favorite to repeat as state champion and culminate a career with three state placement finishes. Recovering from a football injury, he missed the Ironman, but did win the North Coast Classic. Then, in a battle of state champions in the Brecksville final, he upended Garren 5-3. He has added titles at Perry and Perrysburg to the resume. Miller will exit a deep Alliance district that features five ranked wrestlers, including three other projected state placers.

Logan Sharp continues the Sharp family tradition of HVY excellence at West Branch. He qualified for state last year at 220, while Connor Sharp occupied HVY. This year, Sharp was champion at Riverside and Kenston before finishing runner-up at Top Gun to the nation's No. 1 HVY, Nevills from California. Last week, he did extend Miller, losing 7-5. Returning state placer Brumley placed sixth at Powerade, runner-up at Perry, third at Perrysburg, and first at the Hephner. District placer Parrish was runner-up to Sharp at Kenston and runner-up to Zapata at Wadsworth. The other ranked wrestler here is Hawkins, who was fourth at Kenston and sixth at Top Gun.

Two of the other projected placers will exit the Wilmington district that features four ranked wrestlers in this weight class. The senior Henderson placed third at state last year, and this year was champion at Franklin over Peacock and Jackson, missed placement at the Ironman by a match, was runner-up at the GMVWA, and champion at Western Brown. Returning state qualifier Loughman, a junior, was champion at Miami Trace, Cambridge, and Sheridan with a third place finish at the GMVWA. The senior Peacock was a state alternate last year, and this year was fourth at Franklin and SWOWCA, with a fifth place finish at Fairfield. Finally among the ranked is fellow senior Broderick, who has titles at Edgewood and Bellbrook to go with a sixth at the GMVWA.

Two other wrestlers in this weight class bring state tournament experience, and both exit from the Bowling Green district. Returning state placer Lawrence went 1-2 at Medina, losing 4-3 to Lee early and then by fall to Henry in consolation. He was a semifinalist at Perrysburg before having to injury default back. Rohrbacher placed second at the Gorman and fifth at Top Gun, while falling short of placement at Ironman and Medina. Two other wrestlers are ranked in this district: the junior Fisher, who was runner-up at the CIT; and returning district placer Holzworth, a senior who came back in the last couple of weeks.

Rounding out the districts is the one at Claymont, which features only three ranked wrestlers. It's led by the senior Henry who was fifth at Medina and seventh at the Top Gun. District placer Vanmeter was third at Cambridge, while the junior Pahl was champion at Gallian and Athens to go with a runner-up finish at Miami Trace.

Team Standings

1. St. Paris Graham (Wilmington)
2. Claymont (Claymont)
3. Perry (Alliance)
4. Akron SVSM (Alliance)
5. Toledo Central Catholic (Bowling Green)
6. CVCA (Alliance)
7. Crestwood (Alliance)
8. Wauseon (Bowling Green)
9. Lexington (Bowling Green)
10. Padua (Alliance)
11. Bellbrook (Wilmington)
12. Lake Catholic (Alliance)

Division Three – Rankings and Analysis

106 pounds

1. Drew Mattin, Delta, freshman (Bowling Green)
2. Hunter Bray, Dayton Christian, sophomore (Troy)
3. Sebastian Vidika, Black River, senior (Garfield Hts)
4. Shane Johnston, Tuslaw, junior (Garfield Hts)
5. Joey Bowen, Manchester, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
6. Jake Adkins, Johnstown Northridge, junior (Heath)
7. George Clemens, Wayne Trace, sophomore (Troy)
8. Jordan Burkholder, Crooksville, sophomore (Heath)
9. Gregory Quinn, Shadyside, freshman (Heath)
10. Christian Wellman, Waynedale, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
11. Damon Keister, Milbury Lake, senior (Bowling Green)
12. Damian Demilio, Genoa, sophomore (Bowling Green)
13. Luke Buxton, Dixie, sophomore (Troy)
14. Brandon Neikirk, Cardinal, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
15. Zach Davie, Troy Christian, junior (Troy)
16. Alex Rhine, Mechanicsburg, freshman (Troy)

BG – Mattin, Keister, Demilio, Thomas Schnittker (Woodmore, sophomore); Dominic Rosin (Sandusky SMCC, freshman)

GH – Vidika, Johnston, Bowen, Wellman; Neikirk

HEA – Adkins, Burkholder, Quinn, Thomas Campbell (Martins Ferry, junior); Colton Bethel (Ridgewood, freshman)

TROY – Bray, Clemens, Buxton, Davie; Rhine

The 2013 state tournament in the small-school division was one marked by the influence of non-seniors. Seven state champions come back for this year, while six runners-up were eligible to return. Therefore, it is to be expected a lot of state experienced kids will be present across the weight classes. A full eight wrestlers with state experience are back in the opening weight class, which is two more than the number in DI and DII combined (six total).

However, it is a freshman who carries the mantle as favorite. Mattin seeks to be a second straight freshman from Delta (Jake Spiess did it last year) to win this weight class. He beat the second ranked Bray 2-1 in the Brecksville final on a second period turn, and also was champion at Perrysburg; Mattin was runner-up at Oregon Clay, losing 5-4 to projected D2 runner-up Lucas in the tiebreaker. He exits a very shallow district at Bowling Green with just two other ranked wrestlers, neither projected to place. The senior Keister was champion at Toledo St. John's and Woodmore this season; while the sophomore Demilio is expected to drop shortly after spending the season at 113.

Third at state last year, losing 2-0 to Ullinski in the semifinal, Bray anchors a very deep Troy district at this weight with four other wrestlers ranked; that includes another two with state experience. On the season, Bray won three matches at Ironman and was champion at Marion County. Returning state qualifier Clemens has titles at Van Buren and the LCC Thunderbird to his credit, but did lose by major decision to Mattin in dual meet competition. The freshman Buxton was champion at Edgewood and runner-up to Clemens at the LCC Thunderbird. Returning state qualifier Davie was champion at Troy Christian and eighth at the GMVWA, while the group is rounded out by another freshman Rhine, who injured defaulted down to sixth at the LCC Thunderbird after losing 10-6 to Buxton in the semifinals.

Three returning state placers will exit the Garfield Hts district, and they'll be joined by two other wrestlers in the rankings. The senior Vidika placed fourth at state last year, and was runner-up to Lucas (losing 5-1) at Marion Harding before winning the Gorman. Johnston, a junior, finished sixth at state last year; this year he was champion at Milan Edison and second at North Canton. The sophomore Bowen finished seventh at state, and has finished third at Brecksville, the Gorman, and the Bill Dies. Fellow sophomores Wellman – runner-up at Marion County – and Niekirk, third at Aurora, are also ranked here.

Closing it out in this weight is the Heath district, which features two wrestlers with state experience among the three that are ranked. The junior Adkins placed eighth at state and is a two-time state qualifier. One the season he was champion at Mt. Vernon and Sheridan (at 113), and sixth at Oregon Clay. The other returning state qualifier is the sophomore Burkholder. Rounding out the rankings is the freshman Quinn, who was runner-up at the OVAC meet.

113 pounds

1. Jake Spiess, Delta, sophomore (Bowling Green)
2. Christian Clary, Dayton Christian, senior (Troy)
3. Evan Ullinski, Woodmore, senior (Bowling Green)
4. Kristopher Hill, Bishop Hartley, junior (Heath)
5. Damian Short, Archbold, junior (Bowling Green)
6. Alex Smith, Sandusky SMCC, junior (Bowling Green)
7. Brady Barnett, Milan Edison, freshman (Bowling Green)
8. Kolten Martin, DeGraff Riverdale, senior (Bowling Green)
9. John Smith, Mapleton, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
10. Mitch Tikkanen, Jackson Milton, junior (Garfield Hts)
11. Jay Uhlenake, Coldwater, sophomore (Troy)
12. Michael Sergent, Troy Christian, freshman (Troy)
13. Anthony Heavilin/Brandon White, Harrison Central, sophomore (Heath)
14. Louis Demarco, Hawken, junior (Garfield Hts)
15. Brysen Mansor, Huron, junior (Bowling Green)
16. Stan Bleich, Elyria Catholic, freshman (Garfield Hts)

BG – Spiess, Ullinski, Short, Smith; Barnett, Martin, Mansor

GH – Smith, Tikkanen, Demarco, Bleich; Brad Trescott (Rootstown, freshman)

HEA – Hill, Heavilin/White, Alex Timko (St. Clairsville, senior), Brandon Carbenia (Sandy Valley, senior); Gavin Stalnaker (Belpre, sophomore)

TROY – Clary, Uhlenake, Sergent, Harrison Gallagher (Greenview, sophomore); Justin Gibbs (Clinton Massie, junior)

Three state finalists are present in this weight class, including last year's 106 pound state champion Spiess, who is undefeated on the season. Spiess was champion at Brecksville, champion up a weight at Perrysburg, and champion at Oregon Clay this season. He anchors an absolutely stacked weight class at the Bowling Green district, which includes his state finals opponent from last year in Ullinski – also a winner of four tournaments this year (Bellevue, Woodmore, Lima Senior, and LCC Thunderbird). Next in line is returning state qualifier Short, who made state last year at 120 and spent a chunk of the season there (placing fourth at Medina). In dual meet competition, Short lost to Spiess 5-4, and in tournament competition at this weight he was third at Marion County (pinned by Clary). Rounding out the projected state qualifiers at this district is returning state placer Smith, who was champ at the Gorman and fourth at Marion County in this weight class; he also won two early season tournaments up at 120.

Additional ranked wrestlers at BG in this weight are the freshman Barnett, champion at Milan Edison and fourth at North Canton. While competing at Marion County, Barnett lost in overtime to state placer Hill and 4-3 to three-time state placer Clary. Returning state qualifier Martin, a senior, was runner-up to Ullinski at Woodmore and a champion at Van Buren. State alternate Mansor, a junior, was third at Marion Harding and has lost by fall to Barnett in dual meet competition.

Three-time state placer Clary (4-3-2) is the other state finalist in this weight class. This season, he placed seventh at Ironman and fourth at Brecksville, before winning the Marion County tournament. Only two other ranked wrestlers join him at the Troy district. The first of those is the freshman Sergent, who was eighth at the GMVWA and fifth at Marion County; while the other is the sophomore Uhlenake, a returning state alternate who was runner-up at Troy and the LCC Thunderbird.

The weight class's fifth and final returning state placer is the junior Hill, who was sixth in this weight class last year. During the present season, he was runner-up at the GMVWA and Marion County (losing 17-3 to Clary), with weight class titles at the CIT and Marion Pleasant. Hill is the anchor in a shallow Heath district weight that features only one other ranked wrestler, the Harrison Central starter (White placed fifth at the OVAC meet).

Rounding out the district compositions is the one at Garfield Hts, which features four ranked wrestlers, including one returning state qualifier. Smith, a sophomore, was champion at Marion Harding this season. He's joined in the rankings by state alternate Tikkanen, who was champion at Hudson and third at the Hephner; the junior DeMarco, who was fifth at the North Coast Classic; and the freshman Bleich, champion at Avon Lake and third at the CIT.

120 pounds

1. Evan Cheek, Milan Edison, junior (Bowling Green)
2. Garrett Hancock, Troy Christian, junior (Troy)
3. Kyle Keller, Delta, senior (Bowling Green)
4. Michael May, Dayton Christian, junior (Troy)
5. Tyler Sarreshteh, Liberty-Benton, senior (Bowling Green)
6. Brendan Fitzgerald, Grandview Hts, sophomore (Heath)
7. Carson Mills, Fredericktown, junior (Heath)
8. Jett Heldenbrand, Hillsdale, junior (Garfield Hts)
9. Joe Newman, Sandy Valley, senior (Heath)
10. Rodney Richter, Monroe Central, junior (Heath)
11. Tyler Rogers, Margareta, senior (Bowling Green)
12. Devon Dunbar, Northwood, junior (Bowling Green)
13. Cory Pucci, Cuyahoga Hts, senior (Garfield Hts)
14. Tyler Wiley, Caldwell, senior (Heath)
15. Tyler Goodpaster, Deer Park, junior (Troy)
16. Kyle Behringer, Defiance Ayersville, senior (Bowling Green)

BG – Cheek, Keller, Sarreshteh, Rogers; Dunbar, Behringer

GH – Heldenbrand, Pucci, Michael Wilson (Waynedale, sophomore), Tony Paolucci (Rootstown, sophomore); Ian Mast (Cardinal, junior)

HEA – Fitzgerald, Mills, Newman, Wiley; Josh Kahl (Shadyside, freshman)

TROY – Hancock, May, Goodpaster, Ruger Goeltzenlechter (Wayne Trace, freshman); McKinley Screetch (Dayton CJ, junior)

Yet another robust weight class of competition here in Division III with twelve wrestlers having state experience, and five already making a podium appearance. The deepest of the districts is at Bowling Green, which has six ranked wrestlers, including projected state champion Cheek. The Cadet freestyle All-American and Super 32 Challenge placer was fourth last year at 106 in Division II, and this season has titles at Milan Edison, North Canton, and Marion County to his credit. Cheek's lone loss on the season is up one weight class, 6-4 to two-time Michigan state champion Lincoln Olson.

Two-time state placer Keller is next in line at the BG district, having placed sixth at Brecksville and winning Oregon Clay in this weight class; he also was champion at Perrysburg while competing at 126. Returning state placer Sarreshteh placed fifth at Medina, while winning titles at Van Buren and the LCC Thunderbird. Two-time state qualifier Rogers was runner-up to Cheek at Milan Edison and runner-up to Alex Smith at Bellevue. The junior Dunbar was a district placer last year, and this year was sixth at Oregon Clay; while the senior Behringer rounds it out, as runner-up at the LCC Thunderbird.

Ranked second in this weight class is its defending champion Hancock. The junior was champion at Troy Christian, won four matches at the Ironman (one from placing), was champion at the GMVWA, champion (at 126) at Marion County, and runner-up to Newhouse at Delaware Hayes. He is joined by two other ranked wrestlers at Troy, which includes two-time Division II state qualifier May, a 2012 state placer. May missed the first half of the year, but upon return, lost an overtime decision to Cheek in the Marion County final. Also ranked here is the junior Goodpaster, a district placer last year.

Returning state qualifier Fitzgerald, champion this year at Marion Pleasant, is among the four state experienced wrestlers at the Heath district, though two are not even among the top five at said site. Movement up in weight could very loom, as the next weight only has two of the top 16 at present. Next in line is the junior Mills, who has won titles at Mt. Vernon, Sparta Highland, and the Gorman (8-5 over Heldenbrand along the way). Returning state qualifier Newman has shared time between 120 and 126 this season; returning state qualifier Richter was fourth at the OVAC meet; while the senior Wiley was a state alternate last year and placed seventh in the OVAC meet.

Closing it out here is an underwhelming Garfield Hts district with just two ranked wrestlers present. Returning state qualifier Heldenbrand was third at the Gorman, while the senior Pucci was a state alternate last year.

126 pounds

1. Jarred Ganger, Covington, junior (Troy)
2. Zack Durbin, Mapleton, senior (Garfield Hts)
3. Caleb Ohl, Newark Catholic, senior (Heath)
4. Noah Mattin, Delta, freshman (Bowling Green)
5. Zach Alvarado, CHCA, senior (Troy)
6. T.J. Malkus, Berkshire, senior (Garfield Hts)
7. Matt Mangen, Versailles, senior (Troy)
8. Colton Ullman, Loudonville, junior (Garfield Hts)
9. Aric Peters, Bethel Tate, junior (Troy)
10. Tim Mecklenburg, Lutheran West, senior (Garfield Hts)
11. Buddy Limes, Otsego, junior (Bowling Green)
12. Gabe Santa-rita, Edgerton, junior (Bowling Green)
13. Francisco Alvarado, Defiance Ayersville, senior (Bowling Green)
14. Kyle Case, West Salem Northwestern, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
15. Austin Singleton, Barnesville, senior (Heath)
16. Trenton Macke, Deer Park, junior (Troy)

BG – Mattin, Limes, Santa-rita, F. Alvarado; Alex Neuberger (Milan Edison, freshman)

GH – Durbin, Malkus, Ullman, Mecklenburg; Cayse

HEA – Ohl, Singleton, Evan Offenberger (Sandy Valley, senior), David Forrester (Harrison Central, senior); Tyler Stoneburner (Paint Valley, senior)

TROY – Ganger, Z. Alvarado, Mangen, Peters; Macke

Yet another weight with a defending state champion, as Ganger leads the way here. He had a major off-season injury, and transferred from Troy Christian to Covington. This past weekend was his first major competition back, and he got to the finals before being upended 4-3 by returning state placer Ohl in the LCC Thunderbird final. However, come Columbus in just over four weeks, I feel comfortable that Ganger will be closer to full form and able to repeat as state champion.

With four other ranked wrestlers present at the Troy district, Ganger should get somewhat pushed in that tournament. That group is led by two-time state qualifier Zach Alvarado, champion at Troy Christain and Madeira (at 132), before finishing third at LCC Thunderbird. Next in line is returning state qualifier Mangan, who was sixth at the GMVWA and fourth at Oregon Clay. Division II district placer Peters was champion at Madeira here, after spending the early part of the season down at 120 where he was third at Edgewood and missed placement at SWOWCA by one match. Closing out that group is the junior Macke, who also missed placement at SWOWCA by a match.

Ranked second in this weight class is two-time state placer Durbin, who placed third at state last year after losing 7-3 in the semifinal round to Ganger. This season, Durbin was champion at Marion Harding. He'll lead five ranked wrestlers at the Gafield Hts district. Malkus, who made state in 2012 but missed competing due to injury and failed skin check last year at the sectional tournament, has been in-and-out this year. However –when in – his performances include a fifth at Kenston, and a 3-2 dual meet victory over Mecklenburg. The junior Ullman placed eighth at state last year, and was third at the Gorman this year. Mecklenburg qualified for state two years ago, but lost a go-to-state match last year to Hozan who ended up placing.

Despite the upset over Ganger in the LCC Thunderbird final, the resume for Ohl falls behind that of Ganger and Durbin. Ohl placed fifth at state last year, and this year was runner-up at the Gorman and fourth at the CIT. He anchors the previously mentioned shallow district at Heath with just one other ranked wrestler, the senior Singleton who placed sixth at the OVAC meet.

Finally, it is the Bowling Green district featuring four ranked wrestlers led by the freshman Mattin, who was fourth at Brecksville and fifth up at 132 at Perrysburg. A pair of state alternates, Limes and Santa-rita, along with state qualifier Francisco Alvarado joins Mattin as ranked wrestlers. Limes was runner-up at Tiffin Columbian, third at Perrysburg, and champion at Van Buren; Santa-rita was runner-up at Toledo St. John's, and has a major decision over F. Alvarado in dual meet competition; while Alvarado finished fourth at LCC Thunderbird.

132 pounds

1. Sammy Gross, Beachwood, senior (Garfield Hts)
2. Lyle Plummer, Dayton CJ, senior (Troy)
3. Major Moore, Willard, senior (Bowling Green)
4. Dustin Marteney, Delta, sophomore (Bowling Green)
5. Ryan Ford, Covington, sophomore (Troy)
6. Wes Fritz, Norwalk St. Paul, junior (Bowling Green)
7. Trenton Soto, Otsego, junior (Bowling Green)
8. Evan Francis, Kirtland, junior (Garfield Hts)
9. Bobby Bowen, Manchester, senior (Garfield Hts)
10. Austin Lang, Waterford, senior (Heath)
11. Taylor Deatrick, Paulding, senior (Bowling Green)
12. Nate Frye, Cuyahoga Hts, senior (Garfield Hts)
13. Bobby Stewart, Union Local, sophomore (Heath)
14. Mitchell Matheny, DeGraff Riverdale, junior (Bowling Green)
15. Hunter Pizzino, Harrison Central, junior (Heath)
16. Jake Maynard, Johnstown Northridge, sophomore (Heath)

BG – Moore, Marteney, Fritz, Soto; Deatricks, Matheny
GH – Gross, Francis, Bowen, Frye; Zane Chase (Girard, senior)
HEA – Lang, Stewart, Pizzino, Maynard; Sam Neer (Galion Northmor, junior)
TROY – Plummer, Ford, Daniel Gough (Stivers, senior), Hunter Collier (Blanchester, freshman); Seth Bell (Dayton Christian, junior)

Among the 16 state championships won by Beachwood wrestlers, which is joint 23rd all-time in OHSAA history, only three have earned a pair (David Sternberg, Michael Linsker, and Kevin Lipp). This year, two Bison wrestlers have the chance to earn a second state title. In this weight, Gross could culminate a career track of 3-1-3-1, which would arguably be the best in program history when it comes simply to state tournament placements. During his senior season, Gross placed eighth at the Ironman and first at Kenston.

He is the anchor of four ranked wrestlers at the Garfield Hts district. Returning state qualifier Francis spent much of his junior season up at 138 before making a late drop down to here. While at 138, he was runner-up at Willoughby South and Lorain, with a third place finish at Perry mixed in. Another returning state qualifier is the senior Bowen, who was third at the Gorman but failed to place at either Brecksville or the Bill Dies. Rounding out the ranked wrestlers at this site is the senior Frye, who competed at the state tournament in 2012. He was seventh at 126 in the Bill Dies, but will more likely compete here in the state series.

Four of the primary challengers to Gross will exit the Bowling Green district (those ranked third, fourth, sixth, and seventh), along with two others from the top 16 group. Ranked third is returning Division II state qualifier Moore, who has titles at Milan Edison, Medina, and the Gorman on the resume during his senior season. Next in line is Marteney, who placed eighth at state last year as a freshman, and this year was seventh at Brecksville and fifth at Oregon Clay; while winning a title at Perrysburg up one weight class. Returning third in the state Fritz was runner-up at the Gorman and LCC Thunderbird, while finishing a match short of placement at Brecksville. State qualifier Soto has titles at Tiffin Columbia and Van Buren to his credit, while finishing third at Perrysburg.

Those outside the state qualification group at BG but ranked include state alternate Deatricks, who has a title at Lima Senior to his credit this year; along with the junior Matheny, a returning state qualifier, who was champion at Woodmore and runner-up at Van Buren (losing 11-1 to Soto).

The remaining two projected state placers will exit the Troy district, led by three-time Division II state qualifier Plummer, who this season was third at the GMVWA and second at the CIT. The sophomore Ford was a state alternate last year, but this year was runner-up at the GMVWA before winning titles at Troy and the LCC Thunderbird (11-3 over Fritz in the final). However, those are the lone ranked wrestlers at the site, which means the last two spots are ripe for the picking.

Rounding it out are the four ranked wrestlers from the Heath district, though none are projected to place at state. Leading the group is the senior Lang, the lone state qualifier in the group, who has won two tournaments this season. Next in line is the sophomore Stewart, who was runner-up at the OVAC meet. He's followed by the junior Pizino, who was third in the OVAC meet. Last in the rankings is the sophomore Maynard, who was a state alternate in Division II last year.

138 pounds

1. Kaleb Romero, Mechanicsburg, freshman (Troy)
2. Brad Wardell, Waynedale, senior (Garfield Hts)
3. Josh Weber, Loudonville, junior (Garfield Hts)
4. Grant Rathburn, Bishop Hartley, senior (Heath)
5. Kameron Rayner, Caldwell, senior (Heath)
6. Alex Becker, Dayton Christian, senior (Troy)
7. Evan Hansel, Newark Catholic, senior (Heath)
8. Chance Marthey, Tuslaw, junior (Garfield Hts)
9. Kenny Price, Archbold, senior (Bowling Green)
10. Corey Hawk, Dixie, senior (Troy)
11. Max Reeder, Genoa, senior (Bowling Green)
12. Derek Gross, Norwalk St. Paul, freshman (Bowling Green)
13. Justin Chew, Mogadore, senior (Garfield Hts)
14. Dalton Scott, Bishop Ready, senior (Heath)
15. Jacob Spino, Independence, junior (Garfield Hts)
16. Grant Fidler, Monroeville, senior (Bowling Green)

BG – Price, Reeder, Gross, Fidler; Mason Robson (Collins Western Reserve, senior)

GH – Wardell, Weber, Marthey, Chew; Spino

HEA – Rathburn, Rayner, Hansel, Scott; Tim Violet (Madison Plains, senior)

TROY – Romero, Becker, Hawk, Cody Ohmeiss (Troy Christian, junior); Chase Mayhubb (Milton Union, sophomore)

The loss of an impact wrestler such as Hoskins, state runner-up last year and champion of a loaded GMVWA in this weight class, would normally cause a profound shift in the dynamic. However, that is not the case this year. Even with three state runners-up in the weight above, and a former state champion in the weight below, nobody is running here. That is because of the presence of an athletic freak named Kaleb Romero. The freshman was the starting quarterback, yes starting quarterback, on a football team that made the state semifinals in Division VI this year. In addition said freshman was also a three-time Junior High state champion and a multi-time grade school state champion before that. Prior to Hoskins' removal from the picture, Romero had upended him 1-0.

Other results for Romero this season are a runner-up finish at Western Brown, losing 2-0 to Fausz, and a dominant title at the LCC Thunderbird last weekend. He anchors a Troy district featuring two other excellent ranked wrestlers and another kid with state tournament experience. The senior Becker is the highest returning state placer in this weight (sixth), and was fifth at Marion County. Fellow senior Hawk was a state qualifier last year, and finished fourth at the LCC Thunderbird.

The two wrestlers directly behind Romero in the rankings exit the Garfield Hts district, 2012 state placer Wardell and returning state placer Weber. The senior Wardell was a state alternate last year, and his year was champion at Marion County; while the junior Weber was seventh last year at state, and this year was champion of the Gorman, eighth at Top Gun, and runner-up at the Hephner. Three other wrestlers are ranked in this weight class from this district field: returning state qualifier Marthey was runner-up at Milan Edison, returning state qualifier Chew was runner-up at the Bill Dies and third at the Hephner, while Spino was champion at North Coast and third at Lorain. As a point of information, Marthey has spent time at both 138 and 145; he could end up at 145 with fellow junior Damion Little competing here, Little pinned state placer Rayner in the regional final of state duals.

Three other projected state placers exit the Heath district. Four wrestlers are ranked, while five carry state experience (all those are mentioned in the composition listing). The senior Rathburn is a two-time state qualifier, was sixth at the GMVWA, runner-up at Marion County and the CIT, and champion at Marion Pleasant. Returning state placer Rayner was champion at Gallia and the OVAC meet. 2012 state qualifier Hansel, a state alternate this past year, was runner-up at the Gorman as well as third in both the CIT and LCC Thunderbird. Returning state qualifier Scott failed to place at the CIT in this weight class, but was champion at Sparta Highland in the 145 weight class earlier this year.

Rounding out the rankings are four wrestlers from the Bowling Green district, none positioned in the top eight. Two-time state qualifier Price was fifth at Marion County and runner-up at LCC Thunderbird here, while finishing sixth up in the 152 weight class at Medina. Two-time district placer Reeder, also a 2011 state qualifier is ranked here. The freshman Gross was sixth at the Gorman and fifth at the LCC Thunderbird (split matches with Hansel); while the senior Fidler has tournament titles at Milan Edison and Woodmore.

145 pounds

1. Logan Day, Archbold, senior (Bowling Green)
2. Logan Lacure, Greeneview, sophomore (Troy)
3. Nick Vestal, Dayton Christian, sophomore (Troy)
4. Jamie Baldrige, Galion Northmor, senior (Heath)
5. Jesse Beverly, Delta, freshman (Bowling Green)
6. Reid Stanley, Waynedale, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
7. Davey Tunon, Clinton Massie, sophomore (Troy)
8. Joe Ziegler, Mechanicsburg, junior (Troy)
9. Ricky Ratcliff, West Jefferson, senior (Heath)
10. James Handwerk, Lutheran West, freshman (Garfield Hts)
11. Zach Steiner, Norwayne, freshman (Garfield Hts)
12. Bruce Sefert, Beallsville, senior (Heath)
13. Brett Kahl, Shadyside, sophomore (Heath)
14. Riley Henderson, Mariemont, junior (Troy)
15. Tony Rozzi, Woodmore, senior (Bowling Green)
16. Anthony Walden, Beachwood, senior (Garfield Hts)

BG – Day, Beverly, Rozzi, Zach Brodman (Carey, junior); Andrew Caris (Eastwood, sophomore)

GH – Stanely, Handwerk, Steiner, Walden; Damon Little (Tuslaw, junior)

HEA – Baldrige, Ratcliff, Sefert, Kahl; Zac Sowers (Union Local, senior)

TROY – Lacure, Vestal, Tunon, Ziegler; Henderson

Even with three state runners-up in this weight class, there is not a broad depth, as the quality behind the projected state placers is lacking. Despite a loss to Vestal in overtime in the Marion County final, the pick to win this weight class is still the senior Day. Before the season, he was third at the Preseason Nationals with a win over Garcia from Illinois, who has been nationally ranked at times in 2013-14. Then, in-season, he won three matches at the Ironman and was champion at Medina and LCC Thunderbird.

Vestal, as previously mentioned has the head-on win over Day. However, he only went 1-2 at the Ironman, including a loss by major decision to Garcia of Illinois. In addition to beating Day at Marion County, Vestal upended returning state placer Stanley 3-1 in the semifinals. At Brecksville, he took fifth but had a pair of wins over top five in their state tournament division competition (Beverly and Rahmani). Last year, he was state champion for Lake Highland Prep (Fla.) at 126 in small-school.

Lacure was runner-up at 120, including a 6-3 victory over defending state champion Sammy Gross in the semifinals. During the Super 32, he went 4-2, including a win over New York state runner-up Frankie Garcia. He was runner-up at the GMVWA and LCC Thunderbird (losing 2-1 to Day in the final). Lacure is ranked second and Vestal third at this weight, both exit the Troy district, where three other ranked wrestlers also reside.

The sophomore Tunon was a Division II state alternate last year, and this year was third at Fairfield before winning a title at Western Brown. Ziegler, a junior, was fifth at Western Brown and third at the LCC Thunderbird. Henderson, last year a state alternate has spend time at both 138 and 145; however, while in this weight, he was third at Middletown Madison and second at Madeira.

Day anchors the district at Bowling Green, which features freshman sensation Beverly, but only one additional ranked wrestlers for a total of three. Beverly, a Junior High state champ last year, was one match from placing at Brecksville, a runner-up at Oregon Clay (beat state placer Lang 7-4), and was third up a weight at Perrysburg. The junior Brodman is the other ranked wrestler here, and he has placed in four tournaments this season.

The Heath and Garfield Hts district each feature one state placer, and four ranked wrestlers. The senior Baldrige placed fifth in this weight last year at state, and was at 152 prior to last week when won the title at Marion Pleasant. While up a weight class, he was champion at the Gorman and runner-up at Marion County. Joining him at the Heath district are 2012 state placer Ratcliff, state alternate Sefert, and district placer Kahl.

The sophomore Stanley placed seventh in this weight class last year, and was third at Marion County. He's joined in the rankings at the Garfield Hts district by a pair of freshmen, Handwerk and Steiner, as well as the senior Walden. Handwerk was a Junior High state champion and a Cadet Greco-Roman All-American. He wrestled early on at 145, so he has this option still to use. Steiner was champion at Smithville, fourth at the Bill Dies, and has a 4-1 win over Marthey on the resume this season. Walden was champion at Beachwood and Riverside, but also has some moments of inconsistency.

152 pounds

1. Jacob Danishek, Dayton Christian, senior (Troy)
2. Dakota Mays, Nelsonville York, junior (Heath)
3. Dakota Stanley, Waynedale, senior (Garfield Hts)
4. Austin Siemon, Deer Park, junior (Troy)
5. Seth King, Hawken, senior (Garfield Hts)
6. Seth Knoll, DeGraff Riverdale, senior (Bowling Green)
7. Jesse Gross, Norwalk St. Paul, senior (Bowling Green)
8. Kealli Cummings, CHCA, senior (Troy)
9. Daniel Jennings, Covington, senior (Troy)
10. Clayton Davidson, Kirtland, junior (Garfield Hts)
11. Jake DeLorge, Lutheran West, senior (Garfield Hts)
12. Anthony DeCarlo, Springfield Catholic Central, senior (Troy)
13. Garrett Grime, Archbold, sophomore (Bowling Green)
14. Deven Taylor, Margaretta, junior (Bowling Green)
15. Derek Gregan, West Salem Northwestern, senior (Garfield Hts)
16. Patrick Stover, Bishop Ready, senior (Heath)

BG – Knoll, Gross, Grime, Taylor; Seth Gaghen (Woodmore, junior)

GH – Stanley, King, Davidson, DeLorge, Gregan

HEA – Mays, Stover, Cody Dingess (West Jefferson, junior), Chet Bakiewicz (Centerburg, senior); Bryce Coleman (Martins Ferry, junior)

TROY – Danishek, Siemon, Cummings, Jennings; DeCarlo

Along with Micah Jordan, Danishek is the shining star of Ohio high school wrestling in 2013-14. He was champion during this season at the Super 32 Challenge (pre-season), Ironman (second straight year in the finals), and Brecksville (repeat champion). Danishek is prohibitively favored to win a fourth state title, and is ranked No. 2 in the nation at his weight class, and No. 17 overall in the Class of 2014 regardless of weight (Micah Jordan is No. 6).

Four other ranked wrestlers, all within the top 12, join Danishek as exiting from the Troy district. For those of you that know the drill by now, it means at least one won't be moving on to state. The junior Siemon qualified for state last year, and this year was fifth at SWOWCA. Cummings, a senior, was champion at Troy Christian and Madeira, before finishing as runner-up at LCC Thunderbird. Returning state qualifier Jennings was fourth at the GMVWA and LCC Thunderbird, while returning state placer DeCarlo was runner-up at Greenon and third in the CIT.

Ranked second to Danishek is the junior Mays, already a two-time state placer. This season, he has won four tournaments, including an Outstanding Wrestler honor at Marion County. At Brecksville, Mays placed sixth. He exits a soft district weight class, which includes only one other ranked wrestler: the senior Stover, who was champion at Sparta Highland and the CIT this year.

The other returning placer in this state weight class exits from the Garfield Hts district, it's the senior King who was runner-up at 160 in the North Coast Classic before dropping down to here. He's one of five ranked wrestlers at that tournament, whose top-ranked wrestler is returning state qualifier Stanley, who was third at Marion County losing 5-1 to Mays in the semifinal. The junior Davidson was a district placer last year, and this year was champion at Willoughby South and Lorain before taking second at Perry. DeLorge, a senior who was at Avon prior to this year, placed eighth at Medina and third at Perry; while 2012 state qualifier Gregan rounds out the ranked contingent.

Last among the districts is the one at Bowling Green, which features two projected state placers and four ranked wrestlers in all. The senior Knoll was a state qualifier last year, and has three tournament titles to his credit this year; while fellow senior Gross was a state alternate after making state the prior two years, and this year came back from injury to win a title at the LCC Thunderbird. Returning district placer in this weight, the sophomore Grime, was fifth at Marion County and missed placement at the LCC Thunderbird by one match. The junior Taylor is also a returning district placer, and was champion at both Milan Edison and Bellevue this season.

160 pounds

1. Austin Reese, Mechanicsburg, senior (Troy)
2. Kollin Moore, Norwayne, junior (Garfield Hts)
3. Tyler Fahrer, Delta, senior (Bowling Green)
4. Zach Ladich, Rootstown, senior (Garfield Hts)
5. Chance Sonnenberg, Van Buren, junior (Bowling Green)
6. Rob Mickey, Johnstown Northridge, senior (Heath)
7. Ray Day, Reading, senior (Troy)
8. Jordan Hendrix, Otsego, senior (Bowling Green)
9. Tegan McFadden, Paint Valley, sophomore (Heath)
10. Dylan Hartman, Cory Rawson, senior (Bowling Green)
11. Myliek Green, Bellaire, senior (Heath)
12. Cameron Luther, Springfield Catholic Central, senior (Troy)
13. James Cupan, Girard, senior (Garfield Hts)
14. Kyle Ice, Waynedale, freshman (Garfield Hts)
15. Caleb Stockmaster, Margaretta, junior (Bowling Green)
16. Jacob Crosswell, Bishop Hartley, senior (Heath)

BG – Fahrer, Sonnenberg, Hendrix, Hartman; Stockmaster

GH – Moore, Ladich, Cupan, Ice; Drew Braisel (Manchester, junior)

HEA – Mickey, McFadden, Green, Crosswell; Cody Ross (Galion Northmor, senior)

TROY – Reese, Day, Luther, Austin Windle (Ada, junior); Mack Rose (Miami East, junior)

Last year Reese entered the state tournament as favorite to win the 138 pound weight class, having finished third at 103 and second at 120 the prior two years. In fact, he held a 5-0 lead on the undefeated (would be state champ) J.J. Diven with two minutes and 30 seconds left in regulation. A very late second period takedown for Diven, an escape at the start of the third, and then a takedown towards the end of the third forced overtime. Diven got the takedown (and pin) in overtime, which relegated Reese to consolation.

Reese then lost his first match on Saturday morning, but was able to avoid the triple-dip and finish fifth at state. During the summer, he earned a silver at the Disney Duals (only one loss in ten matches against national competition), and that has catapulted into this season. It started with a third place finish at the Super 32 Challenge, and continued with a third place finish at the Ironman. Reese is undefeated on the season, nationally ranked in his weight class, and the future Bobcat is a top 100 senior regardless of weight class.

All that pontification for a state title, for which will be no guarantee at all. The weight class includes two additional wrestlers that have finished second in the state previously. The junior Moore was runner-up last year at 152 pounds, and this year has been dominant in titles won at Smithville at the Bill Dies; while three-time placer Fahrer was a runner-up in 2012 (7-2-3), and has titles at Perrysburg and Oregon Clay to go with a third place finish at Brecksville. Two other state placers are in this weight class as well, Sonnenberg and Ladich.

In terms of district tournament composition, Reese exits the shallowest one at Troy, as it has only two other ranked wrestlers. 2012 state qualifier Day was sixth at SWOWCA, and a champion at Madeira and Reading; while district placer Luther was fourth at the CIT.

Moore exits the Garfield Hts district, which has four ranked wrestlers in all, including Ladich who placed eighth in Division II last year. This year, Ladich pinned state placer Strnad in the semis of the Bill Dies before being majored by Moore in the final. He also placed sixth at Medina and won at Aurora. The senior Cupan was runner-up at Riverside and third at the Hephner.

Fahrer exits the deepest of the four districts, the one at Bowling Green that has five ranked wrestlers. Sonnenberg placed fifth at state last year as a sophomore, and this season was runner-up at Tiffin Columbian, Van Buren, and LCC Thunderbird. The senior Hendrix was fourth at Tiffin Columbian and Perrysburg, before upsetting Sonnenberg to win the title at Van Buren. State alternate Hartman was runner-up at Arcadia, champion at Lima Senior, and third at Van Buren; he tested the waters at 170 at the LCC Thunderbird where he was one match away from placing. Rounding it out is the junior Stockmaster, who won titles at Milan Edison and Bellevue.

Four ranked wrestlers exit the Heath district, including returning state qualifiers in Mickey and McFadden. The senior Mickey was champion at Sheridan, runner-up at Mt. Vernon, and fifth at Oregon Clay. Additional ranked wrestlers include the senior Green, a runner-up at the OVAC meet, and the senior Croswell who was runner-up at Marion County.

170 pounds

1. Ryan Harris, Beachwood, senior (Garfield Hts)
2. Zach Sullivan, National Trail, junior (Troy)
3. Hayden Miller, Norwalk St. Paul, junior (Bowling Green)
4. Jake Datz, Madison Plains, senior (Heath)
5. Ben Miller, Covington, junior (Troy)
6. Ryan Green, Margaretta, junior (Bowling Green)
7. Todd Miller, Delta, senior (Bowling Green)
8. Brandon Breezley, Blanchester, senior (Troy)
9. Colton Jenkins, Cardington Lincoln, senior (Heath)
10. Leo Herrmann, Steubenville Catholic Central, senior (Heath)
11. Tanner Topp, West Salem Northwestern, senior (Garfield Hts)
12. Wes Buettner, Delphos St. John's, junior (Troy)
13. Nick Cardiero, Girard, senior (Garfield Hts)
14. Devon Bergeron, Defiance Ayersville, senior (Bowling Green)
15. Travis Pickering, Mapleton, junior (Garfield Hts)
16. Logan Snyder, Waynedale, senior (Garfield Hts)

BG – H. Miller, Green, T. Miller, Bergeron; Jacob Wise (Elmwood, senior)

GH – Harris, Topp, Cardiero, Pickering; Snyder

HEA – Datz, Jenkins, Herrmann, Jared Pack (Centerburg, junior); Drew Lowery (Toronto, sophomore)

TROY – Sullivan, B. Miller, Breezley, Buettner; Alec Gladwell (Columbus Grove, senior)

Like Gross in the 132 section, Harris can become another Bison wrestler to win two state titles during his career, and only the second in program history to win back-to-back titles. He also seeks to become a four-time state placer with a productivity track of 7-3-1-1. The present composition of this weight class makes it one of the weakest I've seen in a long time in this weight range. Outside of Harris, the weight class combines for zero state tournament wins, and only two wrestlers with a single state tournament appearance. Six wrestlers were state alternates last year, while a seventh was a district placer.

Harris anchors the proceedings at the Garfield Hts district, which features five ranked wrestlers. State alternate Topp is next (though he may end up flipping weights with state qualifier Meek). District placer Cardiero, who was fourth at the Hephher follows. State alternate Pickering was fifth at Marion Harding. To round things out, it's the senior Snyder, who did pin Pickering in dual meet competition during the season.

One of the other two in this weight to appear in a state tournament match is Sullivan, who is ranked second, and leads a Troy district with four ranked wrestlers in all. The junior Sullivan won four matches at the Ironman, and was a champion at Tippecanoe. State alternate Miller has third place finishes at Troy (up at 182) and the LCC Thunderbird to his credit. The senior Breezley was champion at Reading, and a runner-up at the LCC Thunderbird; while the junior Buettner won at Marion Harding and fifth in the CIT and LCC Thunderbird.

The third with a state tournament appearance in the present composition of this weight class is the senior Bergeron, who exits a Bowling Green district with four ranked wrestlers. Bergeron had been competing at higher weights until dropping to 170 this past weekend, where he went 0-2 at the LCC Thunderbird. Leading the BG district in the rankings is the junior Hayden Miller, who was seventh at Brecksville, third at the Gorman, and champion at the LCC Thunderbird. State alternate Green was champion at both Milan Edison and Bellevue. The senior Todd Miller finished fifth at Brecksville, third at Perrysburg, and seventh at Oregon Clay.

Rounding it out is a Heath district that features only three ranked wrestlers. The senior Datz was a state alternate last year, and this year finished runner-up at Marion County; fellow senior Jenkins was fifth at the Gorman; while another fellow senior Herrmann was champion at the OVAC meet.

182 pounds

1. Travis Linton, Rootstown, senior (Garfield Hts)
2. Armani Robinson, Greeneview, senior (Troy)
3. Wyatt Dye, Sandusky SMCC, senior (Bowling Green)
4. Ryan Patchin, Delta, junior (Bowling Green)
5. Dom Johns, Coshocton, junior (Heath)
6. Logan Campbell, Ashland Crestview, senior (Bowling Green)
7. Dylan Williams, Brookville, senior (Troy)
8. Joey Meek, West Salem Northwestern, senior (Garfield Hts)
9. Devin Bouza, Defiance Tinora, senior (Bowling Green)
10. Tim Hunkley, Collins Western Reserve, senior (Bowling Green)
11. Jack Staggs, Waynedale, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
12. Colton Booth, Tri-County North, junior (Troy)
13. Rickey Bruce, Triad, senior (Troy)
14. Ryan Leasure, Girard, senior (Garfield Hts)
15. Mitchell Meeks, Newcomerstown, senior (Heath)
16. Blake Cary, Loudonville, junior (Garfield Hts)

BG – Dye, Patchin, Campbell, Bouza; Hunkley

GH – Linton, Meek, Staggs, Leasure; Cary

HEA – Johns, Meeks, Josh Green (Westfall, senior), Robert Miller (Madison Plains, senior); Cole Howes (Harrison Central, senior)

TROY – Robinson, Williams, Booth, Bruce; Brandon Magee (Covington, sophomore)

Linton is the sixth of seven wrestlers in Division III to be going after back-to-back state titles this year. Prior to Garrett Linton winning state at 195 pounds in 2012, the Rootstown program had zero state champions. Garrett was their first, Travis and Jake Moore won titles last year, and a repeat title would make it four for the Rovers in three years; an increase in percentage by a factor of infinity.

Speaking of that track, when Armani Robinson finished as runner-up in 2012, it was the first ever finalist in Greeneview program history. Lacure and Hoskins added runner-up finishes last year. Should Robinson or Lacure win state titles this year, it would be the first in their school's history.

Defending state champ Linton exits a deep district tournament, one that features five ranked wrestlers, though three are outside the top ten. After failing to place at the Ironman in the 170 weight class, Linton has bounced back with titles at Medina and the Bill Dies. Returning state qualifier Meek was a quarterfinalist at 170 at Medina, lost that match, but then defaulted out; while he was champion in this weight class at Nelsonville York.

Robinson exits a district tournament at Troy that includes four ranked wrestlers. During this season, he was runner-up at the GMVWA, losing by fall in the final to Harris; and was also champion at the LCC Thunderbird. District placer Williams, a junior, placed eighth at the GMVWA; he also pinned Meek this past weekend at the SMCC D3 Duals. Fellow junior Booth was third at Tippecanoe at 195, and runner-up in this weight at the LCC Thunderbird; while the senior Bruce rounds out the ranked wrestlers, champion at Bellbrook, second at Marion Harding, and third at the LCC Thunderbird.

The other deep district tournament in this weight class is at Bowling Green, one that features five ranked wrestlers including three with state tournament experience. 2012 state qualifier Dye missed last year due to injury, and this season was third at the Gorman. Fellow 2012 state qualifier Patchin was out the month of December because of his transfer to Delta; and since entering the lineup has performed well, third at Perrysburg and second at Oregon Clay. The returning state qualifier is Campbell, who has titles at Marion Harding and Woodmore to his credit on the season. Bouza was a state alternate in this weight last year, and placed fourth at Perrysburg; while the district placer Hunkley won titles at Milan Edison and Bellevue.

Heath is again the shallow district with only two ranked wrestlers, one being returning state placer Johns.

195 pounds

1. Ryan Weber, Loudonville, senior (Garfield Hts)
2. A.J. Ouelette, Covington, senior (Troy)
3. Kyle Dieringer, Versailles, junior (Troy)
4. Kile Schaefer, West Salem Northwestern, junior (Garfield Hts)
5. Glenn Zaller, Grand Valley, senior (Garfield Hts)
6. Jacob Campbell, Dixie, senior (Troy)
7. Jack Huffman, Lima Central Catholic, junior (Troy)
8. Tristan Anderson, Waynedale, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
9. Scott Wohlheter, Tuslaw, junior (Garfield Hts)
10. Isaac Sanford, Steubenville Catholic Central, senior (Heath)
11. Derek Ebbeskotte, Ottawa Glandorf, senior (Bowling Green)
12. Jonathan McClellan, Danbury, senior (Bowling Green)
13. Brandon Foughty, Wellston, senior (Heath)
14. Jamie Barrett, Belpre, senior (Heath)
15. Hudson Cole, Sandy Valley, senior (Heath)
16. Dezmond Perkins, Southeastern, senior (Heath)

BG – Ebbeskotte, McClellan, Jacob Widman (Fremont SJCC, senior), Payton Whitticar (Van Buren, sophomore); Mark Francis (Delta, junior)

GH – Weber, Schaefer, Zaller, Anderson; Wohlheter

HEA – Sanford, Foughty, Barrett, Cole; Perkins

TROY – Ouelette, Dieringer, Campbell, Huffman; Nick Clune (Coldwater, junior)

Another group of programs with a shallow history in terms of winning state championships is represented at the top of the rankings in this weight class. Loudonville has won a single state title in program history, that coming from Tyler Scott in 2000, during his junior season after placing fifth at state the year before. Covington has one state title in program history, Logan Brown in 2006 at 189 pounds (the third last weight class at the time). Versailles and West Salem Northwestern both have two state titles in program history, each of them last getting a champ 25 years ago in 1989.

The junior Weber is the projected state champion, after placing fourth at state last year. This year he was second at the Gorman, a Top Gun semifinalist before having to default out, and a champion at the Hephner. Weber also split matches against top contenders for the 220 title in early December. He exits a Garfield Hts district tournament with five ranked wrestlers.

One of them is returning state placer Schaefer, a junior whose season has reflected borderline regression. In the last week, he has two losses to wrestlers in his sectional/district ranked below him. Zaller is a two-time state qualifier whose combined record at the Schott is 1-4. This year, Zaller was second at Perry and third at the Hephner. The sophomore Anderson was champion at Marion County.

Like Weber at 195 last year, Ouelette placed fourth at 182. This year, he has finished third at the GMVWA to go with titles at Troy and LCC Thunderbird. Four overall ranked wrestlers exit his district at Troy. The junior Dieringer qualified for state last year, and this year finished fourth at the GMVWA and seventh at Oregon Clay. The senior Campbell has improved a ton this year, winning a title at Edgewood and finishing as runner-up to Ouelette (5-3 loss) at LCC Thunderbird. Rounding out the ranked group is returning district placer Huffman, who had a title at Allen County to go with third place finishes at the CIT and LCC Thunderbird; he also lost 2-1 to Dieringer in dual meet competition.

The Troy and Garfield Hts districts monopolize the top nine spots here, but the Heath district does have five of the other seven ranked positions. Said group is led by the senior Sanford, who was champion at Sheridan and runner-up at the OVAC. Fellow senior Foughty is next with two titles on the year, those at Vinton County and Athens. Returning district placer Barrett lost 5-4 to Foughty in that Vinton County final, and was also second at Cambridge. Another district placer in this weight at Heath is the senior Perkins, who lost by fall to Sanford in the Sheridan final.

Rounding out the rankings is the Bowling Green district, which has wrestlers ranked in the 11th and 12th positions. The senior Ebbeskotte was champion at Van Buren, while fellow senior McClellan was champion at Woodmore. Two others will make the state tournament, and those spots are rife for the having. This is the district to cross-pair within in the first round at state to say the least for 195 pounds.

220 pounds

1. Jay Nino, Genoa, junior (Bowling Green)
2. Justin Post, Coldwater, senior (Troy)
3. Carter Harris, West Jefferson, senior (Heath)
4. Adrian Harding, Greeneview, junior (Troy)
5. Travis Jaramillo, Archbold, senior (Bowling Green)
6. Dan Jones, Columbus Academy, junior (Heath)
7. Seth Bloor, Wellsville, junior (Garfield Hts)
8. Cameron Conaway, South Central, sophomore (Bowling Green)
9. Cody Carr, Brookville, senior (Troy)
10. Michael Furbee, St. Clairsville, sophomore (Heath)
11. Mitch Murray, Norwayne, senior (Garfield Hts)
12. Devon Richard, Delta, sophomore (Bowling Green)
13. Alex Stotter, Hawken, senior (Garfield Hts)
14. Alex Scotton, Independence, senior (Garfield Hts)
15. Moises Lopez, Willard, senior (Bowling Green)
16. Alex Fry, Defiance Ayersville, senior (Bowling Green)

BG – Nino, Jaramillo, Conaway, Richard; Lopez, Fry

GH – Bloor, Murray, Stotter, Scotton; Pully Flowers (Beachwood, senior)

HEA – Harris, Jones, Furbee, Mark Clifford (Paint Valley, senior); Schuyler Miller (Westfall, senior)

TROY – Post, Harding, Carr, Michael McKinney (Reading, senior); Justin Daniel (Covington, senior)

A year after seven non-seniors won state titles in Division III, if one was to believe my projections, there will be six non-seniors winning state titles this year. That would be a rather high number to have hold consistent over two years. The last of my projected underclass state champs comes in this weight class from returning state qualifier Nino, who has a 3-1 win over 195 pound projected champ Weber from early December.

Nino exits a loaded district tournament at Bowling Green, that has five ranked wrestlers in addition to him. The senior Jaramillo also won a match at state last year, and during this season placed sixth at Medina and third at both Marion County and LCC Thunderbird; he also lost 3-2 in dual meet action to Nino. The sophomore Conaway is a returning district placer, who was runner-up at Sparta Highland early this season. Next in line is fellow sophomore Richard, who was 3-2 at Brecksville before winning a title at Perrysburg and finishing fifth at Oregon Clay. The senior Lopez was fifth at the Gorman, while fellow senior Gray was fourth at the LCC Thunderbird.

The projected state runner-up in this weight, returning state placer Post, will exit from the Troy district along with two other ranked wrestlers. Those three are ranked ninth or better, which kind of means it's all in for one wide open spot. On the season, Post was champion at Middletown Madison and LCC Thunderbird with a runner-up finish at Troy. The junior Harding finished as runner-up at LCC Thunderbird, beating Jaramillo 6-1 in the semi before losing 3-2 to Post in the final, and he finished fourth at the GMVWA. Returning state qualifier Carr was eight at the GMVWA.

Along with Post, the other state placer in this weight class is the senior Harris, who placed seventh at 182 pounds last season. Joining him at the Heath district in this weight class is the other remaining wrestler with state experience in the sophomore Jones. Only one other wrestler in this weight holds a ranking, and that is the sophomore Furbee, who was runner-up at Nelsonville York and fourth at the OVAC meet.

The Garfield Hts district is bereft of wrestlers with state tournament experience, but it does include four ranked wrestlers starting with state alternate Bloor, who was the OVAC runner-up. The senior Murray is next in line, and he was champ at Smithville and eighth in the Bill Dies. Fellow senior Stotter was runner-up at the North Coast classic, while it is the senior Scotton who rounds out the rankings; last year Scotton was a state alternate, and this year was third at the North Coast Classic.

285 pounds

1. Patrick Garren, Bishop Ready, senior (Heath)
2. Corey Durbin, Fremont SJCC, senior (Bowling Green)
3. Ben Sexton, Garaway, senior (Heath)
4. Jacob Hanzel, Manchester, senior (Garfield Hts)
5. Nathan Jackson, Dayton Christian, senior (Troy)
6. Cody Buckner, Genoa, senior (Bowling Green)
7. Chance Vellor, Delta, sophomore (Bowling Green)
8. Matt Hunter, West Salem Northwestern, senior (Garfield Hts)
9. Isaac Sexton, Van Buren, junior (Bowling Green)
10. Connor Careless, Norwalk St. Paul, senior (Bowling Green)
11. Jon Bodkin, Martins Ferry, junior (Heath)
12. Charlie Smith, Hanoverton United, junior (Garfield Hts)
13. A.J. Pinyard, Grandview Hts, senior (Heath)
14. Justin Pfeister, DeGraff Riverdale, senior (Bowling Green)
15. Kelly Barthalow, Ridgewood, junior (Heath)
16. Paul Deely, Independence, junior (Garfield Hts)

BG – Durbin, Buckner, Vellor, I. Sexton; Careless, Pfeister

GH – Hanzel, Hunter, Smith, Deely; Adam Widder (Fairless, junior)

HEA – Garren, B. Sexton, Bodkin, Pinyard; Barthalow

TROY – Jackson, Nate Schroeder (Delphos St. John's, senior), Logan Vandemark (Spencerville, junior), Billy Cadaweller (Williamsburg, junior); Ben Ferguson (Miami East, sophomore)

Hard to believe it's been 15 years since Tommy Rowlands graced the high school mats in the Buckeye State. Arguably the best wrestler in Ohio State history (up to Logan Stieber, obviously), Rowlands was a four-time NCAA All-American and two-time national champion. Competing at the senior international level, Rowlands finished fifth in the 2007 World Championships, but could never make that elusive Olympic team.

However, the journey for Rowlands started at Bishop Ready where he was a two-time state champion at 189 and 215 pounds in 1998 and 1999. Now this year, the Silver Knights are looking for their first two-time champion since then. Heck, prior to Garren winning state last year, Rowlands was the last state champion the illustrious program had. Should Garren win state again, it would be the 30th state champ for Bishop Ready, and tie them with Richmond Hts. for sixth all time (assuming Massillon Perry doesn't surpass them from behind).

This season, Garren was champion at the CIT and a runner-up at Brecksville, losing 5-3 to fellow defending state champion Billy Miller. The Penn commit joined Danishek in winning a Super 32 Challenge title this past October. He is the anchor figure among five ranked wrestlers at the Heath district. Also here is returning state four place finisher Ben Sexton, who was champion at Aurora earlier this year. The junior Bodkins was a state alternate last year, and this year has titles at the OVAC and New Lexington. District placer Pinyard, a senior, was runner-up at Marion Pleasant.

The other returning state placers in this weight class, joining Garren and Sexton, both exit from the Bowling Green district, along with four other ranked wrestlers. Durbin was fourth at 220, while this year he has complimented that with titles in three tournaments and a runner-up finish at Perrysburg (losing 7-3 to projected D1 champion Bonner). Careless placed eighth in this weight class, but is currently fifth on the BG ladder, as he has battled injury throughout the season. He was two-and-out at Brecksville, and a semifinalist at LCC Thunderbird, where he lost to Isaac Sexton, but then defaulted the next two bouts. Returning state qualifier Buckner carries a pin over Ironman placer Jackson. State alternate Vellor missed December, while transferring to Delta for his sophomore season, which has started with fourth place finishes at Perrysburg and Oregon Clay. Rounding out the ranked group is the senior Pfeister, who finished second at Woodmore, and third at Van Buren.

Two of the remaining projected state placers exit the Garfield Hts district, both are seniors and returning state qualifiers, as well as being among four ranked wrestlers in that district field. Hanzel was sixth at Brecksville and champion at both the Gorman and Bill Dies. Hunter was sixth at Medina and champion at Nelsonville York. The junior Smith was a state alternate last year, while fellow junior Deely has carried below expected form.

Last among the ranked wrestlers here is Jackson, who is ranked fifth, but is the lone ranked wrestler to exit the Troy district. On this season, Jackson was runner-up at Franklin to Henderson; then flipped that loss to make the semis at the Ironman, but then dropped down to sixth place. At Brecksville, Jackson went 3-2, but he then bounced back to win a title at Marion County.

Team Standings

1. Delta (Bowling Green)
2. Dayton Christian (Troy)
3. Covington (Troy)
4. Waynedale (Gafield Hts)
5. Greeneview (Troy)
6. Mechanicsburg (Troy)
7. Archbold (Bowling Green)
8. Beachwood (Garfield Hts)
9. Loudonville (Garfield Hts)
10. Norwalk St. Paul (Bowling Green)
11. Rootstown (Garfield Hts)
12. Genoa (Bowling Green)