

Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to read the State Tournament Predictions Report. As I embark on year number nineteen – for which I have record – of doing this in some way, shape, or form ... we can only reflect on how the prior years have gone in the way of predictions, since there was no individual state tournament last year.

After enduring through the cancellation of the 2020 state wrestling tournament, and a 2020-21 season that was far from normal, it has been a relief to experience a relatively normal and fully operational 2021-22 campaign. While it was disappointing to lose the two major in-state holiday tournaments and see a couple mid-January tournaments in northeast Ohio go by the wayside, it's been mostly been a season more like those before the pandemic.

If not for the cancellation of the 2020 statement, Seth Shumate (Dublin Coffman) and Gavin Brown (Legacy Christian) could be in position to win a fourth title, as each won state in 2019 as freshmen and then in 2021 as juniors. Both wrestlers have signed to wrestle for Ohio State during the 2022-23 school year. In total, the Buckeye State features 24 wrestlers to have won four state titles; the first of which was Mark Zimmer (Columbus DeSales), who won the first of his state titles on March 13th in 1976 (the calendar date for this year's state championship matches). He tragically passed away after a three-year fight against ALS on February 16th of last year.

Four wrestlers won state titles last year as freshmen, and would be on track to join the four-timer club should they win the next three years. In Division I, Ryan Bennett (St. Edward) is a contender at 126 pounds and Ty Wilson (Dublin Scioto) is at 132, Beric Jordan (St. Paris Graham) is seeking to repeat at 106 in Division II, while Dillon Campbell (Legacy Christian) is expected to compete at 120 in Division III.

Thirteen others won state last year, and can repeat as champions in March. Joey Blaze (Perrysburg), Connor Euton (Westerville North), and Dylan Russo (Olentangy Liberty) from Division I; Nolan Gessler (St. Paris Graham), Brody Conley (Tiffin Columbian), Dylan Fishback (Aurora), Kyle Snider (CVCA), and Todd Allen (Medina Buckeye) from Division II; along with Max Hermes (Milan Edison), Max Shore (Miami East), Jarrett Hornish (Wayne Trace), Cameron Lacure (Legacy Christian), and Austin Kohlhofer (Delta) from Division III. 2019 state champion Peyton Fenton (Elyria) will be seeking bookend Division I state titles.

The state tournament is slated to return to Value City Arena (aka "The Schott") on Friday, March 11th with championship matches slated for Sunday, March 13th.

Looking at the team landscape, all three divisions have a relatively clear favorite in the individual state tournament. St. Edward has now won six consecutive state tournament titles when the event has been contested (2015-2019, 2021), and looking at the roster they have this year, that stretch is going to add four more to it at least. More interesting could be how close can Perrysburg get to first, and/or if they can take second, which they were able to do in 2014. Also, if Dublin Coffman can somehow get to second, they would become the highest finishing team from the Central District in the history of the bigschool classification (also including the single-class event in years prior to 1971).

St. Paris Graham has now won 20 consecutive state tournament titles when the event has been contested (2001-2019, 2021), and is prohibitively favored to push that to 21. Looking at their roster composition, that streak should continue for another could of years. However, the battle for second is going to be razor tight between Louisville (2021 state runners-up) and Aurora (2019 state runners-up).

While in Division III, it is going to be a repeat state title for Legacy Christian unless something ridiculously absurd happens along the way. The question is who takes second, as of the writing of this report, the leading contenders were Milan Edison and Mechanicsburg.

From an individual perspective, Ohio has three wrestlers currently ranked first in the country by MatScouts: Beric Jordan (St. Paris Graham) at 106, Marcus Blaze (Perrysburg) at 113, and Dylan Fishback (Aurora) at 195. In all, close to 30 wrestlers sit in the top 25 of their respective weight classes nationally.

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 years that trend data is available.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2019 – DI 6/14, DII 8/14, DIII 9(or10)/14 (TOTAL = 23 or 24)

2020 – NO STATE TOURNAMENT OCCURRED

2021 – DI 6/14, DII 9/14, DIII 12/14 (TOTAL = 27); note: DI had a one weight class where the projected champ did not compete post-season, and the second-ranked wrestler won the title

Where were the other champs ranked? (note this may not be perfect): 2nd - 128, 3rd - 63, 4th - 27, 5th - 16, 6th - 7, 7th - 3, 8th - 3, 9th - 3, 10th – 2, >10- 4

Each weight class breakdown starts with an ordinal listing of the top 16 wrestlers. Following that ranking, is a listing of the top five (or more) wrestlers at each of the district tournaments; note that four wrestlers at each district tournament site, of which there are four per division, earn state tournament qualification. Following the ranking list and matrix, there is a written commentary that provides further perspective over and above the ranking list itself.

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 with a barometer for what might happen over the next few weeks.

Please note that this report was researched during the period of February 8th through February 13th, with Division I and Division II having data compilation done by the end of February 11th. For Division I and Division II, the state dual invitational finals results are considered, but nothing else from that weekend; while the Division III data compilation is through February 13th. The ordinal ranking and commentary then completed.

There is a week left of wrestling in the regular season, though it not one in which every team has a competition scheduled. It is also important to note the impact of the JakesWrestling database, without which the rankings process could not be completed.

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).

In years prior to 2020, I would indicate that two predictions are guaranteed to be correct. However, that year showed even those which seemed to normally be obvious could be rendered wrong:

*The state tournament will be staged March 11th through 13th at the Schott.

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

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

District Tournament Site Analysis

Due to the structural mess of the 2020-21 school year here in Ohio, the previous two-year enrollment cycle is now into a third year. Enrollment counts took place in the fall, and there will be new divisions and representation decisions coming in the late spring that take effect for 2022-23 and 2023-24. The divisions and district compositions of the last two years are the same for this year.

There are no state tournament performance statistics for 2020, but this section will detail performance data from 2017-2019 and 2021. Summary for Division I: all-NE district at North Canton (sectionals at Brecksville, Kenston, Wadsworth, and Willoughby South); mixed district at Perrysburg (sectionals at Midview, Oregon Clay, St. Edward, and Strongsville); all-Central district at Hilliard Darby; and all-SW district at Kettering Fairmont.

For Division II, there is an all-NE district at Perry (Lake County) with sectionals at Canal Fulton Northwest, Lake Catholic, Painesville Harvey, and Perry; a mixed district at Norwalk (all three northwest sectionals plus a sectional at Beachwood); a mixed district at Wilmington (three southwest sectionals plus the central sectional); and a mixed district at Gallia (two east sectionals and two southeast sectionals). There are just over 30 teams that were assigned between the Beachwood, Lake Catholic, and Painesville Harvey sectionals that got to choose which sectional to participate in.

For Division III, there is an all-NE district at Garfield Hts, an all-NW district at Rossford (sectionals at Archbold, Oak Harbor, Plymouth, and Van Buren), a mixed district at Troy (three southwest sectionals plus the sectional at Lima Central Catholic), and a mixed district at Heath (one central sectional, two east sectionals, and one southeast sectional)

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

DIV I - All Northeast (North Canton)

2021: 127-105, 54.7% (overall); 59-53, 52.7%; (championship only); 7 (two-and-out)

2019: 107-106, 50.2%; 53-55, 49.1%; 13

2018: 108-109, 49.8%; 56-53, 51.4%; 10

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

DIV I - Combined Northeast (3)/Northwest (1) <Perrysburg>

2021: 114-97, 54.0% (overall); 62-51, 54.9% (championship only); 12 (two-and-out)

2019: 123-97, 55.9%; 70-50, 58.3%; 10

2018: 114-95, 54.5%; 65-51, 56.0%; 14

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

Note – this composition will be alike to 2021, but different than 2017-2019 because the northeast district has seven sectionals, compared to the six in previous years.

DIV I - All Southwest (Kettering Fairmont)

2021: 77-115, 40.1% (overall); 41-55, 42.7% (championship only); 20 (two-and-out)

2019: 115-104, 52.5%; 54-51, 51.4%; 6

2018: 112-104, 51.9%; 54-52, 50.9%; 12

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

DIV I - All Central (Hilliard Darby)

2021: 102-103, 49.8% (overall); 48-51, 48.5% (championship only); 17 (two-and-out)

2019: 75-113, 39.9%; 33-54, 37.9%; 27

2018: 86-112, 43.4%; 35-54, 39.3%; 20

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

DIV II - Combined East (2)/Southeast (2) <Gallia Academy>

2021: 91-110, 45.3% (overall); 39-55, 41.5% (championship only); 13 (two-and-out)

2019: 113-112, 50.2%; 53-55, 49.1%; 11

2018: 99-109, 47.6%; 43-56, 43.4%; 19

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

NOTE: 2017-2019 had composition of Central (1)/East (2)/Southeast (1)

DIV II – Northwest (3)/Northeast (1) <Norwalk>

2021: 111-106, 51.2% (overall); 58-52, 52.7% (overall); 13 (two-and-out)

2019: 94-109, 46.3%; 45-55, 45.0%; 14

2018: 96-120, 44.4%; 37-56, 39.8%; 15

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

DIV II - All Northeast (Perry)

2021: 119-106, 52.9% (overall); 61-51, 54.5% (championship bracket); 11 (two-and-out)

2019: 128-96, 57.1%; 73-48, 60.3%; 6

2018: 125-96, 56.6%; 69-48, 59.0%; 7

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

NOTE: See above section that the composition between Perry and Norwalk will be similar to 2021, but different than in 2017-2019.

DIV II – Southwest (3)/Central (1) <Wilmington>

2021: 99-98, 50.3% (overall); 52-52, 50.0% (championship only); 19 (two-and-out)

2019: 85-103, 45.2%; 39-52, 42.9%; 25

2018: 100-95, 51.3%; 61-50, 55.0%; 15

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

NOTE: In 2017-2019 this was 3 SW and 1 SE sectional

DIV III - All Northeast (Garfield Hts)

2021: 110-108, 50.5% (overall); 54-55, 49.5% (championship only); 10 (two-and-out)

2019: 115-109, 51.3%; 46-55, 45.5%; 11

2018: 98-109, 47.3%; 53-52, 50.5%; 19

2017: 104-108, 49.1%; 48-53, 47.5%; 18

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

2021: 73-114, 39.0% (overall); 27-55, 32.9% (championship only); 22 (two-and-out)

2019: 76-105, 42.0%; 39-53, 42.4%; 24

2018: 91-107, 46.0%; 43-54, 44.3%; 19

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

NOTE: 2017 this was Central (1), East (2), Southeast (1); 2018-2019 this was Central (2) and East/Southeast (2)

DIV III – Southwest (3)/Northwest (1) <Troy>

2021: 126-99, 56.0% (overall); 72-49, 59.5% (championship only); 8 (two-and-out)

2019: 94-113, 45.4%; 47-54, 46.5%; 15

2018: 106-105, 50.2%; 49-52, 48.5%; 10

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

NOTE: For 2017 it was Southwest (2), Northwest (1), Central (1); 2018-2019 this was Southwest (3) and Northwest (1), though one of three southwest sectionals featured half of the southeast district teams

DIV III - All Northwest (Rossford)

2021: 111-99, 52.9% (overall); 57-51, 52.8% (championship only); 16 (two-and-out)

2019: 135-93, 59.2%; 78-48, 61.9%; 6

2018: 125-99, 55.8%; 65-52, 55.6%; 8

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

NOTE: this reflects four of the five northwest sectionals

DIVISION ONE

106 pounds

1. Jayveon Clinton, Elyria, freshman (Perrysburg)
2. Gunner Havens, Teays Valley, junior (Hilliard Darby)
3. Adam Butler, St. Edward, freshman (Perrysburg)
4. Cole Evans, Perrysburg, freshman (Perrysburg)
5. Brett Stanley, Brecksville, sophomore (North Canton)
6. Carter Slubowski, Hilliard Darby, junior (Hilliard Darby)
7. Konner Lambers, Cincinnati Elder, freshman (Kettering Fairmont)
8. Jack Dinwiddie, Wadsworth, freshman (North Canton)
9. Ryan Kennedy, North Olmsted, freshman (Perrysburg)
10. Zach Bergman, Anthony Wayne, sophomore (Perrysburg)
11. Jayshawn Eggleton, Maple Hts, junior (Perrysburg)
12. Emeric McBurney, Massillon Perry, freshman (North Canton)
13. Julien Kliev, Hilliard Bradley, senior (Hilliard Darby)
14. Bryce Estep, Fremont Ross, freshman (Perrysburg)
15. Brock Blankenhorn, Mt. Vernon, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
16. Adom Sharpley, Solon, freshman (North Canton)
17. Chloe Dearwester, Harrison, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)

HD – Havens, Slubowski, Kliev, Blankenhorn; Neal Krysty (Olentangy Liberty, freshman)

KF – Lambers, Dearwester, Marsel Sabirdjanov (Mason, sophomore), Joey Franz (Springboro, sophomore); Adam Gelman (Sycamore, sophomore)

NC – Stanley, Dinwiddie, McBurney, Sharpley; Greyson Clemens (Uniontown Lake, freshman)

PBG – Clinton, Butler, Evans, Kennedy; Bergman, Eggleton, Estep

Ten of the fourteen weights in Ohio's big school division have at least one wrestler ranked nationally in the top 25 by MatScouts at this point in time, with four of them having multiple wrestlers ranked. This clearly is NOT one of them. In fact, there is only one returning state tournament participant, and just one other wrestler that has even wrestled in a go-to-state match during their high school career.

Both those wrestlers will contend for state qualification out of the Hilliard Darby district. Havens placed eighth at state last year as a sophomore, while fellow junior Slubowski lost 7-4 in the consolation semifinal round. On the season, Havens has titles at Barnesville and Watkins Memorial, while he went 1-2 at the Walsh Ironman; Slubowski has titles at Big Walnut and Xenia. The other two ranked wrestlers from this district are the senior Kliev and the sophomore Blankenhorn. Kliev has two tournament titles, while placing third behind Havens at Watkins Memorial and fourth at the GMVWA; Blankenhorn was champion at Jonathan Alder and third at Delaware Hayes, while taking second at the John Brown Memorial up one weight class.

The favorite in this weight class is the freshman Clinton, who was an OAC junior high state champion last year at 102 pounds, but did not see his first competition this season until late in January. Three other freshmen, all of whom placed at OAC junior high state, join him as projected state qualifiers from the Perrysburg district. Butler went 2-2 at the Ironman and missed placement at the Powerade by one match; Evans was champion at Maumee Bay after finishing as runner-up at Ashland and Perrysburg; while Kennedy has tournament titles at Lorain, Perry Pin City, and Hoban on the season.

Three other ranked wrestlers will be after state spots at Perrysburg, the most congested of the four districts. The sophomore Bergman was third at Solon and Maumee Bay, but missed placing at Perrysburg by one match; fellow sophomore Eggleton was champion at Hudson; while the freshman Estep was fourth at Defiance, runner-up at the Gorman, and eliminated by Bergman one match short of placing at Maumee Bay.

There is the least quantity of quality at the Kettering Fairmont district with just two wrestlers occupying a ranked position. Most notable among them is the sophomore Dearwester, who seeks to become the first female to qualify for state in Division I, and just the third overall (Paige Nemec in Division II and Olivia Shore in Division III). Next season, the OHSAA will have a sanctioned state series solely for females for the first time. Of note on the season, Ms. Dearwester was fourth at SWOWCA. The other ranked wrestler is the freshman Lambers, who was an OAC junior high state champ last year at 84 pounds. On the season he has titles at SWOWCA, the CIT, and Delaware Hayes to go with a runner-up finish at the Edison Holiday.

Rounding things out is a quartet of ranked wrestlers at North Canton, led by the sophomore Stanley who was scratched from last year's sectional tournament when he was positioned to contend for a trip to Columbus. During the current season he was champion at Ashland and the Suburban League, runner-up at SWOWCA (at 113), along with third at Boardman; he also lost in overtime to the St. Edward reserve wrestler in the state dual meet final. The freshman Dinwiddie was third at North Canton, fourth at the Suburban League, and fifth at the Wadsworth GIT; fellow freshman McBurney was third at the Edison Holiday, sixth at the Wadsworth GIT, and runner-up at Delaware Hayes; while another freshman Sharpley was fourth at Solon and third at the North Coast Classic.

113 pounds

1. Marcus Blaze, Perrysburg, freshman (Perrysburg)
2. Wyatt Richter, St. Edward, senior (Perrysburg)
3. Jordan Rosselli, Olentangy Liberty, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
4. Holden Huhn, Cincinnati LaSalle, freshman (Kettering Fairmont)
5. Micah Medina, Oregon Clay, junior (Perrysburg)
6. Kaiyon McKinney, Elyria, freshman (Perrysburg)
7. Kevin Grunzweig, Solon, senior (North Canton)
8. Jared Johnston, Cincinnati Moeller, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
9. Nate Dulcie, Massillon Perry, sophomore (North Canton)
10. Toby Hutsler, Lancaster, junior (Hilliard Darby)
11. Jacob Ferguson, Austintown Fitch, senior (North Canton)
12. Joey Thamann, Cincinnati Elder, freshman (Kettering Fairmont)
13. Jack DeBoe, Mentor, freshman (North Canton)
14. Rahul Raghuram, Dublin Coffman, junior (Hilliard Darby)
15. Dylan Hartman, Mt. Vernon, senior (Hilliard Darby)
16. Michael Gosselin, Springboro, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)

HD – Rosselli, Hutsler, Raghuram, Hartman; Isaiah McCaa (Newark, junior)
KF – Huhn, Johnston, Thamann, Gosselin; Tommy Couch (Harrison, senior)
NC – Grunzweig, Dulcie, Ferguson, DeBoe; Carlo Santoro (Mayfield, senior)
PBG – Blaze, Richter, Medina, McKinney; Ray Lewis (Strongsville, junior)

Back in 2014 when Perrysburg finished as state runner-up to St. Edward, the Yellow Jackets were staring a 40-year drought without a state champion right in the face. That weekend, Rocco Caywood struck gold at 170, while a pair of siblings were among the other five placers for that team. Mario Guillen placed third at 113 as a sophomore, while Moises took seventh at 120 as a junior; Mario won state two years later at 126 as a senior in 2016, while Moises did the same in his senior year at 138 in 2017.

This edition of the Yellow Jackets is also anchored by a pair of brothers, returning state champion Joey Blaze, and his younger more talented brother Marcus. Marcus is in this weight class, and as a freshman is undefeated on the season. This includes titles at the Ironman, Ashland, Perrysburg, and Maumee Bay tournaments; prior to starting high school, Marcus was an All-American at the U16 freestyle nationals and a Super 32 Challenge placer. He is the clear favorite in this weight class.

Ranked second is the senior Richter, who placed fourth in this state tournament weight class last year. He'll join Blaze in the field at the Perrysburg district; on the season he placed eighth at the Ironman, missed placing at the Powerade by one match, and lost 10-2 to Blaze at the OHSWCA State Duals. Two others join Blaze and Richter as ranked wrestlers in this district. Medina placed seventh at state last year as a sophomore, and this season was third at Solon before finishing as runner-up at Ashland and Maumee Bay; while the freshman McKinney placed fifth at the Carnahan in Indiana and Ashland, along with taking seventh at Maumee Bay.

There are two other returning state placers in this weight class, both did so at 106 last year. Rosselli was fourth as a freshman, while Grunzweig took sixth as a junior. Rosselli went 2-2 at the Ironman along with taking first at Olentangy Liberty and second at Wadsworth; while Grunzweig missed the first chunk of the season before taking second at Orange, where he lost 5-2 to Johnston in the final.

Rosselli is joined by three other ranked wrestlers at Hilliard Darby. Hutsler won a match at state last year as a sophomore, and this year missed a top six finish at Olentangy Liberty by one match before taking third at New Lexington; the junior Raghuram was champion at Mt. Vernon to open the season before placing sixth at Ashland and advancing to the semis at Licking Hts; while the senior Hartman placed third at Mt. Vernon (at 120) and Boardman, along with a title at Jonathan Alder and runner-up finish at Delaware Hayes.

Grunzweig is also joined by three ranked wrestlers at North Canton. The sophomore Dulcie was third at the Edison Holiday and sixth at Wadsworth GIT before winning the title at Delaware Hayes; the senior Ferguson was champion at Beaver Local and runner-up at two additional tournaments; while the freshman DeBoe finished runner-up at the Hephner.

Johnston, who went 0-2 at state last year as a freshman, is the weight's other returning state participant. He is joined by three other ranked wrestlers at Kettering Fairmont. Johnston started the season at 106, where he placed fifth at SWOWCA and went 2-2 at the Powerade; but has found the going at 113 more amicable, placing third at the CIT and first at Orange. The anchor of this weight class is the freshman Huhn, who won three matches at the Ironman before taking first at SWOWCA, third at Ashland and Wadsworth, along with seventh at the Escape the Rock in Pennsylvania. Fellow freshman Thamann placed fourth at SWOWCA and the Edison Holiday before taking fifth at the CIT, while the sophomore Gosselin was fifth at the GMVWA and champion at Watkins Memorial.

120 pounds

1. Jaxon Joy, Wadsworth, junior (North Canton)

2. Ryan Avalos, Perrysburg, junior (Perrysburg)
3. Peyton Fenton, Elyria, senior (Perrysburg)
4. Damion Ryan, Centerville, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
5. Austin McBurney, Massillon Perry, junior (North Canton)
6. Nick Molchak, Solon, senior (North Canton)
7. Kaden Brown, St. Edward, sophomore (Perrysburg)
8. Tanner Spaulding, Cincinnati LaSalle, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
9. Nick Rodriguez, Oregon Clay, senior (Perrysburg)
10. Jayden Cochran, Miamisburg, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
11. Noah Moreland, Vandalia Butler, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
12. Joey Vazsonyi, Medina Highland, junior (North Canton)
13. Braxton Sheets, Grove City, junior (Hilliard Darby)
14. Hayden Hollis, Springboro, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
15. Bryce Sears, Colerain, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
16. Jibreel Smith, Newark, junior (Hilliard Darby)

HD – Sheets, Smith, Adam Makour/Joseph Baumann (Dublin Coffman, freshman/sophomore), Andrew Myers (Upper Arlington, sophomore); Josh Niemann (Watkins Memorial, senior)

KF – Ryan, Spaulding, Cochran, Moreland; Hollis, Sears

NC – Joy, McBurney, Molchak, Vazsonyi; Jonathan Campbell (Walsh Jesuit, sophomore)

PBG – Avalos, Fenton, Brown, Rodriguez; Brayden Bierdmann (Anthony Wayne, senior)

Last year's state final at 106 pounds saw one wrestler compete while in the lead for close to five minutes, along with amassing a riding time advantage (if it was kept in high school) of around four minutes. However, said wrestler, Jaxon Joy of Wadsworth ended up losing the bout 6-5 to Ryan Bennett because he gave up a reversal super-late in the first period and a four-point move with under 40 seconds left in the bout.

After failing to place at either the U16 freestyle nationals or the Super 32 Challenge, Joy also missed out on placement at the Ironman and Powerade, falling short by one match on both of those occasions. In between the Ironman and Powerade, he did win a title at North Canton, beating McCrone 3-2 in the final to avenge his front side loss from the Ironman. A significant turning point in the season seemed to come at the Grizzly Invitational, when he knocked off Drew Heethius by 16-3 major decision; Heethius being a two-time Michigan state champ and a Junior National freestyle All-American.

Since then, Joy seems to be wrestling a much more open and aggressive match, which should minimize the likelihood of the type of loss that happened in last year's state final. In five matches against three of the four wrestlers ranked behind him, Joy is 5-0; pin and 10-5 wins over Avalos, 7-3 over Fenton, 3-0 then a major decision over McBurney.

The pair of wrestlers ranked directly behind Joy exit the Perrysburg district, as do two other ranked wrestlers. Avalos and Fenton have split matches this season, Fenton winning 8-7 in the final at Ashland with Avalos reversing that in overtime during the Maumee Bay final. Fifth at 113 last year as a sophomore, Avalos has used his relentless pace to make a leap this season in which he also missed placement by one match at Ironman (beat McBurney along the way) and took first at Perrysburg (beating Ryan in the final, second win over him on the season). University of Virginia signee Fenton won state at 106 in 2019, and also placed sixth in the Walsh Ironman this season.

The sophomore Brown had a win over McBurney on the season's opening weekend, and then went 1-2 at Ironman and 3-2 at Powerade in the following tournaments; he lost 5-1 to Avalos at state duals. The senior Rodriguez went 0-2 at state last year, while this season has featured third place finishes at Solon and Maumee Bay to go with a fifth at Ashland and the championship at Dublin Scioto.

Three ranked wrestlers, including a pair of returning state medalists, join Joy at the North Canton district. McBurney placed third at 106 as a sophomore, and started the season going 3-2 at the Ironman and missing placement by one match at the Beast of the East; while following it up with titles at the Edison Holiday and Delaware Hayes, along with a third at Wadsworth. Molchak placed sixth last year as a junior, and this season was runner-up at Solon (3-1 to McCrone), champion at North Coast, and a semifinalist at Maumee Bay (losing 6-4 to Avalos). Vazsonyi was a district semifinalist in this weight class last year as a sophomore, but lost 14-12 then 5-4 to miss out on a state tournament trip; while this season has included a fourth at Maumee Bay, third at West Holmes, and runner-up at Suburban League.

The last returning medalist in this weight class is Ryan, who was fifth here last year as a junior. The current season includes a title at SWOWCA, third at Ashland, and second at Perrysburg. Five ranked wrestlers are among the other contenders at Kettering Fairmont. Spaulding went 1-2 at state last year a freshman, while he was third at SWOWCA this year before taking fourth at Ashland and Wadsworth; Cochran also went 1-2 at state as a freshman at 106 last year, and has sandwiched titles at Edgewood and Miamisburg around a second at GMVWA; the junior Moreland is also a returning state qualifier, while this season he was fourth at SWOWCA before finishing runner-up at Valley View and Mason; while the senior Hollis is also a returning state qualifier, who was sixth at GMVWA and third at Watkins Memorial while going 3-2 at Maumee Bay. Finally, the sophomore Sears was seventh at SWOWCA, third at Mason, and has two tournament titles.

Rounding out the districts is the one at Hilliard Darby that features just a pair of ranked wrestlers, led by returning state qualifier Sheets, who has taken third at Olentangy Liberty and second at Dublin Scioto on the season; while fellow junior Smith was runner-up at Mt. Vernon (at 126) and Olentangy Liberty before winning a title at Licking Valley then going 1-2 at Maumee Bay.

126 pounds

1. Brennan Cernus, Pickerington Central, senior (Hilliard Darby)
2. Omar Ayoub, Dublin Coffman, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
3. Vinnie D'Alessandro, Mayfield, junior (North Canton)
4. Kaden Jett, Brecksville, junior (North Canton)
5. Mason Brugh, Wadsworth, senior (North Canton)
6. Ryan Bennett, St. Edward, sophomore (Perrysburg)
7. Luke Acuna, Centerville, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
8. Hudson Goebel, Findlay, junior (Perrysburg)
9. Nolan Frye, Walsh Jesuit, senior (North Canton)
10. Londen Murphy, Cincinnati Moeller, freshman (Kettering Fairmont)
11. Aiden Agin, Lancaster, senior (Hilliard Darby)
12. Drake Cerny, Marion Harding, senior (Hilliard Darby)
13. Nathan Perry, Avon Lake, junior (Perrysburg)
14. Diego Chavez, Perrysburg, sophomore (Perrysburg)
15. Charles Curtis, Massillon Perry, sophomore (North Canton)
16. Colton Spurgeon, Mt. Vernon, senior (Hilliard Darby)
17. Nick Blackburn, Mentor, sophomore (North Canton)

HD – Cernus, Ayoub, Agin, Cerny; Spurgeon; Frankie Mulligan (Upper Arlington, senior)
KF – Acuna, Murphy, Parker Lee (Vandalia Butler, junior), Cohl Wandsnider (Harrison, sophomore); Eli Marengo (Cincinnati LaSalle, sophomore)
NC – D’Alessandro, Jett, Brugh, Frye; Curtis, Blackburn
PBG – Bennett, Goebel, Perry, Chavez; Zach Orseno (North Ridgeville, senior), Kenneth Lambert (Strongsville, senior)

While Shumate and Brown are the only two-time Ohio state tournament champions in this year’s field, a third wrestler has a pair of state “level” tournament titles to his name. The senior Cernus won state at 106 as a freshman at Culver Academies in Indiana, before taking gold at National Preps in the 113-pound weight class as a sophomore at Wyoming Seminary; last year he took third at 120 in the unofficial National Prep Inviational before coming back home to Pickerington North for his senior season. Prior to the season, Cernus established himself as the favorite in this weight by taking sixth at the Super 32 Challenge in this weight class; titles at Olentangy, Olentangy Liberty, and Dublin Scioto have done nothing to change that thought.

His direct rival is going to be the sophomore Ayoub, who was runner-up last year at state losing 3-0 to Ty Wilson despite beating him the previous two weeks at the sectional and district levels. Ayoub sustained an injury during an early round loss at the Walsh Ironman, which caused him to miss a chunk of the season before coming back to win his weight at Delaware Hayes. Since returning, he has five dominant wins over wrestlers that have participated in state tournaments.

Three other returning state placers join Cernus and Ayoub in the present composition at Hilliard Darby. Agin placed as a freshman in 2019, qualifier in 2020 before the pandemic-imposed cancellation, and missed last season due to injury; his current season includes runner-up finishes at Olentangy and Olentangy Liberty, along with a third at New Lexington. Cerny placed at state in both 2019 and 2021, while he missed weight during the 2020 post-season. This season includes titles at Galion, Marion Harding, and Marion Pleasant along with an 8-1 dual meet loss to Ayoub. Fellow senior Spurgeon has three tournament titles to go with a fourth at SWOWCA and third at Delaware Hayes. Expect to see movement up or down out of this weight from somebody at the district.

Starting with Ayoub, this weight class is a gigantic mess. There is a plethora of wrestlers that can contend for the second finalist spot and the consolation finalist spots. The margins between the wrestlers are super tight, and the matchup outcomes during the course of this season reflect such. Nowhere is this more abundantly clear than at the North Canton district, where there are four returning state placers, yet it’s the junior D’Alessandro who leads this field despite yet to have place at the state tournament.

D’Alessandro entered last year’s state tournament with just a 2-1 district semifinal loss to Joy. However, he would lose 3-2 to Rosselli in the opening round and then by fall in the second consolation match against Avalos to miss out on placement. Outside of a 3-2 loss up a weight class to Hayden Kuhn, it’s been all wins, many of which reflect high quality; most notable among them a 2-1 victory over fellow junior Jett in the state duals qualifying event.

Returning state placers Jett and Brugh have wrestled each other three times on the season, Jett winning the first (TB) and third (7-2) with Brugh taking the middle match in overtime. The junior Jett opened the season avenging his state quarterfinal loss with a dual meet victory over Goebel in the tiebreakers before

missing Ironman placement by one match, and then winning titles at Ashland Boardman. The senior Brugh went 2-2 at Ironman, was runner-up at North Canton, and placed at Powerade before winning titles at Wadsworth and the Suburban League.

Frye has twice placed at the state tournament, including fifth last year as a junior; while this season he was 1-2 at the Ironman before winning the title at North Canton (over Brugh) and taking second at the CIT (losing to Murphy). The sophomore Curtis upset Frye 4-2 in the district quarterfinal last year for his most notable win to date, and would go on to place eighth at state; while this season includes a fourth at Wadsworth and runner-up at Delaware Hayes. Also, in this district weight class is returning state alternate Blackburn; the sophomore was fourth at Ashland before taking home gold at Perry Pin City and the Hephner.

Lost in all this discussion is a state champion and returning state finalist. The state champion is the sophomore Bennett, who reversed a regular season loss to upset Joy in the 106-pound state final last season. His season started by going 1-2 at Ironman then 2-2 at Powerade. He then registered probably the best regular season win by any wrestler in this weight class field when he pinned Wyoming Seminary's Vince Bouzakis in overtime of their mid-January dual meet; however, Jett then beat him 2-1 via two stalling calls in the state dual meet final. The returning state runner-up is the junior Goebel, who was 2-2 at the Ironman then won a title at Findlay, but has been in and out of the lineup since then.

Those two exit the Perrysburg district, as do two other ranked wrestlers. Perry went 2-2 at the district tournament last year as a sophomore at 113, but this season he has four tournament titles, was third at Ashland with wins over Acuna and Blackburn, along with second at West Salem Northwestern losing 94- to Brugh in the final. The sophomore Chavez took seventh at 113, but has yet to compete this season. Also exiting this district tournament are returning state qualifier Orseno and 2020 state qualifier Lambert, who was a state alternate last year.

Last and somewhat least is the district at Kettering Fairmont, which features just two ranked wrestlers in two-time state placer Acuna and the freshman Murphy. Acuna missed placing at the Ironman by one match, was third at SWOWCA, fifth at Ashland, and fourth at Perrysburg. Murphy was runner-up at SWOWCA and sixth at Perrysburg before winning titles at the CIT and Orange; he also lost 6-4 to Brugh at state duals. Others with state experience in this weight are Lee and Brandon Mitchell (Oak Hills, senior), both of whom went two-and-out last year.

132 pounds

1. Jake Niffenegger, Cincinnati LaSalle, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
2. Ty Wilson, Dublin Scioto, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
3. Jeremy Ginter, Toledo Whitmer, sophomore (Perrysburg)
4. Allenson Denkins, Perrysburg, senior (Perrysburg)
5. Nick Gerome, Solon, senior (North Canton)
6. Jared Goldberg, St. Edward, freshman (Perrysburg)
7. Antonio Shelley, Mentor, sophomore (North Canton)
8. Jayden Colon, Parma, senior (Perrysburg)
9. Khaled Askar, Westlake, senior (Perrysburg)
10. Wyatt Moore, Hilliard Davidson, junior (Hilliard Darby)
11. Evan Butcher, Westerville North, junior (Hilliard Darby)
12. Chase Pluhar, Brecksville, junior (North Canton)
13. Kade Mellon, Wadsworth, sophomore (North Canton)

14. Marshall Geckler, Massillon Perry, freshman (North Canton)
15. Thomas Cassetty, Uniontown Lake, senior (North Canton)
16. Ty Daugherty, Avon, senior (Perrysburg)
17. Jack McCall, Lebanon, junior (Kettering Fairmont)

HD – Wilson, Moore, Butcher, Slade Waller (Grove City, junior); Gabe Bulgaris (Olentangy, senior)
KF – Niffenegger, McCall, Drew Magness (Cincinnati Elder, senior), David Gelman (Cincinnati Moeller, senior); Simon Taylor (Centerville, senior), Ryan Wissmar (Springboro, junior)
NC – Gerome, Shelley, Pluhar, Mellon; Geckler, Cassetty
PBG – Ginter, Denkins, Goldberg, Colon; Askar, Daugherty

There was a very late weight class change in terms of the writing of this report, as two-time state runner-up Niffenegger just made his certification down in this weight class. As a result, he becomes the projected state champ in this weight class after competing the prior three years at 138. For how strong he came on at the end of his freshman year, I thought Jake would do a little more over the next three years; however, it was not to be as it seemed he would narrowly miss out on placement at the major national-level events in which he competed (i.e. Ironman, Super 32, Fargo).

However, he can still win that elusive state title before going on to the Naval Academy. In all competitions so far at 138, he was champion at SWOWCA and Ashland (with wins over Ayoub and Burnett), before taking eighth at Escape the Rock and second at Wadsworth (to University of Michigan c/o 2023 commit Dylan Gilcher).

His two most direct challengers will be Wilson and Ginter, both sophomores. Wilson was one of four freshmen to win state titles last season, and has followed it up with a most excellent sophomore season; he has four tournament titles, along with taking second at North Canton (1-0 to projected DII state champ Castro), and fifth at Ironman (beating Ginter 6-1 during the course of that event). Ginter took third at 126 last season, and this season he missed Ironman placement by one match before winning titles at Ashland and Perrysburg.

Ginter is the anchor figure at the deepest of the four district tournaments, as he is joined by five other ranked wrestlers. Leading the group is Denkins, who had to injury forfeit from his match-to-place at state last year as a junior; he was runner-up at Ashland and fourth at Maumee Bay. The freshman Goldberg was 1-2 at Ironman then 3-2 at Powerade, before picking up a pair of notable wins at state duals, overtime decision over McCall and 3-1 over Pluhar. The senior Colon missed state by one match last year, and this year includes a title at Lorain and runner-up finish at Kenston (upset Kuhn 8-5 in the semifinal). Fellow senior Askar made state last year, but this year lost to Colon in the Lorain final, was also runner-up at North Coast (beat Gerome in the semifinal), and then took fifth at Perry Pin City (lost to Shelley). Finally, fellow senior Daugherty was champion at Avon Lake before taking seventh at both Marion Harding and Maumee Bay.

Looking at Wilson's district, there are just two other ranked wrestlers. The junior Moore is a returning state alternate, who was runner-up at DeSales and Delaware Hayes; champion at two tournaments; along with finishing sixth at Marion Harding and third at Jonathan Alder. Butcher qualified for state in 2020 as a freshman before missing last year, while this season has included runner-up finishes at Mt. Vernon and Olentangy Liberty along with a title at Licking Hts.

There is significant congestion at North Canton with six ranked wrestlers to fight over four spots, and quite frankly there is no order that would really surprise me. The senior Gerome and sophomore Shelley both made state last year, while Cassetty made state in 2019. Gerome has titles at Solon and Orange, along with a third at North Coast and runner-up at Maumee Bay (beat Denkins in the semi); Shelley was fourth at Ashland, third at Perry Pin City, and runner-up at the Hephner; Pluhar has two wins over Mellon and a win over Geckler on the season to go with a runner-up at SWOWCA, fifth at Ashland, plus titles at Boardman and the Suburban League; Mellon has dual meet wins over Denkins, Frye, and Geckler to go with a runner-up at West Salem Northwestern, third at Wadsworth, fourth at Suburban League, and fifth at North Canton; the freshman Geckler was third at the Edison Holiday, along with fifth at Wadsworth and Delaware Hayes (only loss was to Wilson); while Cassetty was fourth at Hoover and the Hephner sandwiched around a fifth at Maumee Bay.

At Kettering Fairmont, Niffenegger would take on state spot, assuming he is here. There is going to be a mess for the other three state spots, though only McCall is ranked. A state semifinalist last year out of total left field before sliding back to sixth, the junior McCall placed third at SWOWCA this year before missing out on placement at Maumee Bay by one match. Three others at this district also have qualified for state: Magness, Gelman, and Taylor. Any other movement into this weight class could shift the qualification dynamic at district, along with the podium dynamic at state.

138 pounds

1. Nate Burnett, Elyria, senior (Perrysburg)
2. Dy'Vaire VanDyke, Walsh Jesuit, junior (North Canton)
3. Ismael Ayoub, Dublin Coffman, senior (Hilliard Darby)
4. Conner Kleinberg, Springboro, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
5. Bradley Eaton, St. Edward, freshman (Perrysburg)
6. David Shue, Wadsworth, senior (North Canton)
7. Ethan Mitchell, Findlay, junior (Perrysburg)
8. Israel Petite, Nordonia, sophomore (North Canton)
9. Brody Chase, Lancaster, senior (Hilliard Darby)
10. Edwin White, Westerville North, senior (Hilliard Darby)
11. Landon Johnson, Massillon Perry, freshman (North Canton)
12. Wyatt Brock, Cincinnati LaSalle, freshman (Kettering Fairmont)
13. Jacob Castillo, Middletown, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
14. Chase Crutchley, Medina Highland, sophomore (North Canton)
15. David Zambounis, Brecksville, sophomore (North Canton)
16. Spencer Meng, Centerville, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
17. Dom Mudry, North Royalton, senior (Perrysburg)

NOTE – should Jake Niffenegger choose to compete at this weight, he becomes projected state champion

HD – Ayoub, Chase, White, Ayden Boothby (Upper Arlington, senior); Ian Cho (Dublin Jerome, sophomore)

KF – Kleinberg, Brock, Castillo, Meng; Stone Busler (Cincinnati Moeller, sophomore)

NC – VanDyke, Shue, Petite, Johnson; Crutchley, Zambounis

PBG – Burnett, Eaton, Mitchell, Mudry; Mahdi Shoman (North Olmsted, senior)

The late defection of Niffenegger down to 132 pounds, should that remain the case come post-season, comes as a relief to the field at this weight class. He beat two of the top three contenders on the way to

a title at Ashland. As we clear through the late weight class drop, it provides Clarion signee Nate Burnett with a golden opportunity to join his brother Mick (2019 at Elyria), father Eric (1984-1987 at Oberlin), and uncle Scott (3x at Elyria Catholic) as state champions in the family – having placed fifth at both the 2019 and 2021 state tournaments.

It would also come in the last year of Erik serving as head coach for the Pioneers, where he has guided the program to three individual and two dual team tournament runner-up finishes. Erik's coaching legacy goes beyond the Elyria high school wrestling room, and he has been an influential figure in many of the successes achieved by wrestlers from northern Ohio over the last two decades through the Burnett Trained Wrestling Club.

Nate's season has included a fourth-place finish at the Walsh Ironman before finishing runner-up at the Carnahan (loss to Jesse Mendez in the final) and Ashland, with two wins over returning Division III state champ Lacure. Three additional ranked wrestlers join Burnett at the Perrysburg district. The freshman Eaton placed eighth at the Powerade after going 2-2 at the Ironman; he also has in-season wins over a Michigan state runner-up and state qualifier; Mitchell was state alternate in this weight last year as a sophomore, and this year was third at Defiance and Wadsworth sandwiched around a fifth-place finish at Maumee Bay; while the senior Mudry was third at Solon and the Hephner, champion at three tournaments, and fifth at the Suburban League.

Yet again, it's a group of six ranked wrestlers competing at North Canton. VanDyke placed third at state last year as a sophomore, and was eighth in the Walsh Ironman earlier this season along with titles at four tournaments (including Solon and North Canton). Two-time state qualifier Shue went 5-4 between the Ironman and Powerade, placed fourth at North Canton and Wadsworth, along with winning the Suburban League. The other with state experience is Petite, who 1-2 at 132 last year as a freshman; while this season was runner-up at North Coast and Suburban League sandwiched around a sixth at Wadsworth.

Next up is the freshman Johnson, who was champion at the Edison Holiday, seventh at Wadsworth, and runner-up at Delaware Hayes. Crutchley lost a go-to-state match last year as a freshman; this year he placed third at three tournaments, seventh at Perysburg, and missed Maumee Bay placement by one match. Finally, it's the sophomore Zambounis, who avenged a Suburban League consolation final loss with a 4-3 win over Crutchley in the state duals qualifying final; while also taking fifth at Ashland and second at Boardman.

Next in line is the Hilliard Darby district with three ranked wrestlers led by Ayoub, a Wisconsin signee who placed fifth at state last year and missed Junior National freestyle A-A finish by one match this past summer. Ayoub also has titles at Mt. Vernon, Licking Hts, and North Coast to go with a third-place finish at Ashland (loss 3-2 to Niffenegger in the semi). The senior Chase was a district placer up at 152 last year; this year he was runner-up at Olentangy (up at 150) and New Lexington. Finally, fellow senior White was third at Mt. Vernon and runner-up at Olentangy Liberty.

Four ranked wrestlers feature at the Kettering Fairmont district, led by returning state eighth-place finisher Kleinberg. During this junior season he was runner-up at GMVWA and Beavercreek before winning titles at Maumee Bay and Watkins Memorial. The freshman Brock placed third at junior high state last year, and was 0-2 at the Ironman in this weight before spending most of the rest of the season up at 144, where he missed placing at SWOWCA by one match before taking sixth at Ashland and second

at Wadsworth. The junior Castillo was champion at the GMC tournament, while the senior Meng was third at SWOWCA and missed placing at Perrysburg by one match.

144 pounds

1. Joey Blaze, Perrysburg, junior (Perrysburg)
2. Ethan Birden, Dublin Coffman, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
3. Eugene Harney, Sycamore, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
4. Maclain Morency, Cincinnati Anderson, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
5. Matthew Szczepaniak, Lakota West, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
6. Creed Hill, Medina Highland, junior (North Canton)
7. Carson Thomas, Cincinnati LaSalle, freshman (Kettering Fairmont)
8. Manny Scordos, Brecksville, senior (North Canton)
9. Andrew Supers, Medina, junior (North Canton)
10. Connor Holm, Elyria, sophomore (Perrysburg)
11. Zander Graham, Teays Valley, senior (Hilliard Darby)
12. Daniel Eggleton, Maple Hts, senior (Perrysburg)
13. Niko Gonzalez, Olentangy Berlin, senior (Hilliard Darby)
14. Josh Melms, Marysville, senior (Hilliard Darby)
15. Nick Humphrys, Wadsworth, junior (North Canton)
16. Carson Atkins, Olmsted Falls, senior (Perrysburg)
17. Vince Randall, Stow, senior (North Canton)

HD – Birden, Graham, Gonzalez, Melms; Tyler Derricks (Olentangy Liberty, sophomore)

KF – Harney, Morency, Szczepaniak, Thomas; Dzhambulat Tckhovrebov (Kings, senior)

NC – Hill, Scordos, Supers, Humphrys; Randall

PBG – Blaze, Holm, Eggleton, Atkins; Bobby Hopkins/Lukan O’Brien (St. Edward, sophomore), John Paul Smith (Findlay, sophomore)

Blaze came through with state gold last year when he pinned Niffenegger during the alternating tiebreakers. The Purdue University c/o 2023 commit then continued to build upon that vibe with a placement finish at the Super 32 Challenge and taking fifth at the Walsh Ironman, the medal match was a 5-1 win over Birden. That would become the first of four wins over his direct title rival season-to-date. Blaze also has tournament titles at Ashland, Perrysburg, and Maumee Bay on the season.

Four other wrestlers join Blaze as ranked at the Perrysburg district, three of whom were state tournament participants last year. The sophomore Holm was 1-2 at the Ironman before taking fifth at the Carnahan, fourth at Ashland, and seventh at Maumee Bay; the senior Eggleton was runner-up at Hudson in this weight, though it would not surprise me if he has dropped down in weight since then; while fellow senior Atkins failed to place at Ashland.

Birden exits the Hilliard Darby district, which features three other ranked wrestlers. Graham qualified for state in 2020 before earning the state alternate spot last year; he was 0-2 at the Ironman, losing 6-4 to Holm in the consolation round, and has since taken home the title at Jonathan Alder. Fellow senior Gonzalez has titles at Olentangy Liberty, Dublin Scioto, and Claymont after taking last year off; he was also runner-up at Delaware Hayes. Fellow senior Melms has spent most of the season up in weight, including a runner-up finish at SWOWCA and a seventh-place finish at Maumee Bay up at 157, as well as a third at Dublin Scioto up at 150.

Yet again it is the district at North Canton with the most ranked wrestlers, five in total, though there is not a title contender in the lot. It's again a weight where any order of placers would not surprise. Like many of his Highland teammates the last two years, the junior Hill has found the go-to-state match to be horrifically unkind. In his case it was last year where he lost 3-1 to Shue in that round. He has spent almost all of this season up at 150, but is dropping here for state series; Hill was third at Perrysburg, sixth at Maumee Bay, and fourth in the Suburban League at said weight class.

The senior Scordos went two-and-out at 132 at state last year. He was fifth at SWOWCA and third at Ashland before picking up two dual meet victories over Humphrys along with tournament titles at Boardman and the Suburban League. Supers also went 0-2 last year at state, doing so as a sophomore at 126; season to date includes championships at the Hephner and two other events to go with a fourth at Maumee Bay. Humphrys was a district placer last year as a sophomore at 152, and this year was champion at North Canton and West Salem Northwestern along with taking third at Wadsworth and fifth in the Suburban League; while the senior Randall was runner-up at Solon, along with third at Boardman, the Hephner, and Suburban League (pinned Humphrys there).

Finally, the Kettering Fairmont district is anchored by a pair of returning state tournament participants. The sophomore Harney was fifth at 138, while Morency was 1-2 in his sophomore campaign at 145. Harney went 2-2 at the Ironman up at 150 before coming down to this weight to win the GMC; while Morency was champion at both SWOWCA and Washington C.H. up at 150, along with taking third at GMVWA and Maumee Bay in this weight. The junior Szczepaniak was a state alternate last year, and this year was champion at Edgewood before earning runner-up honors at SWOWCA, Delaware Hayes, and GMC. Finally, the freshman Thomas was 1-2 at the Ironman in this weight before spending the large chunk of the season up at 150 where he was seventh at SWOWCA and third at Ashland.

150 pounds

1. Chris Earnest, Wadsworth, junior (North Canton)
2. Wynton Denkins, Perrysburg, junior (Perrysburg)
3. Ethan Smith, Eastlake North, senior (North Canton)
4. Keegan Knapp, Olentangy Orange, senior (Hilliard Darby)
5. Quentin Whitehill, Medina, senior (North Canton)
6. Flint Guerra, Lebanon, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
7. Ty Miller, St. Edward, freshman (Perrysburg)
8. Tim Smith, Colerain, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
9. Jack Golla, Marysville, senior (Hilliard Darby)
10. Anthony Grecol, Strongsville, senior (Perrysburg)
11. Iain Rojas-Escobar, Worthington Kilbourne, senior (Hilliard Darby)
12. David Jordan, Grove City, senior (Hilliard Darby)
13. Sam Thompson, Massillon Perry, senior (North Canton)
14. Luke Conway, Cincinnati St. Xavier, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
15. Broc Fitzpatrick, Olentangy Liberty, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
16. Tyler Weseman, Oregon Clay, senior (Perrysburg)

HD – Knapp, Golla, Rojas-Escobar, Jordan; Fitzpatrick

KF – Guerra, Smith, Conway, Miles Moyer (Northmont, senior); Caleb Heilman (Loveland, freshman)

NC – Earnest, Smith, Whitehill, Thompson; Zisi Giatis (Medina Highland, freshman)

PBG – Denkins, Miller, Grecol, Weseman; Izzak Pedrazza (Elyria, senior)

The juniors Earnest and Denkins have split matches on the season. Earnest winning 9-8 in overtime during an opening weekend dual, while Denkins earned a rideout in the ultimate tiebreaker of an 8-8 match at the state duals. Two years ago, Earnest was positioned to win a state title at 106 before the pandemic-imposed cancellation, while last year he was fourth at 132; Denkins missed the second half of last year due to injury after going 2-2 at 138 in the district tournament as a freshman.

When looking at the rest of their seasons, Earnest has three wins over nationally ranked wrestlers, but three of his four losses (outside of the one to Denkins) are against wrestlers that are not ranked. He placed seventh at the Ironman, including a medal match victory over the Ohio State bound Gavin Brown before winning titles at North Canton, Wadsworth, and the Suburban League; but missed out on placing at the Powerade by one match due to a pair of losses to unranked wrestlers. Denkins went 2-2 at the Ironman, losing in ultimate tiebreaker to Mojena (who is ranked at a lower weight) and getting disqualified due to an illegal move late in a 1-1 match during consolation; since then, he was champion at Ashland, Perrysburg, and Maumee Bay (best win probably 10-5 over Knapp in the Maumee Bay final).

Next in line is the senior Smith, who qualified for state twice at Lake Catholic, including a fourth-place finish at 138 last year before ending up at Eastlake North. This season includes tournament titles at Kenston up one weight class before dropping into this weight to win at Boardman. Earnest and Smith are both exit district at North Canton, along with 2020 state qualifier Whitehill, who was state alternate last year as a junior; he did not make a season debut for 2021-22 until mid-February. The fourth ranked wrestler at this district is the senior Thompson, state alternate last year, whose season includes going 2-2 at both the Ironman and Beast of the East along with a title at the Edison Holiday.

The next highest returning state placer after Earnest and Smith is the senior Knapp, who placed seventh at 160 last season. Up at 157, he was champion at Upper Arlington and Ashland sandwiched around a second to Euton at Olentangy Liberty; while at this weight, he was first at Olentangy Orange and runner-up at Maumee Bay. Four additional ranked wrestlers also seek state tournament spots at Hilliard Darby.

The senior Golla qualified for state last year at 160; this year he was second at Kettering Fairmont and first at Dublin Scioto, along with finishing fifth at SWOWCA and Maumee Bay; fellow senior Rojas-Escobar missed state by one match last season, and this season includes three tournament titles plus a runner-up finish at Marion Pleasant; another senior is Jordan who lost to Golla in the final at Dublin Scioto, was fourth at Olentangy Liberty, and first at Hebron Lakewood; while Fitzpatrick was a go-to-state loser last year as a freshman, and has placed third at both Olentangy Liberty and Wadsworth season-to-date.

Rounding out the state placers is the senior Smith, who is among three ranked wrestlers in the field at Kettering Fairmont. Smith was third at SWOWCA, losing to Guerra in the semifinal, and first at Kettering Fairmont. The just mentioned Guerra is a junior, who was second at SWOWCA and third at Maumee Bay. Fellow junior Conway was champion at Olentangy and fourth at SWOWCA, while the freshman Thomas was seventh at SWOWCA and third at Ashland. It should be noted that Moyer went 0-2 at state last year as a junior.

Last, but not least, are the three ranked wrestlers that join Denkins in the Perrysburg field. The freshman Miller went 2-2 at Ironman, including an overtime loss to Denkins; he was 4-2 at Powerade, losing by fall to Earnest to suffer elimination; while at state duals he lost 11-9 to Guerra and 12-7 to Denkins. The senior Grecol won a state tournament match last year, while this year he was runner-up at Perrysburg

and third at Barnesville in this weight along with taking third up one weight class at both Solon and Kenston. Finally, the senior Weseman qualified for state at 170 back in 2020.

157 pounds

1. Connor Euton, Westerville North, senior (Hilliard Darby)
2. James Scavuzzo, Medina Highland, senior (North Canton)
3. J.R. Miller, St. Edward, freshman (Perrysburg)
4. Noah Ewen, Perrysburg, senior (Perrysburg)
5. Erich Trinski, Elyria, junior (Perrysburg)
6. Luke Marsh, Lebanon, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
7. Tyler Lintner, Austintown Fitch, junior (North Canton)
8. Shawn Erryl Will, Marysville, senior (Hilliard Darby)
9. Mason Valencia, Barberton, senior (North Canton)
10. Brad Hornback, Cincinnati Moeller, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
11. Devin Halliday, Delaware Hayes, junior (Hilliard Darby)
12. Evan Rizzo, Brecksville, freshman (North Canton)
13. Gregory Siambo, Mayfield, senior (North Canton)
14. Aiden Ashburn, Westlake, senior (Perrysburg)
15. A.J. Dolph, North Canton Hoover, freshman (North Canton)
16. Zach Kraus, Oregon Clay, junior (Perrysburg)

HD – Euton, Will, Halliday, Kody Goffin (Olentangy Berlin, senior); Josh Henderson (Hilliard Davidson, junior)

KF – Marsh, Hornback, Jack Willen (Cincinnati LaSalle, sophomore), Fletcher Rose (Miamisburg, sophomore); Seth Kroeger (Colerain, senior)

NC – Scavuzzo, Lintner, Valencia, Rizzo; Siambo, Dolph

PBG – Miller, Ewen, Trinski, Ashburn; Kraus

Going back to the 2019 state tournament, Euton entered that event as a district champion with a 30-8 record. He then won 4-3 in the opening round on Thursday, but on Friday morning lost by fall to Casey Wiles then 6-1 to Javion Jones. Those would be his last losses for two seasons. He was undefeated headed to the 2020 state tournament before it got kiboshed, and then he was an undefeated state champion last year.

This summer was a good building block off that state title, as he missed a Junior National freestyle All-American finish by one bout. The Iowa State signee placed fifth in this year's Walsh Ironman, losing 5-3 to eventual champion Angelo Ferrari and then 6-4 in consolation to Zack Ryder, both of whom are top ten in the nation wrestlers at the weight class. Outside of that, it has been a dominant season with four tournament titles, including a technical fall over two-time state placer Burns in the Licking Hts final. He is the clear favorite in this state tournament weight class.

Only two ranked wrestlers join Euton in district competition at Hilliard Darby. The senior Will placed seventh at state last year, but this year has been a bit uneven; fifth at SWOWCA up at 165, runner-up at Dublin Scioto (pinned by Euton), and then went 1-1 at state duals (beat Hornback 6-4, lost 10-2 to Rizzo). The junior Halliday was a state alternate last year at 160; this year he was third at Olentangy Liberty up at 165 before taking second at Delaware Hayes in this weight class.

The other returning state medalist in the pool at this weight class is the senior Scavuzzo, who was 2-2 at the Ironman and runner-up at Perrysburg before racking up titles at Maumee Bay, West Holmes, and Suburban League. Five other ranked wrestlers feature in the district tournament field at North Canton, most notably two-time state alternate Lintner and returning state qualifier Valencia.

Lintner was champion at Beaver Local and Boardman then third at the Hephner, before going up one weight class to take second at the EOWL. Valencia spent most of the year down at 150 where he won two tournaments before taking third at both the Gorman and Suburban League, but will be up here for post-season. The freshman Rizzo was fifth at SWOWCA and Ashland, fourth at Boardman, and third in the Suburban League; after opting out of last season the senior Siambo went 2-2 at Perrysburg before taking fifth at Maumee Bay; while the freshman Dolph, a Junior High state champ last year, was sixth at Hoover then went 1-2 at Ashland before pinning Hornback to win at Orange.

There's a group of five ranked wrestlers at Perrysburg, two of whom have state tournament experience. However, the freshman Miller leads the ranked group having finished one match out of placement at the Powerade, beating two Michigan state placers in duals, and beating two state experienced wrestlers at state duals (1-0 over Marsh, 7-4 over Ewen).

Ewen placed at state in 2019 before missing by one match in 2020, and suffering an injury last year; this year he was third at Perrysburg and fourth at Maumee Bay. The junior Trinski won a state tournament match last year, and this season finished third at the Carnahan and was a semifinalist at Ashland. The senior Ashburn was champion at Lorain and North Coast before taking second at Perry Pin City, while the junior Kraus was fourth at Solon, sixth at Ashland, third at Dublin Scioto (up at 165), and eighth at Maumee Bay.

Closing it out is the pair of ranked wrestlers at Kettering Fairmont. The senior Marsh is a returning state qualifier, who competed most of the year at 165 where he took first and SWOCA and missed Maumee Bay placement by one match; while fellow senior Hornback is a returning state alternate who was third at SWOWCA, fifth at Perrysburg, and champion at the CIT.

165 pounds

1. Myles Takats, Perrysburg, junior (Perrysburg)
2. Evan Bennett, St. Edward, senior (Perrysburg)
3. Dez Gartrell, Dublin Coffman, senior (Hilliard Darby)
4. William Scavuzzo, Medina Highland, senior (North Canton)
5. Brandon Batson, Glen Oak, junior (North Canton)
6. Jakob Hurley, Westland, senior (Hilliard Darby)
7. Aidan McStay, Hudson, senior (North Canton)
8. J.R. Reed, Stow, senior (North Canton)
9. Ben DiMarco, Kenston, junior (North Canton)
10. Nick Hollerbach, Willoughby South, senior (North Canton)
11. Jeremy Olszko, Nordonia, junior (North Canton)
12. Braxton Lawson, Huber Hts. Wayne, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
13. Lane Abrams, Fairfield, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
14. Aydan George, Centerville, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
15. Cole Yuhas, Westlake, senior (Perrysburg)
16. Brixton Bright, Mentor, senior (North Canton)
17. Dominico Migliori, Oregon Clay, senior (Perrysburg)

HD – Gartrell, Hurley, David Cochran (Mifflin, senior), Caiden Hooks (Olentangy Berlin, senior); Storm Beane (Grove City, sophomore)

KF – Lawson, Abrams, George, Matthew Kowalski (Springboro, freshman); Maceo Powell (Princeton, senior)

NC – Scavuzzo, Batson, McStay, Reed; DiMarco, Hollerbach, Olszko, Bright

PBG – Takats, Bennett, Yuhas, Migliori; Isaiah Schlegel (Toledo Whitmer, junior)

For most of the season, returning state runner-up Bennett was the clear favorite in this state tournament weight class. The Penn “signee” navigated through three one-point matches to earn a spot in last year’s state final opposite of Victor Voinovich, while this season had placed sixth at the Walsh Ironman. However, a 3-0 upset loss to the junior Takats changed the calculus. Takats himself was 1-2 in last year’s state tournament down at 126. This season he is 1-2 against returning state medalist Gartrell (Ironman and dual meet losses, Ashland finals win); while also winning the title at Maumee Bay and losing to Lillard in the semifinal at Perrysburg on the way to finishing third. Other notable Takats results come up at 175 where he lost 9-7 to Ironman placer Welch and sealed a state duals match victory with a 7-5 victory over Broskie.

The two anchor the district at Perrysburg, one that features two other ranked wrestlers. Yuhas was a district placer last year as a junior, while this year has titles at Lorain, North Coast, and Perry Pin City on the resume; fellow senior Migliori was third at Solon and (at 175) Dublin Scioto, while taking fourth at Ashland and Maumee Bay.

Ironman placer Gartrell took fifth at state in the 160-pound bracket last year as a junior. At said Ironman, Gartrell also picked up tiebreaker victories over a Junior National freestyle All-American and a nationally ranked wrestler, both from Pennsylvania. He has tournament titles at Mt. Vernon, Licking Hts, and Delaware Hayes on the season. The only other ranked wrestler joining Gartrell at Hilliard Darby is returning state placer Hurley, who has four tournament runner-up on the season (including two finals losses to Gartrell). Also at this district is returning state qualifier Hooks.

The deepest of the district tournaments is yet again the one at North Canton, which features eight ranked wrestlers. Some of these wrestlers came down from earlier competitions at 175, but might want to consider going back up there – even though three spots up at 175 are “taken”, the path to a fourth spot is probably easier up there.

Three of the ranked wrestlers at North Canton went 1-2 at the state tournament last year. The senior Scavuzzo was 2-2 at the Ironman before finishing fourth at Perrysburg, third at Maumee Bay, and second at the Suburban League; the junior Batson missed most of the season but came back in mid-to-late January; while the senior Reed started his season with a title at Solon up at 175, but dropped to this weight where he was runner-up at Boardman, third at the Hephner, and fourth in the Suburban League.

McStay lost his go-to-state match 1-0 to Will Scavuzzo last year as a junior. His season started up at 175 with runner-up finishes at Hudson, Kenston, and the Hephner before dropping to this weight to take third at the Suburban League. The junior DiMarco also started at 175 where he was fifth at Solon and fourth at Kenston, before taking first at Orange in this weight; the senior Hollerbach was champion at Hawken and North Coast then fifth at Kenston up a weight before taking second at the Hephner in this weight; the junior Olszko did the same thing taking third at North Coast, first at North Canton, and

second at Perrysburg before dropping to take third at Wadsworth and fifth at Suburban League; while Bright was fifth at Ashland and second at Perry Pin City in this weight.

Lastly the district at Kettering Fairmont features three ranked wrestlers led by Lawson who went two-and-out last year at state as a sophomore, and has a title at Troy to his credit this season. The senior Abrams was third at SWOWCA before winning titles at Kenston and GMC, while George was a state alternate last year as a freshman; this year he was fourth at SWOWCA, third at Ashland, and fifth at Perrysburg.

175 pounds

1. Luke Geog, St. Edward, senior (Perrysburg)
2. Luke Vanadia, Brecksville, junior (North Canton)
3. Mitchell Broskie, Dublin Coffman, senior (Hilliard Darby)
4. Kurt Thompson, Cincinnati Moeller, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
5. Colton Powers, Marysville, junior (Hilliard Darby)
6. Sean O'Horo, Boardman, senior (North Canton)
7. Nathan Urry, Olmsted Falls, senior (Perrysburg)
8. Chase Stein, Cincinnati LaSalle, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
9. Ronald Dimmerling, Glen Oak, senior (North Canton)
10. Brayden Benson, Grove City, senior (Hilliard Darby)
11. Kayden Kralik, Fremont Ross, junior (Perrysburg)
12. J. Tyler Hicks, Beavercreek, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
13. Jarrell Young, St. Ignatius, junior (Perrysburg)
14. Taedon Beasley, North Olmsted, senior (Perrysburg)
15. Matt Hamula, Medina, senior (North Canton)
16. Kyle Sandborn, North Royalton, junior (Perrysburg)
17. Jack Romanini, Walsh Jesuit, senior (North Canton)

HD – Broskie, Powers, Benson, Richard Lawrence (Hilliard Davidson, junior); Corey Howlett (Westerville North, junior), Jake Badgeley (Upper Arlington, senior)

KF – Thompson, Stein, Hicks, Wyatt Ferguson (Oak Hills, junior); Jack Hoffman/Aiden Weimer (Springboro, freshman), Caleb Stepp (West Clermont, junior)

NC – Vanadia, O'Horo, Dimmerling, Hamula; Romanini

PBG – Geog, Urry, Kralik, Young; Beasley, Sandborn

Junior National freestyle All-American, Cadet National freestyle runner-up, third at the Ironman, second at the Doc Buchanan. All those career credentials, along with being a key cog in Ohio State's nation-best 2022 recruiting class, yet zero state tournament titles. In fact prior to last year, he had not even competed at the district tournament – freshman year he was closed out of the lineup by the Hepner-Andonian-Dover trifecta, while sophomore year it was an injury the week of district.

Entering the state tournament last year, Geog's only loss was a 7-6 result from last December against Logan Messer, one that most viewed as an upset of sorts. Then, Geog would lose 3-2 to Messer in the state final. Messer is now starting at George Mason as a true freshman, and is having a relatively decent season. For Geog this season has included a third at the Ironman (split against Wask) and seventh at Powerade (losses 3-1 to eventually champion Brayden Thompson and 3-2 to Ohio State c/o 2023 commit Rocco Welsh). Quality wins include a pin over Broskie, 7-0 over Welch, 11-5 over Iowa State

signee Manuel Rojas (JN FS champ), 14-0 over Michigan state runner-up Remy Cotton, and a technical fall over projected state runner-up Vanadia.

Vanadia placed seventh at state last year as a sophomore, including an 11-0 major decision loss to Geog in the quarterfinal. During the summer, he would earn a 16U National freestyle runner-up finish at 182 to McDanel. After missing the Ironman dual to illness, he has titles at SWOWCA and Boardman sandwiched around a runner-up finish to Welch at Ashland. Four other ranked wrestlers join Vanadia at the North Canton district. Returning state alternate O'Horo is undefeated with titles at Kenston, Boardman, Hephner, and EOWL. Fellow senior Dimmerling beat O'Horo 5-2 in the tiebreaker in the go-to-state round last year on the way to placing sixth at state; he was third at Solon, champion at Hudson, and then runner-up at Wadsworth and Hoban. Another senior Hamula was champion at Marengo Highland before taking third at Hudson, Maumee Bay, and the Hephner; while Romanini was third at North Canton and Hoban sandwiched around a fifth at CIT.

Five ranked wrestlers will be in the hunt for the three state spots that Geog does not take up at the Perrysburg district. Urry placed fourth at 160 last year as a junior, while this year was third at Olentangy Liberty and fifth at Ashland; Kralik qualified for state two years ago at 126 as a freshman for St. Edward but missed all of last year and has been in-and-out of the lineup this year at Fremont Ross, when in the lineup he is talented and was runner-up at the Gorman; fellow junior Young qualified for state last year, and was runner-up at this year's CIT; the senior Beasley was champion at Lorain and Hoban, while taking fifth at Perry Pin City; and Sandborn was state alternate last year as a sophomore, with this year taking fourth at Solon and Hudson, along with runner-up at North Coast and Suburban League (he was also third at Perry Pin City down at 165).

Three ranked wrestlers, all with at least one state tournament win, call the Hilliard Darby district their home. It's a group led by the senior Broskie, who placed at NHSCA Junior Nationals after missing state placement despite being a quarterfinalist; he has titles at Mt. Vernon, Licking Hts, and Delaware Hayes along with going 3-2 at the Ironman and finishing third at Ashland. Powers placed at state as a sophomore last year, and has an older brother going to join the Ohio State football team as a LB/DE this summer; his season includes a title at Dublin Scioto and runner-up finish at Maumee Bay. The senior Benson was runner-up to Powers at Dublin Scioto and the same to Broskie at Delaware Hayes, along with a fourth at Olentangy Liberty and two tournament titles. Lawrence qualified for state last year, but I have not seen him in any results this year.

Like Hilliard Darby, the Kettering Fairmont district has three ranked wrestlers, each of whom won a state tournament bout last year. The senior Thompson was runner-up at SWOWCA then champion at CIT and Orange before beating Powers 3-1 at state duals; fellow senior Stein was third at SWOWCA and Wadsworth, sixth at Ashland, and fourth at Escape the Rock; while the junior Hicks was a semifinalist at SWOWCA up at 190 before winning the Beavercreek tournament in this weight.

190 pounds

1. Seth Shumate, Dublin Coffman, senior (Hilliard Darby)
2. Camden McDanel, Teays Valley, junior (Hilliard Darby)
3. Johnny Slaper, St. Edward, sophomore (Perrysburg)
4. Jonathon Sanchez, Cincinnati Moeller, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
5. Brentan Simmerman, Little Miami, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
6. Gunnar Pool, Centerville, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
7. Coen Grimm, Wadsworth, junior (North Canton)

8. Domonic Konopka, Medina Highland, senior (North Canton)
9. Payton Lupton, Northmont, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
10. Kamarrei Harden, Cincinnati Northwest, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
11. Gavin Beasley, North Olmsted, junior (Perrysburg)
12. Trent Thomas, Bedford, junior (Perrysburg)
13. Will Edmondson, Stow, senior (North Canton)
14. Shawn Earle, Brecksville, senior (North Canton)
15. Tavier Lugo-Flowers, Princeton, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
16. Ben Bickerstaff, Marysville, senior (Hilliard Darby)

HD – Shumate, McDanel, Bickerstaff, Ajay Locke (Lancaster, senior); Zach Leonard (Olentangy Orange, senior)

KF – Sanchez, Simmerman, Pool, Lupton; Harden, Lugo-Flowers

NC – Grimm, Konopka, Edmonson, Earle; Ricky Legg (Kent Roosevelt, senior)

PBG – Slaper, Beasley, Thomas, Dean Hetrick (Fremont Ross, senior); Davion Browning (Lima Senior, junior)

If not for the pandemic-imposed cancellation of the 2020 state tournament, we would be getting ready to celebrate the four-time state champion whose path started at the highest weight class. The current most advanced weight class mark is from Chris Phillips, who won state titles from 2008 through 2011, starting at 171 as a freshman. None the less, Shumate is bound for Ohio State as part of that No. 1 overall recruiting class – joined by Geog, Gavin Brown, and Brendan McCrone in-state along with out-of-state hammers in Nick Feldman, Nic Bouzakis, and Jesse Mendez.

A 2019 Walsh Ironman champion, Shumate saw his run at a repeat title ended in a 3-1 semifinal loss to Michigan signee Rylan Rogers; he then lost in the tiebreakers 3-1 to Hayden Walters, a junior from Oregon, in the third-place bout. In more local competition, Shumate has not lost and has not been tested on the way to four tournament titles. His most direct rival for a state title comes from fellow Hilliard Darby district participant McDanel, who was runner-up last year as a sophomore in the weight immediately below; he would go on to win a 16U national freestyle title in the summer (Shumate was a Junior runner-up to Fishback in the weight above). On the season, McDanel missed Ironman placement by one match before winning titles at Watkins Memorial and Barnesville. Only one other ranked wrestler joins them at Hilliard Darby, returning state qualifier Bickerstaff, who missed placement by one match at SWOWCA before taking first at Dublin Scioto and fifth at Maumee Bay.

Two other returning state placers are in this weight class, the sophomore Slaper and the senior Sanchez. Slaper was a sixth at 220 last year as a freshman, but saw his season start late due to being part of the state football title; he did go 1-2 at the Powerade in his debut competition. Only two other ranked wrestlers join him at Perrysburg, a pair of juniors in Beasley and Thomas. Beasley was champion at Lorain and Hoban, while returning state alternate Thomas was runner-up to Sanchez at Orange (6-4) and Beasley at Hoban (3-2) along with winning three tournament titles. It should be noted returning state qualifier Andrew Liber (Toledo St. Francis, junior) is ineligible for post-season due to his transfer from Sylvania Northview.

Sanchez is the lead figure at a Kettering Fairmont district that features six ranked wrestlers in total. His season includes runner-up finishes at SWOWCA and Perrysburg, titles at CIT and Orange, along with a 2-2 run at the Powerade. Simmerman was a state alternate last year as a sophomore, and started this season at 215 where he was champion at Mt. Vernon and fifth at SWOWCA; in this weight class he was

third at Perrysburg (3-1 loss to Sanchez) before taking titles at Western Brown, Washington C.H., and New Lexington. Fellow junior Pool qualified for state last year, and has a runner-up finish at Ashland along with a fourth at Perrysburg on the resume this season.

Fellow junior Lupton has titles at four tournaments, including an 11-9 finals victory over Lykins at GMVWA before a runner-up finish at Western Brown; the senior Harden was champion at Sycamore and third at SWOCA; while fellow senior Lugo-Flowers was seventh at SWOWCA and first at GMC.

Rounding things out is another jumbled mess of four ranked wrestlers at North Canton with little to separate them. The junior Grimm leads the group with a title at Wadsworth and third place finish at Suburban League notably on the resume; the senior Konopka won a state match last year, but had an absolutely poor day at the Suburban League in finishing seventh, though he avenged one of the two losses at that event the next week (Earle); he also was fifth at Perrysburg, third at Maumee Bay, and runner-up at West Holmes. Fellow senior Edmonson, a returning district placer, was runner-up at Solon, third at Boardman, fifth at the Hephner, and fourth in the Suburban League; while another senior in Earle was third at Ashland, seventh at Boardman, and runner-up at the Suburban League.

215 pounds

1. Logan Shephard, Massillon Perry, senior (North Canton)
2. Dylan Russo, Olentangy Liberty, junior (Hilliard Darby)
3. Max Vanadia, Brecksville, junior (North Canton)
4. Matthew Howard, Dublin Scioto, senior (Hilliard Darby)
5. Ty Cobb, Oregon Clay, senior (Perrysburg)
6. Zach Delsanter, St. Edward, junior (Perrysburg)
7. Myles Johnson, Springboro, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
8. Lukas Stiles, Medina Highland, junior (North Canton)
9. Roosevelt Andrews, Barberton, junior (North Canton)
10. Wyatt Walker, Trenton Edgewood, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
11. C.J. Crawford, Beavercreek, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
12. Cole Dickerson, Lancaster, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
13. Jacob Mullens, Westland, senior (Hilliard Darby)
14. Laveall Trimble, Cincinnati St. Xavier, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
15. Jamell Smith, Xenia, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
16. Maverick Blackburn, Wadsworth, junior (North Canton)
17. Gage Yackee, Toledo St. John's, sophomore (Perrysburg)

HD – Russo, Howard, Dickerson, Mullens; Connor Garren (Olentangy Orange, junior)

KF – Johnson, Walker, Crawford, Trimble; Smith, Will Adkins (Cincinnati Moeller, freshman)

NC – Shephard, Vanadia, Stiles, Andrews; Blackburn

PBG – Cobb, Delsanter, Yackee, Andrew Oster (North Royalton, senior); Mack Keenan (Westlake, senior)

Heading into the state tournament at 220 pounds last year, there was a clear favorite. It was Ben Vanadia of Brecksville, the runner-up in 2019 at 182, who was undefeated for the season and off to Purdue. However, during the week of practice, he re-aggravated an injury, which took him off the state tournament bracket. As a result, it was a wide-open tournament, though there was a clear favorite in the junior Shephard; while Russo was coming off a relatively unexpected district finals loss to Jake Nelson.

However, that Sunday morning saw Russo beat Shephard 5-3 in overtime in the state semifinal. With the top half of the bracket having absolutely broken, Russo would then beat Fairfield's Brandon Smith 3-2 to win the state title. Since then, if you look at the relative results between Shephard and Russo, that state semifinal result would be a shock to the system; Shephard was an All-American in Junior freestyle, and then runner-up at Super 32 and Ironman, while Russo was a DNP in all three events. Then at Wadsworth, Shephard beat Snider in OT and Neves 3-2 on the way to be tournament OW, while Russo lost to both wrestlers to take fourth.

All that being said, these two still sit a cut above the rest of the field. Shephard exits district at North Canton, where there are four additional wrestlers seeking state tournament spots. It's a group led by returning state placer Vanadia, who was a U16 national freestyle All-American; he placed first at SWOWCA and Boardman, was runner-up at Ashland and Suburban League, while going 1-2 at Ironman. The junior Stiles has been a district semifinalist each of the last two years, but has gone 0-4 on Saturday morning so he is seeking a state tournament debut; this season includes titles at Perrysburg and West Holmes sandwiched around a third at Maumee Bay. Fellow junior Andrews has tournament titles at the Gorman and Suburban League to his credit this season; while another junior Blackburn was third at North Canton down at 195 before taking second at West Salem Northwestern, fifth at Wadsworth, and third in the Suburban League at this weight.

Three ranked wrestlers join Russo at Hilliard Darby, including the senior Howard who has had some excellent moments this season, mostly coming at Dublin Scioto when he beat Shulaw 9-3 and Cobb 6-4 to win the tournament title and OW honors. However, he also was sixth at North Canton and third at Marion Harding, while losing to Shepherd in the final at Delaware Hayes. The sophomore Dickerson was champion at Olentangy before taking runner-up honors at Olentangy Liberty and New Lexington; while the senior Mullens was state alternate last year, and this season was fourth at Mt. Vernon, seventh at the Gorman, and champion at Licking Hts.

There are but three ranked wrestlers at Perrysburg, led by three-time state qualifier Cobb, who placed eighth last year after losing 5-1 to Russo in the quarters and Slaper in the consolation quarters. This season he was first at Solon then third at Ashland before taking second at Dublin Scioto and Maumee Bay. The junior Delsanter was 1-2 at the Ironman but Division III state placer Ryder before missing placement at the Powerade by one match; he lost 5-2 to Vanadia in the state duals final. The sophomore Yackee was runner-up at Toledo St. John's, champion at Findlay, and third at Perrysburg.

Rounding it out is a group of five ranked wrestlers at Kettering Fairmont, though there is the possibility of returning state qualifier Johnson ending up at 190. The junior was one match away from Super 32 placement at 220, and has spent the vast majority of the season in this weight class where he was runner-up at GMVWA, fourth at Maumee Bay, along with champion at Beavercreek at Watkins Memorial. The sophomore Walker was champion at Edgewood and Western Brown sandwiched around at third at SWOWCA; fellow sophomore Crawford won a state tournament bout last year, but this year was fourth at SWOWCA before going 2-2 at Beavercreek. The senior Trimble started the year at 285 where he was runner-up at Olentangy and seventh at SWOWCA before dropping into this weight to win the CIT; while the junior Smith was third at Edgewood and GMVWA, champion at Xenia and Troy, as well as second at Western Brown.

285 pounds

1. Aidan Fockler, Massillon Perry, sophomore (North Canton)
2. Aaron Ries, Wadsworth, sophomore (North Canton)

3. Joshua Padilla, Huber Hts. Wayne, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
4. Ethan Green, Fremont Ross, senior (Perrysburg)
5. Joey Thurston, Teays Valley, junior (Hilliard Darby)
6. Michael Kilbane, St. Edward, junior (Perrysburg)
7. Maliek Williams, Brush, senior (North Canton)
8. Brady Sullivan, North Canton Hoover, sophomore (North Canton)
9. Evan Sevastos, Brunswick, senior (Perrysburg)
10. Robert Snyder, Hilliard Bradley, junior (Hilliard Darby)
11. Riley Ucker, Dublin Coffman, senior (Hilliard Darby)
12. Radical Rothermel, Trenton Edgewood, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
13. Makarrie Harden, Cincinnati Northwest, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
14. Logan Moody, Toledo Whitmer, senior (Perrysburg)
15. Skyler Horn, Mason, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
16. Lucas Stuerenberg, Cincinnati Moeller, freshman (Kettering Fairmont)

HD – Thurston, Snyder, Ucker, Tyler O’Reilly (Westerville South, senior); Tim Lewellen (Lancaster, senior)

KF – Padialla, Rothermel, Harden, Horn; Stuerenberg

NC – Fockler, Ries, Williams, Sullivan; Joey Scally (Medina Highland, senior)

PBG – Green, Kilbane, Sevastos, Moody; Tommy Ling (Anthony Wayne, junior)

Last year with a 9-4 semifinal victory over Ethan Green, Fockler became the first freshman to ever make the state finals match at heavyweight. He would then lose 7-1 in the final to Bradley Weaver of the host school, Hilliard Darby, who is now playing defensive line at Ohio University. In the off-season, Fockler would earn All-American honors at the 16U freestyle nationals and place at the Super 32 Challenge.

All that has led to a good, but not overwhelmingly great, sophomore season-to-date. Fockler was eighth at the Ironman and then missed placing by a match at the Beast. He lost in overtime to Ries in the semis at Wadsworth before taking third, but would then avenge that loss with a pin late in the third period of their dual meet, and won the title at Delaware Hayes. It’s still the resume of a state title favorite, but a state weight that will be tightly contested.

Fockler and Ries will most likely get a rubber match at the North Canton district, where two other ranked wrestlers will join them, along with two-time state alternate Scally. For the season Ries missed placement at the Ironman and Powerade by one match (picking up a win over state qualifier Thurston at Ironman); he also was third at North Canton losing by pin in the tiebreaker to Brazek, runner-up at Wadsworth, and champion in the Suburban League. The senior Williams was a district placer last year in this weight class, and this year was champ at Riverside before taking fourth at North Canton; while the sophomore Sullivan was sixth at North Canton, before winning titles at Ashland and Orange.

Two wrestlers whose futures clearly lie along the offensive line are the next ranked wrestlers behind Fockler and Ries. The junior Padilla placed eighth at 285 last year, and has committed to be an interior offensive lineman at Ohio State; while the senior Green was third in this weight class last year, and has signed to be an offensive tackle at Cincinnati.

Padilla anchors a field at Kettering Fairmont that includes four other ranked wrestlers. Padilla was champion at SWOWCA this season. Rothermel was a quarterfinalist last year at state, but lost to Padilla in the match to place; this season includes a title at Edgewood before placing fourth at SWOWCA and second at Western Brown. Fellow senior Harden went two-and-out at 195 last year, while this year

includes a fifth at SWOWCA and title at Sycamore; fellow senior Horn went two-and-out in this state weight, and was fourth at GMVWA before winning three tournaments; while the freshman Stuerenberg was fifth at SWOWCA, sixth at Perrysburg, and runner-up at CIT and Orange.

Green is joined by three other ranked wrestlers, and an additional returning state qualifier in Ling. It seems that Green has been in-and-out of the lineup with football obligations being balanced; his first competition came at the Edison Holiday where he took a surprising third before then taking first at Clyde in January. The junior Kilbane is also a star on the football field, and his college plans most likely involve playing on the defensive line for an FBS program; he picked up two big wins in the Eagles dual meet trip to Michigan. Sevastos won a state bout in this weight class last year as a junior, and this year has titles at Solon and North Coast to his credit; while fellow senior Moody was a district placer last year, and this year was third at Ashland and Maumee Bay along with taking seventh at Perrysburg.

It's three ranked wrestlers at Hilliard Darby, led by returning state qualifier Thurston, who upset Padilla in the first round before losing to Jake Powell and Aeden Begue to miss out on state placement. The junior went 2-2 at the Ironman, but has since won titles at Barnesville and Watkins Memorial. Fellow junior Snyder was a district place last year, and was champion at Kettering Fairmont before taking second at GMVWA and Watkins Memorial. Round it out is three-time state qualifier Ucker, who placed at the Super 32 this fall but then followed it up with going 1-2 at the Ironman (including a loss to Moody); other results include a title at Mt. Vernon and Licking Hts to go with runner-up finishes at Ashland and Delaware Hayes.

Team

1. St. Edward (Perrysburg)
2. Perrysburg (Perrysburg)
3. Dublin Coffman (Hilliard Darby)
4. Wadsworth (North Canton)
5. Elyria (Perrysburg)
6. Brecksville (North Canton)
7. Massillon Perry (North Canton)
8. Medina Highland (North Canton)
9. Teays Valley (Hilliard Darby)
10. Cincinnati LaSalle (Kettering Fairmont)
11. Cincinnati Moeller (Kettering Fairmont)
12. Dublin Scioto (Hilliard Darby)

DIVISION TWO

106 pounds

1. Beric Jordan, St. Paris Graham, sophomore (Wilmington)
2. Javaan Yarbrough, Copley, sophomore (Perry)
3. Jacob Ohl, Ontario, sophomore (Norwalk)
4. Colyn Limbert, Medina Buckeye, sophomore (Norwalk)
5. Johnny Green, Aurora, freshman (Perry)
6. Brady Smith, West Holmes, senior (Gallia)
7. Tate Hisey, St. Mary's Memorial, freshman (Norwalk)
8. Logan Dean, Bethel-Tate, sophomore (Wilmington)
9. Riley Rowan, Perry, sophomore (Perry)
10. Parker Pikor, Lake Catholic, sophomore (Perry)
11. Lacy Harvey, Louisville, senior (Perry)
12. Zavian LaFountain, Wauseon, freshman (Norwalk)
13. Owen Nelson, CVCA, junior (Perry)
14. Ethan Burkhart, New Lexington, junior (Gallia)
15. Christian Osborne, Akron SVSM, sophomore (Perry)
16. Mark Mueller, Minerva, sophomore (Gallia)

GAL – Smith, Burkhart, Mueller, Dane Fawcett (Claymont, freshman); Landon Jenkins (Carrollton, sophomore)

NOR – Ohl, Limbert, Hisey, LaFountain; Alex Gonzales (Napoleon, sophomore)

PER – Yarbrough, Green, Rowan, Pikor; Harvey, Nelson, Osborne

WIL – Jordan, Dean, Jordan Ross (Hamilton Ross, junior), Mason Kelsch (Norwood, sophomore); Mason Hornfeck (Licking Valley, freshman)

After the 2018 state tournament, Jeff Jordan stepped down as head coach at Graham. His Falcons had amassed more than 200 points in four straight state tournaments, and his teams won state titles in all 17 years of his reign as head coach (scoring more than 200 points on nine occasions). The first year of the post-Jordan era was a state title with only 123.5 points, and the following year was the 2020 cancellation when Graham was not favored to win the individual state tournament.

2021 saw a return to prominence for the Falcons, as they put five in the finals (three champs) and 12 on the podium on the way to 181.5 points, which was an almost 90-point margin on second place Louisville. One of the anchor figures for this “rebirth” was Beric Jordan, state champion at 106 pounds as a freshman, absolutely no relation to Jim or Jeff. The nation’s No. 1 ranked wrestler in this weight class is prohibitively favored to repeat as state champion, and is one of four projected state champions for Graham in this report.

The favorite to finish second place, should the bracket permit, is the sophomore Yarbrough. He finished fifth in this weight as an extraordinarily undersized competitor, so much in fact that he was a 16U nationals double finalist at 88 pounds during the summer (freestyle champion, Greco-Roman runner-up). Want the gap between first and second? Yarbrough lost by 17-2 technical fall to Jordan in the quarters of the Walsh Ironman, and then was out of the tournament when he missed the second day weigh-in; since then, he was champion at the Hephner and runner-up at the Suburban League.

Six other ranked wrestlers join Yarbrough at Perry for the district tournament, in what is one of the more congested weight classes for any district tournament statewide. The freshman Green was runner-up at OAC junior high state in the 102-pound class last year; he was first at Solon and Perrysburg, second at Boardman, third at the Suburban League, and 2-2 at the Ironman (second loss 11-6 to Limbert). Rowan was state alternate last year as a freshman at 113, with runner-up finish at North Coast, fourth at Edison Holiday, and a CVC title on the resume this year. Fellow sophomore Pikor was runner-up at Solon and CIT, champion at Riverside, seventh at Hoover, and fifth at Edison; the senior Harvey was fourth at North Canton, Maumee Bay, and Hephner before winning the EOWL; the junior Nelson was runner-up at North Canton and Wadsworth, third at Ashland, and seventh at Maumee Bay; while the sophomore Osborne was fifth at Boardman in this weight after spending the first half-plus of the season at 113.

There's just one other ranked wrestler at Wilmington outside of Jordan, and that's the sophomore Dean, who was third at SWOWCA and champion at Washington C.H.

Once past Jordan and Yarbrough, the next two ranked wrestlers are the sophomores Ohl and Limbert, who met in the state alternate match last year at Ontario, with Ohl winning on that occasion. They are joined by two other ranked wrestlers at that district this year. On the season, Ohl was at 113 when he won titles at Kenston and the Gorman, while he won in this weight at Findlay; Limbert missed placement at the Ironman by one match despite beating both Evans and Green in consolation, since then has titles at the Gorman and West Holmes (beating state qualifier Smith in that final). The freshman Hisey has titles at Marion Harding and Lima Senior on the season, along with a dual meet win by fall over fellow freshman LaFountain; whose season resume includes a third at Defiance, along with sixth-place finishes at Perrysburg and Maumee Bay.

The senior Smith, a returning state qualifier, leads a group of three ranked wrestlers at Gallia. For the season Smith has titles at Cambridge and Smithville to go with the runner-up finish at West Holmes; the junior Burkhart was state alternate in this district weight last year, and has titles in three tournament at the weight class this season along with an eighth at North Canton up one weight class; while the sophomore Mueller was runner-up at Cambridge and champ at Marengo Highland before missing placement at North Canton by one match.

113 pounds

1. Brogan Tucker, St. Paris Graham, freshman (Wilmington)
2. Codie Cuerbo, Aurora, senior (Perry)
3. Billy Smith, Sandusky Perkins, senior (Norwalk)
4. Tyler Hisey, St. Mary's Memorial, senior (Norwalk)
5. Joey Romano, Lake Catholic, sophomore (Perry)
6. Collin Twigg, Wauseon, junior (Norwalk)
7. Kolten Barker, Louisville, sophomore (Perry)
8. Braden Hahlen, CVCA, junior (Perry)
9. Mason Taylor, West Holmes, junior (Gallia)
10. Gannon Kazmirski, St. Clairsville, senior (Gallia)
11. Connor Norris, Minerva, sophomore (Gallia)
12. Brady Fisher, London, senior (Wilmington)
13. Isaac Meese, Indian Valley, sophomore (Gallia)
14. Mason Ducat, Defiance, freshman (Norwalk)
15. A.J. Kimble, Licking Valley, senior (Wilmington)
16. Jovanni Greco, Hamilton Ross, sophomore (Wilmington)

GAL – Taylor, Kazmirski, Norris, Meese; Kail Snair (Carrollton, sophomore)
NOR – Smith, Hisey, Twigg, Ducat; Korbyn Jones (Ashland, junior)
PER – Cuerbo, Romano, Barker, Hahlen; Dominic Ciolli (Perry, junior)
WIL – Turcker, Fisher, Kimble, Greco; Blake Niehaus (Batavia, senior)

After Cuerbo lost by one point to Jordan via a third-period comeback, and then earned All-American honors in Junior freestyle, most reasonable people assumed that the one thing standing in the way of a state title for the Pitt signee was the presence of Beric Jordan. Once Jordan cleared down to 106, it was expected Cuerbo would clear to state gold before graduating. However, fast forward to the Ironman, and a couple of wrestlers put their hands up to say, “not so fast my friend”.

Even though he did not place at the tournament, the freshman Tucker probably made the stronger statement. He missed placement by one match, losing 1-0 to a nationally ranked Rivera from Florida on the back side after beating Martino from Idaho (this year’s Doc Buchanan champion); while on the front side, he pinned returning state medalist Smith. Since then, Tucker won the Carnahan with wins over projected Michigan and Illinois state champions as well as earning titles at GMVWA and Wadsworth (though he lost to Huhn 8-5 in that tournament).

The senior Smith placed seventh at state last year, while also losing to Cuerbo in the NHSCA Junior Nationals final. He has titles in four tournaments this year to go with his sixth place Ironman finish, which was keyed by a 4-3 win over Cuerbo in the consolation match-to-place, along with a 17-4 major decision over Richter in the immediately following match

Cuerbo was champ at Solon before missing out on Ironman placement. Since then, he lost 8-2 against Blaze in the Perrysburg final before winning titles at Boardman and the Suburban League; he also lost 3-1 to Tucker in overtime. At this time, the weight is ordinaly ranked: Tucker, Cuerbo, Smith.

The three ranked wrestlers that join Cuerbo at Perry are all projected as placers, and each made the state tournament last year at 106. The sophomore Romano lost by fall to Cuerbo in the final at Solon before winning titles at North Canton and CIT and taking second at the Edison Holiday in this weight class; fellow sophomore Barker placed fourth at North Canton and fifth at Maumee Bay before taking first at the Hephner and EOWL; while the junior Hahlen was third at North Canton, fourth at Ashland, sixth at Maumee Bay, and fifth at Wadsworth.

A pair of returning state medalists join Smith in the field at Norwalk. The senior Hisey lost to Cuerbo in a district final last year (Aurora changed district sites this year), while beating Twigg 9-2 in the consolation semifinal on the way to a third-place finish at state. Like last year, Hisey has spent much of the season up one weight class, where he has taken gold at Marion Harding and Lima Senior in the 120-pound class. The junior Twigg was sixth at state last year, and this year was first at Defiance before taking third at Perrysburg and fourth at Maumee Bay. The other ranked wrestler is the freshman Ducat, who was third at Defiance and sixth at Perrysburg.

Tucker is joined by three ranked wrestlers at Wilmington, the seniors Fisher and Kimble both returning state qualifiers. Fisher was runner-up at Marion Harding to Smith before winning titles at Licking Hts, Miami Trace, and Marion Pleasant; while Kimble has a pair of tournament titles to go with a third at Western Brown and runner-up finishes at Jonathan Alder and New Lexington. The sophomore Greco

was a district placer last year, and this year took third at SWOWCA along with winning titles at Franklin (up one weight) and Eaton.

Four ranked wrestlers also exit from Gallia, all with state experience, led by returning state eighth place finisher Taylor. The junior was third at Cambridge up one weight opening weekend before winning the title at Smithville, taking seventh at North Canton, and second at West Holmes; the senior Kazmirski was fifth at North Canton before winning titles at the OVAC and New Lexington; the sophomore Norris was first at Cambridge and Marengo Highland before taking sixth at North Canton; while fellow sophomore Meese was second at Cambridge and first at Riverside up two weight classes before certifying down into this weight class to take third at the Gorman.

120 pounds

1. Brendan McCrone, Lake Catholic, senior (Perry)
2. Anthony Perez, CVCA, junior (Perry)
3. Reuben Pina-Lorenzana, Firelands, junior (Perry)
4. Zach Bellissimo, Perry, senior (Perry)
5. Malachi O'Leary, Wyoming, senior (Wilmington)
6. Brody Saccoccia, Steubenville, freshman (Gallia)
7. Alexander Crane, Sheridan, senior (Sheridan)
8. Colt Ryan, St. Paris Graham, junior (Wilmington)
9. Trevor Hisey, St. Mary's Memorial, senior (Norwalk)
10. Aiden King, Bishop Hartley, freshman (Wilmington)
11. Roman Parobek, Ashland, junior (Norwalk)
12. Levi Pidgeon, Carrollton, sophomore (Gallia)
13. Leroy Steagal, Indian Valley, sophomore (Gallia)
14. Xavier Pierce, Jonathan Alder, junior (Wilmington)
15. Jimmy Lalezas, Cleves Taylor, junior (Wilmington)
16. Wyatt Nemitz, Sandusky Perkins, sophomore (Norwalk)

GAL – Saccoccia, Crane, Pidgeon, Steagal; Andrew Strader (Minerva, junior)

NOR – Hisey, Parobek, Nemitz, C.J. Fisher (Clyde, sophomore); Mike Thomas (Mansfield Madison, sophomore)

PER – McCrone, Perez, Pina-Lorenzana, Bellissimo; Michael Dorris (West Branch, sophomore)

WIL – O'Leary, Ryan, King, Pierce; Lalezas

After falling short via 5-3 decision loss to Dierre Clayton, two-time state placer and three-time state qualifier McCrone needed a signature moment for his high school career. After an opening weekend title at Solon, it came in a shining delight for the Ohio State signee when he placed seventh at the Walsh Ironman. The result was keyed by a front side win over Jaxon Joy and a match-to-place victory over Avalos. Since then, he was runner-up at North Canton, having his win over Joy flipped in a 3-2 finals loss, and champion at CIT.

Three of the four other returning state medalists in this weight class also exit the Perry district along with McCrone. Perez placed fifth in this weight class last year as a sophomore, but missed the first two months of the season before coming back here in February; the junior Pina-Lorenzana was runner-up at Findlay, third at the Edison Holiday, fourth at Perrysburg, and seventh at Maumee Bay; while the senior Bellissimo was CVC champion, missed placing at Maumee Bay by a match, and prior to that was runner-up in three events (North Coast, Edison Holiday, and Perry Pin City).

The other returning state medalist is O'Leary, sixth at 113 last year as a junior. This season he has titles at Sycamore and Miami Trace, along with taking fifth at SWOWCA (up one weight class) and Perrysburg. Four other ranked wrestlers join him at the Wilmington district, led by Ryan, who was a district placer two years ago in Division I while competing for Hilliard Darby. Now at Graham, the junior Ryan won three matches at the Ironman, took fifth at the Carnahan, and then was third at GMVWA and seventh at Wadsworth. The freshman King has titles at Olentangy Liberty and Jonathan Alder, a runner-up at Watkins Memorial, third place at CIT, and fourth place at Edison Holiday. Pierce was a state alternate last year as a sophomore, and this season was fourth at Olentangy Liberty, seventh at GMVWA, runner-up at Jonathan Alder, and champ at Marion Pleasant. Finally, the junior Lalezas was sixth at SWOWCA in this weight class while making the finals in three tournaments up one weight.

It's four ranked wrestlers at Gallia, including two with a state tournament win in Crane and Pidgeon. The senior Crane has titles in five tournaments this season, most notably at Claymont (over Pidgeon) and Watkins Memorial (over King), while the sophomore Pidgeon placed sixth at North Canton and second at Claymont. Leading the way at this district is the freshman Saccocia, who has dual meet wins over both Crane and Pidgeon to go with an OVAC title, runner-up finish at Union Local, and fourth place at North Canton. Finally, the sophomore Steagal is a returning state alternate, he has titles at Cambridge and Riverside to go with a runner-up at the Gorman.

Wrapping things up is the three ranked wrestlers at Norwalk, led by 2020 state qualifier Hisey, who was a state alternate last year. The senior has competed most of this year up at 126, but should be dropping here for the post-season; the resume includes a third at Marion Harding and a title at Lima Senior. The junior Parobek placed sixth at Ashland, won the Gorman, and was fifth at Maumee Bay; while the sophomore Nemitz was fourth at Findlay, second at Marion Harding and West Holmes, to go with a third at Perry Pin City.

126 pounds

1. Matt Ellis, Waynesville, senior (Wilmington)
2. Brandon Sauter, Batavia, senior (Wilmington)
3. Cameron Deiter, Bowling Green, senior (Norwalk)
4. Te'Andre Allen, Orange, senior (Perry)
5. Dylan Rhoads, Louisville, sophomore (Perry)
6. Cooper Rathburn, Bishop Hartley, sophomore (Wilmington)
7. Milan Parobek, Ashland, junior (Norwalk)
8. Bryce Kohler, St. Paris Graham, freshman (Wilmington)
9. Bryce Skinner, Akron SVSM, sophomore (Perry)
10. Roman Jones, Dayton C-J, senior (Wilmington)
11. Josh Carman, Carrollton, sophomore (Gallia)
12. Zach Lopez, Columbus DeSales, sophomore (Wilmington)
13. Colton Smitley, Maysville, senior (Gallia)
14. Kaden McGohan, Aurora, senior (Perry)
15. Branton Dawes, Washington C.H., senior (Gallia)
16. Riley Klishenski, Ontario, senior (Norwalk)
17. Jesse Badiu, Medina Buckeye, junior (Norwalk)

GAL – Carman, Smitley, Dawes, Cal Beadling (Steubenville, sophomore); Hunter Albright (Indian Valley, senior)

NOR – Deiter, Parobek, Klishenski, Badiu; Rubyn Semedo (Cleveland C.C., senior)

PER – Allen, Rhoads, Skinner, McGohan; Adam Heckman (Warren Howland, sophomore), Tyler Scharrer (Canfield, freshman)

WIL – Ellis, Sauter, Rathburn, Kohler; Jones, Lopez

When looking at this field compared to the ones immediately before and after it in weight class order, there is the clear lack of an anchor figure. Things do appear to be wide open, especially when you look at 120 with returning runner-up McCrone and 132 with the pair of returning runners-up in Castro and Stevens (plus McClelland returning home from Lake Highland Prep, Fla.). Five wrestlers in this field are returning state medalists, while another five have qualified for a state tournament.

The pick here, though it's made with next to zero confidence, is Ellis who placed seventh as a freshman for Legacy Christian in 2019 before qualifying there in 2020. Last season he came into state having lost only to Gessler in the district final, but a 9-7 opening round loss to Allen and a forfeit ended his state tournament way short of aspirations. This season has included three tournament titles up at 132, along with a GMVWA title in this weight class. He's joined by five other ranked wrestlers, including a pair of returning state medalists in district competition at Wilmington.

Sauter has twice placed at state, and is a three-time qualifier; he is also the highest returning state placer in this field, taking third last year at 120 pounds. His season to date includes titles at Dayton Christian and Miami Trace. Rathburn placed seventh last year as a freshman, and was a semifinalist and Olentangy Liberty this year before defaulting then taking a title at Watkins Memorial in late January. The freshman Kohler was runner-up at GMVWA, along with taking third at the Carnahan and Wadsworth; Jones qualified for state two years ago as a sophomore before not really participating last year, and this year features a runner-up finish at Dayton Christian before taking sixth at GMVWA; while Lopez was a district placer in this weight last year as a freshman, and his current season features three tournament titles to go with a runner-up finish and Dublin Scioto and fifth at New Lexington.

Four ranked wrestlers feature among the field at Norwalk, led by returning state fourth Deiter, who placed third at Perrysburg this season losing just 1-0 to D'Alessandro in the semifinal. The junior Parobek missed top six at Ashland by one match before taking second at the Gorman and third at Maumee Bay; the freshman Klishenski took third at Kenston and the Gorman, while finishing second at Kenston; and the junior Badiu was fourth at the Gorman, third at Claymont, and second at West Holmes.

The other returning state placer in this weight class is the senior Allen, seventh in this class last year. He went 1-2 at the Ironman, but has seemingly been missing from competition for a while. Three additional ranked wrestlers feature in the field at Perry, along with Allen. Rhoads missed out on state by one match last year as a freshman at 106 when he was upset by Ty Stricko in the match-to-go; this season includes going 2-2 at Ironman (beat DI state placer Curtis), losing two matches by a point to miss on placing at North Canton, second place at Maumee Bay, third place at the Hephner, and a title at the EOWL. The junior Skinner was a state alternate in this weight last year, while this season includes placing third at North Canton; and the senior McGohan placed fourth at Solon, was a semifinalist at North Coast, along with taking second at Boardman.

Closing things out are a trio of ranked wrestlers at Gallia, all of whom have state tournament appearances on their account. Carman placed fourth at 113 last year as a freshman. This season includes titles at Licking Valley and Claymont, along with placing sixth at North Canton and third at West Holmes. The senior Smitley qualified for state in 2020 before missing out by one match last year, and this year

has placed third at Licking Valley, second at Claymont and New Lexington, along with first at Heath; while Dawes qualified in 2019 and was a district placer last year with three tournament titles on the resume this year, as well as a third at Cambridge and seventh at GMVWA.

132 pounds

1. Pito Castro, Louisville, senior (Perry)
2. David McClelland, Columbus DeSales, junior (Wilmington)
3. Alijah Stevens, Licking Valley, senior (Wilmington)
4. Zane Van Voorhis, Copley, senior (Perry)
5. Jaymin Salsberry, Beaver Local, senior (Gallia)
6. Donovan Paes, Streetsboro, junior (Norwalk)
7. Landon Engle, Celina, senior (Norwalk)
8. Brock Christian, Perry, junior (Perry)
9. William Stanley, Clyde, freshman (Norwalk)
10. Logan Cravatas, Medina Buckeye, senior (Norwalk)
11. Caleb Kennington, Kenton Ridge, senior (Wilmington)
12. Ky Emmerson, Caledonia River Valley, senior (Wilmington)
13. Carson Hibbs, Wilmington, junior (Wilmington)
14. Zaden Torres, Wauseon, junior (Norwalk)
15. Shane Cheatham, Aurora, junior (Perry)
16. Braden Dunlap, Akron SVSM, freshman (Perry)

GAL – Salsberry, Coltyn Reedy (Sheridan, freshman), Pedro Garcia (Dover, senior), Quake Beatty (Indian Valley, sophomore); Jesse Parrish (Claymont, junior)

NOR – Paes, Engle, Stanley, Cravatas; Torres

PER – Castro, Van Voorhis, Christian, Cheatham; Dunlap

WIL – McClelland, Stevens, Kennington, Emmerson; Hibbs

Wrestlers from Copley have been at the bane of Pito Castro's existence throughout his high school career. Going back to his freshman year at Brecksville, it was a loss to Van Voorhis that denied Castro a state tournament berth at 106 pounds (Van Voorhis would go on to earn a 5th place podium finish). After defeating Kyren Butler in what was viewed at the time as an upset by 1-0 decision in the final of the 2021 Hephner, Butler would reverse that with a 2-1 tiebreaker victory in the district final and then won the rubber match (the one that truly counted) 5-4 in the tiebreakers in the state final.

This has been a superb senior season for the Kent State signee, and it started at the Ironman where he placed seventh using his staple of winning close matches by being stingy in all positions; the most notable win of which was a consolation victory in overtime over three-time Pennsylvania state placer Brendan Chletsos, a Rutgers signee. Since then, he has gone all wins, including titles at North Canton (1-0 via second period rideout over state champ Wilson), Maumee Bay, Hephner, and EOWL.

Four other ranked wrestlers feature in this weight class at Perry, including a pair of returning state placers. One of them is Van Voorhis, now a two-time state placer; his season started by going 3-2 at the Ironman, before placing third at the Hephner and second at Suburban League. The other is the junior Christian who was champ at North Coast, runner-up at Perry Pin City and CVCA, along with a semifinalist at Maumee Bay. The junior Cheatham upset Christian during the preliminary stages of North Coast before having to default out, and has also placed fifth at Boardman on the season; while the freshman Dunlap was eighth at North Canton, 2-2 at Powerade, and sixth at Boardman.

The two most direct challengers to Castro both exit the Wilmington district. The junior McClelland was a state runner-up two years ago at Lake Highland Prep before the transition to National Preps and subsequent COVID cancellation denied him a chance at a state level title last year. Returning home, he has three tournament titles (including an 11-2 major decision over Stevens at New Lexington) to go with a runner-up at Dublin Scioto (3-2 loss to Wilson), and falling one short of placement at the Ironman. The senior Stevens was runner-up last year at state keyed by the stunning second period pin over 2019 state champion Garrett Lautzenheiser in the quarterfinal round; this season includes three tournament titles, a third at Western Brown, and a runner-up at New Lexington.

Three other ranked wrestlers are at Wilmington, two with state experience in Kennington and Hibbs. The senior Kennington was seventh at GMVWA, champion at Springfield Northwestern, and runner-up at Jonathan Alder; the junior Hibbs has three tournament runner-up finishes on the season (including a 3-1 loss to Emerson in the Western Brown final) to go with a sixth at GMVWA and title at Bellbrook. Finally, it's the senior Emerson who beat Stevens and Hibbs on the way to a title at Western Brown, and would then lose to Kennington in the semifinal at Jonathan Alder the following week.

The other three wrestlers with a career state tournament appearance will qualify through the Norwalk district. The junior Paes was champion at Portage County, the senior Engle has four tournament titles including a pin over Hibbs in the Edgewood final, while fellow senior Cravatas has titles at the Edison Opener and West Holmes to go with a runner-up finish at the Gorman. Rounding out the ranked lot at this district tournament is the freshman Stanley and returning district placer Torres. Stanley has been up in weight most of the season working around teammate Overmyer; he started at 144 with a title at the Edison Opener and then was runner-up at Marengo Highland before coming down to 138 to win at Clyde in December. The junior Torres placed third at Defiance, but was one match away from a podium at Perrysburg.

The remaining ranked wrestler in this conversation is the senior Salsberry, a returning state alternate, who heads the field at Gallia. On the season, he was runner-up at Cambridge up one weight class before taking third at OVAC and EOWL in this weight.

138 pounds

1. Dominic Hoffarth, Louisville, junior (Perry)
2. Bret Minnick, Tiffin Columbian, senior (Norwalk)
3. Elliot Alessia, Akron SVSM, senior (Perry)
4. Lance Overmyer, Clyde, sophomore (Norwalk)
5. Lawson Grime, Wauseon, senior (Norwalk)
6. Tristin Greene, Keystone, sophomore (Perry)
7. Conner Roback, Licking Valley, senior (Wilmington)
8. Dylan Strouse, West Holmes, senior (Gallia)
9. Jack Sparent, West Geauga, senior (Perry)
10. Tristan Craddock, Cloverleaf, sophomore (Perry)
11. Egidio DiFazio, Dover, junior (Gallia)
12. Mark Emmerling, Beaver Local, senior (Gallia)
13. Domanick Speelman, Carrollton, senior (Gallia)
14. Hayden Hughes, St. Paris Graham, sophomore (Wilmington)
15. Griffin Adkins, Ashland, senior (Norwalk)
16. Thane McCoy, Wilmington, junior (Wilmington)

GAL – Strouse, DiFazio, Emmerling, Speelman; Carter Mottley (Sheridan, senior)
NOR – Minnick, Overmyer, Grime, Adkins; Clay Alley (Bellevue, junior)
PER – Hoffarth, Alessia, Greene, Sparent; Craddock
WIL – Roback, Hughes, McCoy, Nathan Kulbe (Batavia, junior); Aidan Rush (Columbus DeSales, sophomore)

Prior to the pandemic-imposed cancellation of the state tournament, yes that was just two years ago (feels like twenty, I know), Hoffarth was involved in one of the most important matches on that Saturday afternoon at an absolute blood-bath of an Alliance District. In the consolation semifinal at 106, he upset Cuerdo by 3-2 decision, something that at the time was thought to possibly be state title defining – as there was a team race between the Leopards, Greenmen, and Falcons in progress.

Since then, recurring concussion issues cost Hoffarth his sophomore 2020-21 season. Returning to the mat as a junior, it's been more or less all systems at go. His four losses on record are by a combined seven points, the three Ohio opponents are all top six in Division I at the weight class. On the way to runner-up finishes at North Canton and Maumee Bay, he earned victories over the two wrestlers immediately behind his top position; additionally, there are titles at the Hephner and EOWL on this year's resume.

Returning state placer joins Hoffarth at the Perry district, as do three other ranked wrestlers. Alessia's season includes a third-place finish at North Canton and missing placement at the Powerade by one match. Greene was state alternate last year as a freshman, and started his season at 144 where he won three tournaments before finishing third at West Salem Northwestern, while his drop to this weight at West Holmes came in a runner-up finish; the senior Sparent placed eighth at state last year, this year includes titles at Hawken and Kenston; the sophomore Craddock was runner-up at Lorain, champion at the Mike Lewis, and fifth at Wadsworth.

Minnick beat Alessia in the consolation medal match last year at state; this year the senior was champion at the Gorman and fourth at Maumee Bay. Three additional ranked wrestlers exit his district at Norwalk, two of whom have state tournament experience. Grime placed eighth last year as a junior, and has earned fourth-place finishes at Defiance and Perrysburg in the present season; while the senior Adkins missed the podium by one match at Ashland, was runner-up at the Gorman, and eighth at Maumee Bay before a rather unpleasant day at state duals. The other ranked wrestler in this district is the sophomore Overmyer, a state alternate last year, who finished runner-up to open the season at Milan Edison before taking third at Perrysburg with two wins over Grime along the way.

Four ranked wrestlers appear in the field at Gallia, including three with state tournament experience. A fourth has state tournament experience, Cohen Bunting (John Glenn, sophomore), but is not ranked. Leading the group is the senior Strouse, a returning state qualifier, who was third at Cambridge and sixth at North Canton. Next in line is the junior DiFazio, who was champion at Beaver Local and fifth at OVAC. Emmerling seeks a first state podium after three state qualifications so far in his career; this year includes a title at Beaver Local up one weight class before taking sixth at OVAC and second at EOWL. Speelman qualified for state in 2019, but has dropped down to district placement status each of the last two years; he spent most of the year up one weight where he was fourth at North Canton, third at Licking Valley, and champ at Claymont.

Wrapping it up is a group of three ranked wrestlers at Wilmington, led by 2020 state qualifier Roback. The senior has four tournament titles on the season, most notably at Cambridge and Licking Valley to go with a second at Western Brown and third at New Lexington. The sophomore Hughes missed top six at the Carnahan by one match, was third at GMVWA, and eighth at Wadsworth before wins over McCoy and Adkins at state duals. The junior McCoy was a state alternate last year, and this season has three tournament titles to go with a sixth-place finish at GMVWA.

144 pounds

1. Nolan Gessler, St. Paris Graham, senior (Wilmington)
2. Mitchell Younger, Bishop Watterson, freshman (Wilmington)
3. Bo DiJulius, Aurora, senior (Perry)
4. Maddox Simcoe, Tiffin Columbian, junior (Norwalk)
5. Tucker Kaufman, West Holmes, senior (Gallia)
6. Justin Smythe, Bellevue, senior (Norwalk)
7. Weston Melvin, Miami Trace, senior (Gallia)
8. Owen Eagan, Columbus DeSales, junior (Wilmington)
9. Isaiah Armstrong, Tri-Valley, senior (Gallia)
10. Devin Boyd, Licking Valley, junior (Wilmington)
11. C.J. Spencer, Indian Creek, junior (Gallia)
12. Calvin Rowan, Perry, senior (Perry)
13. Tyler Beckley, Indian Valley, junior (Gallia)
14. Dorian Jackson, Beaver Local, senior (Gallia)
15. Gabe Perz, Chardon, junior (Perry)
16. Benicio Torres, Wauseon, sophomore (Norwalk)

GAL – Kaufman, Melvin, Armstrong, Spencer; Beckley, Jackson

NOR – Simcoe, Smythe, Torres, Sam Wegesin (Galion, senior); James Simms (Fostoria, sophomore)

PER – DiJulius, Rowan, Perz, Cade Cass (Cloverleaf, senior); Kyle Biller (Ashtabula Edgewood, senior)

WIL – Gessler, Younger, Eagan, Boyd; Ripley Szanati (Buckeye Valley, junior)

There is a clear two-horse race at the top of this weight class. One of the candidates is a senior at Graham, a returning state champion; the other is a freshman at a program that is going to emerge on the scene as real relevant soon, but not yet. Even if the in-season datapoints create significant reservation, I feel very uncomfortable going against the Graham wrestling, so the pick here is the Graham wrestler in Gessler.

The main flaw on the resume this season for Gessler is at the Ironman, where he went 1-2 with a pair of losses to rather unheralded wrestlers nationally. He did bounce back to win the Carnahan, GMVWA, and Wadsworth tournaments. On the other hand, Younger is without a loss on the season, including wins over state medalists in Moyer (2-1 at Marion Harding up a weight class on the way to a tournament title) and Taylor (4-3 in the CIT final). The wrestlers could end up facing each other two times in the post-season, as each goes through the Wilmington district.

There are two other ranked wrestlers at the site, Central Ohio juniors in Eagan and Boyd. Returning state qualifier Eagan has three tournament titles, including one at New Lexington; along with runner-up finishes at the Edison Holiday and Dublin Scioto. Boyd has three tournament titles, including one at Licking Valley, along with a second at Cambridge, third at Jonathan Alder, and fourth at New Lexington.

In addition to Gessler, there are seven wrestlers with state tournament qualifications in this weight class, and the group accounts for three combined wins. The junior Simcoe takes care of two of them, as he took eighth last year in basically this weight class. He was 1-2 at the Ironman and champion at the Gorman before suffering an early loss at Maumee Bay then having to injury default. Only two wrestlers join Simcoe in the rankings at Norwalk, the first is returning state qualifier Smythe; the senior started his season up at 150 winning at Bellevue then taking third at the Edison Holiday before moving into this weight and taking fourth at Perrysburg. The sophomore Torres took third at Defiance before missing out on placement at both Perrysburg and Maumee Bay.

The remaining state tournament bracket win in this weight class comes from the senior Kaufman, whose season includes a second at North Canton and third at West Holmes. Five wrestlers join him in the rankings at the Gallia district, including state qualifiers Melvin and Beckley. The senior Melvin was champion at Cambridge, Logan Elm, and Miami Trace along with taking second at GMVWA; while the junior Beckley was first at Cambridge and third at Riverside up one weight class before taking runner-up at the Gorman in this weight.

The junior Armstrong and senior Spencer are both returning state alternates. Armstrong was runner-up at North Coast, champ at Coshocton, before taking fourth at GMVWA and Hephner; while Spencer was champ at Barnesville and West Holmes before placing fourth at OVAC and third at Buckeye Local. Fellow senior Jackson was second at Cambridge and fourth at Beaver Local up one weight class before dropping here to take second at OVAC and first at the EOWL.

Three ranked wrestlers headlined by returning state alternate DiJulius feature at the Perry district. His senior season started with a title at Solon before continuing with a third at Perrysburg and runner-up finishes at Boardman and the Suburban League, while picking up a 9-8 dual meet win over Smythe. Fellow senior Rowan won titles at Perry Pin City and CVC while taking fifth at the Edison Holiday; while Cass has titles at Lorain and the Mike Lewis to his credit.

150 pounds

1. Eddie Neitenbach, Medina Buckeye, sophomore (Norwalk)
2. Ethan Turnbaugh, Ontario, senior (Norwalk)
3. Eli Jacks, St. Paris Graham, sophomore (Wilmington)
4. Nic Willingham, Aurora, senior (Perry)
5. Dominic Pattera, Indian Creek, junior (Gallia)
6. Jack Lee, John Glenn, sophomore (Gallia)
7. Caden Stout, St. Clairsville, senior (Gallia)
8. C.J. Poole, Tiffin Columbian, junior (Norwalk)
9. Conner Douglass, Elida, senior (Norwalk)
10. Nicholas Abounader, Benedictine, senior (Norwalk)
11. Oliver Byerly, Jonathan Alder, junior (Wilmington)
12. Alex Pitsch, Lemon Monroe, senior (Wilmington)
13. Zach Myers, Valley View, senior (Wilmington)
14. Braden Rolf, Clinton-Massie, senior (Wilmington)
15. Sam Partain, Chagrin Falls, senior (Perry)
16. Connor Varnes, West Holmes, senior (Gallia)
17. Justin Artino, West Geauga, junior (Perry)

GAL – Pattera, Lee, Stout, Varnes; Charlie Gibbs (New Philadelphia, senior)

NOR – Neitenbach, Turnbaugh, Poole, Douglass; Abounader
PER – Willingham, Partain, Artino, Mason Gruic (Akron SVSM, freshman); Niko Poullas (Canfield, junior)
WIL – Jacks, Byerly, Pitsch, Myers; Rolf

As the freshmen season of 2018-19 ensued with Turnbaugh and Conley in the midst of a two-year rivalry, the trajectory of each came a story to watch. In fact, after the district tournament in 2019, Turnbaugh was the district champ and Conley entered state on the three-line; however, at state Conley would finish fourth while Turnbaugh fell a match short of state placement. The 2020 season saw Turnbaugh lose to Conley in both the sectional and district finals.

Last year Conley won his first state title at 170, while Turnbaugh lost 8-4 to Dylan Dodson in the 160-pound state final. During this senior season, Turnbaugh was champion at Findlay before losing 14-6 to Neitenbach in the final at the Gorman. Both Turnbaugh and Neitenbach will qualify to state through the Norwalk district.

Neitenbach placed fifth at 138 last year as a freshman. His season started off with a title at Milan Edison, then he was 2-2 at the Ironman including a 6-5 loss to Gavin Brown, and has followed that up with titles at the Gorman and West Holmes. Three ranked wrestlers join them at Norwalk. The junior Poole is a returning state qualifier, who finished fourth at both the Gorman and Maumee Bay; the senior Douglass is a returning state alternate with titles at Bellefontaine and Clyde (January) to go with a second at Allen County and third at Defiance; while fellow senior Abounader was a district placer last year, and has four tournament titles to his credit this season.

The sophomore Jacks was closed out of last year's Graham lineup by Nick Moore and Alek Martin, you might have heard of them. This season includes placing fifth at the Carnahan and Wadsworth, a runner-up finish at GMVWA, as well as dual meet victories over state placers in Wyatt Moyer and Willingham. Four additional ranked wrestlers exit the district at Wilmington, including three returning state qualifiers in Byerly, Pitsch, and Rolf.

The junior Byerly was runner-up at Olentangy Liberty to go with titles at Jonathan Alder and Marion Pleasant; I have not seen results for the senior Pitsch season-to-date; while the senior Rolf was runner-up at Logan Elm and Western Brown. Also ranked at the Wilmington district is fellow senior Myers, who has five tournament titles in this weight class including a 9-3 final win over Northmont's state qualifier Moyer at Edgewood.

Two wrestlers with state tournament wins are among the four ranked at Gallia, the junior Pattera and senior Stout. Pattera was runner-up West Holmes to go with titles at Barnesville, the OVAC, and Buckeye Local; while Stout was third at North Canton up a weight before taking second at the OVAC (3-2 to Pattera) and New Lexington (5-4 to Lee). The sophomore Lee is undefeated based on results I've seen, including tournament wins at Hudson and Licking Valley up a weight before winning the Hephner and New Lexington in this weight class. Rounding out the ranked lot is the senior Varnes, who has been at 144 almost all the season, but is blocked for the post-season by Kaufman; he was third at Cambirdge, second at Smithville, and fifth at West Holmes in that weight.

Last of the four districts is the one at Perry, which features three ranked wrestlers led by Willingham, a district champion in 2020 before dropping off to 2-2 at district last year in what was a significant surprise. This season saw a delayed start, with his most notable performance being a runner-up finish at the Suburban League; Willingham also bumped up a weight class to upset state placer Severs 7-3 in the

semifinal round of state duals, but then lost 7-2 to Jacks in the state duals final. The senior Partain is a returning state alternate Partain was fourth at Kenston and CVC champion up one weight class, while taking third at Orange in this weight. Finally, the junior Artino was champion at Hawken and CVC sandwiched by a runner-up finish at Kenston (lost to Strahan at Kenston, flipped it at CVC).

157 pounds

1. Logan Ours, Beaver Local, senior (Gallia)
2. Antwaun Burns, London, senior (Wilmington)
3. Gunner Cramblett, St. Paris Graham, sophomore (Wilmington)
4. Cody Matthews, Marengo Highland, senior (Wilmington)
5. John Metzger, Ashland, junior (Norwalk)
6. Mike Kinzel, Bowling Green, junior (Norwalk)
7. Ashton Smith, Aurora, senior (Perry)
8. Connor Twigg, Wauseon, senior (Norwalk)
9. Brenden Severs, Louisville, senior (Perry)
10. Hank Williams, Bethel-Tate, senior (Wilmington)
11. Michael Eckelberry, Sheridan, sophomore (Gallia)
12. Reese Spencer, Indian Creek, senior (Gallia)
13. Preston DiMarco, Medina Buckeye, senior (Norwalk)
14. Andrew Barford, Columbus DeSales, freshman (Wilmington)
15. Jaden King, Celina, senior (Norwalk)
16. Mason McCort, St. Clairsville, senior (Gallia)

GAL – Ours, Eckelberry, Spencer, McCort; Hunter Rose (New Lexington, junior)

NOR – Metzger, Kinzel, Twigg, DiMarco; King

PER – Smith, Severs, Calvin Gwinn (Akron SVSM, junior), Ryan Brubaker (Perry, junior); Devin Shaw-Mason (Padua, freshman)

WIL – Burns, Cramblett, Matthews, Williams; Barford

Heading into the third period of last year's 145-pound state final, things were set for the now Wyoming signee Ours to get the upset of the wrestling season here in the Buckeye State. However, Super 32 champion Alek Martin rallied to win the battle of undefeated wrestlers 5-4 and snag a second state title before matriculating to South Dakota State.

Ours has tournament titles at Cambridge and Beaver Local at 165, along with an Outstanding Wrestler performance in winning the OVAC at 160. He finished as runner-up at the Walsh Ironman, losing in the alternating tiebreakers against Angelo Ferrari from Oklahoma; while recently at state duals, Ours led 4-1 early on bumping up against Lillard before ultimately losing 7-5.

The three wrestlers directly behind Ours exit district competition at Wilmington. Two-time state placer Burns has spent parts of the season both at this weight at 165 (which has Lillard and returning state runner-up Newsome as anchors). Up at 165, he has three tournament titles; while in this weight he was champion at Marion Harding, 9-3 over Hurst in the final, and lost to Euton in the final at Licking Hts. Cramblett placed seventh at 160 last year as a freshman, while this season missed Ironman placement by one match before taking titles at the Carnahan, GMVWA, and Wadsworth; he also has a 6-4 dual meet loss to Hurst and a 3-1 dual meet win over Metzger. Matthews placed seventh at state last year at 152 as a junior, and this season has four tournament titles (including a 3-1 semifinal on the way to his Hephner championship) along with a 5-3 semifinal loss to Burns in finishing third at Marion Harding.

Another two ranked wrestlers are at Wilmington, returning district placer Williams and the freshman Barford. The senior Williams has three tournament titles, most notably at SWOWCA; while Barford was champ at DeSales, runner-up at the Edison Holiday and New Lexington, along with fourth at Dublin Scioto and (at 165) Licking Hts.

The Norwalk district features another group of five ranked wrestlers, led by a trio of returning state qualifiers in Metzger, Kinzel, and Twigg. Metzger is after a third state qualification in as many attempts; he was second at Ashland, first at the Gorman, and third at Maumee Bay along with picking up a 2-1 victory over Severs at state duals. Fellow junior Kinzel was first at Defiance and fourth at Perrysburg, while the senior Twigg spent most of the year up at 165 where he was second at Defiance, seventh at Perrysburg, and fifth at Maumee Bay. Also ranked are seniors DiMarco and King; DiMarco has titles at the Edison Opener and Mike Lewis along with finishing fourth at the Gorman; King was champion at Logan Elm, a finalist at Wapakoneta, and runner-up (at 165) at Edgewood.

Just two ranked wrestlers feature at the Perry district, seniors Smith and Severs. Smith was third at North Coast up one weight class before taking sixth at Perrysburg and third at Boardman in this weight class; in the state duals qualifying event, he upended Twigg 5-3. Severs was a state semifinalist up at 182 last year before sliding back to sixth after missing out on state by one match the prior two seasons. This season he was mostly at 165, including third at North Canton, seventh at Maumee Bay, and champion at Hephner; in this weight class, he was EOWL champion.

Three wrestlers join Ours in the rankings at Gallia for district competition. The senior Eckelberry has two tournament titles to go with a runner-up at Watkins Memorial and third at West Holmes; fellow senior Spencer was a state qualifier in 2020, was champion at Barnesville before taking fifth at OVAC and West Holmes, then runner-up at Buckeye Local; while another senior in McCort was eighth OVAC and missed placing at North Canton by one match.

165 pounds

1. Tyler Lillard, Aurora, senior (Perry)
2. Dylan Newsome, Bishop Hartley, junior (Wilmington)
3. Max Kirby, Fairless, senior (Perry)
4. Max Ray, Bellevue, junior (Norwalk)
5. Luke James, St. Paris Graham, freshman (Wilmington)
6. Trevor Badiu, Medina Buckeye, senior (Norwalk)
7. Wyatt Abele, New Lexington, senior (Gallia)
8. Ryan Price, Akron SVSM, junior (Perry)
9. Shane Michael, Ravenna, senior (Perry)
10. Khail Louive, Minerva, senior (Gallia)
11. Drew Lincicome, Philo, junior (Gallia)
12. Thad Stuckey, Wilmington, junior (Wilmington)
13. Lincoln Shulaw, Columbus DeSales, freshman (Wilmington)
14. Kaz Rajko, Chardon, junior (Perry)
15. Remmington Myers, Indian Valley, junior (Gallia)
16. Leo Hess, Mansfield, junior (Norwalk)
17. Angelo Seitz, Ashland, sophomore (Norwalk)

GAL – Abele, Louive, Lincicome, Myers; Vincent Munro (Miami Trace, junior)

NOR – Ray, Badiu, Hess, Seitz; Decarvion Jones (Sandusky, junior)

PER – Lillard, Kirby, Price, Michael; Rajko, Ethan Hicks (Perry, senior)

WIL – Newsome, James, Stuckey, Shulaw; Landon Froelich (Buckeye Valley, sophomore)

For all his talent, the Indiana University signee has yet to have a complete post-season in his career. At St. Edward as a freshman, he was closed out of the lineup by Andonian and Dover; then he qualified to state as a district champ as a sophomore for Aurora before the pandemic-imposed cancellation (was going to battle with Conley for a title); then last year he was at Wyoming Seminary, where COVID kiboshed their sanctioned season.

Facing a relatively robust schedule, Lillard is undefeated except for the Walsh Ironman in which he took fourth; notable wins over Gartrell and Jon Ley (from Florida), splitting matches with Baker from Virginia, and losing 3-1 to eventual champ Rocco Welsh (Ohio State c/o 2023 commit). He has titles at Solon, Perrysburg, Boardman, and the Suburban League. Three wrestlers join Lillard at Perry in the rankings with state experience, four additional in total.

Fellow senior Kirby placed sixth last year at 152, and started his season by missing out Ironman placement by one bout. Since then, he was champion at North Canton and Wadsworth sandwiched by a 3-2 loss to Takats in the Maumee Bay final; Price qualified for state last year as a sophomore, and has tournament finishes of fourth at North Canton and third at Boardman on the season; while Michael qualified for state in 2020 as a sophomore before finishing as state alternate last year, with this season including a title at Riverside and runner-up finish at Portage County. Lastly there's the junior Rajko, who was runner-up at Kenston then went 2-2 at Perrysburg. There may be movement out of this weight down to 157 due to district composition.

Also nationally ranked in this state weight class field is the junior Newsome, who lost 7-4 to Conley in last year's 170-pound state final. Up at 175 to start the season, he was champion at Olentangy Liberty and Milan Edison before dropping away from Conley into this weight class where he has titles at CIT, Jonathan Alder and Watkins Memorial. Three additional ranked wrestlers join Newsome in district competition at Wilmington. The freshman James went 0-2 at the Ironman, but has since been on exemplary form: runner-up at the Carnahan up at 170, third at GMVWA, and runner-up at Wadsworth; the junior Stuckey has four tournament titles plus a fifth-place finish at GMVWA; while the freshman Shulaw has two tournament titles, runner-up finishes at the Edison Holiday and Dublin Scioto, along with going 1-2 at the Beast of the East.

There's a group of four ranked wrestlers at Norwalk led by Ray, who was sixth at state last year as a sophomore. He went 2-2 at the Ironman before taking first at the Gorman. The senior Badiu won a state match last year, but has missed most of the season with a return to competition here in February; the junior Hess was runner-up at Marengo Highland and first at Galion up one weight class before finishing fifth at the Gorman in this weight; while the sophomore Seitz missed top six at Ashland by one match, was seventh at the Gorman, and lost narrowly 4-3 to James at state duals.

A contingent of four are ranked from the Gallia district, led by returning state placer Abele, though I have not seen the senior in any results season-to-date. Louive qualified for state at 160 as a sophomore in 2020 before scratching at sectional last year; results this year include placing fifth at Cambridge, third at Marengo Highland, and seventh at North Canton. The junior Lincicome has been both here and at 175 this season; at 175 he was fifth at Cambridge and third at Logan and Nelsonville York, while he has

runner-up finishes at West Holmes and Watkins Memorial. Fellow junior Myers was runner-up at Cambridge and Beaver Local, third at the Gorman, and a semifinalist at West Holmes.

175 pounds

1. Brody Conley, Tiffin Columbian, senior (Norwalk)
2. Braden Welch, Ashland, senior (Norwalk)
3. Zack Burroughs, St. Paris Graham, senior (Wilmington)
4. Caden Kenworthy, Cambridge, senior (Gallia)
5. Brandon Kessler, Wauseon, senior (Norwalk)
6. Noah Peterson, Louisville, senior (Perry)
7. Kylan Knapp, Miami Trace, senior (Gallia)
8. Dillon Badiu, Medina Buckeye, sophomore (Norwalk)
9. Brandon Kiser, Dover, senior (Gallia)
10. Bryce Whealtes, NDCL, sophomore (Perry)
11. Dom Tracey, Defiance, senior (Norwalk)
12. Stashu Patterson, St. Mary's Memorial, senior (Norwalk)
13. Gabe Morgan, Beaver Local, sophomore (Gallia)
14. Nick Chaddock, Minerva, senior (Gallia)
15. Hudson Brink, West Branch, sophomore (Perry)
16. Ryan Iams, Hamilton Ross, junior (Wilmington)
17. Ethan Llewelyn, Indian Creek, freshman (Gallia)

GAL – Kenworthy, Knapp, Kiser, Morgan; Chaddock, Llewelyn

NOR – Conley, Welch, Kessler, Badiu; Tracey, Patterson

PER – Peterson, Whealtes, Brink, Caden Kohout (Canfield, junior); TBD

WIL – Burroughs, Iams, Zane Panetta (Blanchester, senior), Marshall Froelich (Columbus DeSales, junior); Alex Shellhammer (Tippecanoe, freshman)

After placing fourth at state as a freshman, Conley entered his sophomore year state tournament as the projected favorite to strike gold at 152 pounds before the already mentioned ad infinitum pandemic-imposed cancellation. He then went 48-0 last season on the way to a state title at 170 pounds. This season, the West Virginia signee is again undefeated, and that includes a 4-2 win in the Walsh Ironman final over Cadet World silver medalist James Rowley from Oregon. Since then, he has added titles at the Gorman and Maumee Bay to extend his winning streak to over 100 matches, last losing in the 2020 Maumee Bay Classic final to Enrique Munguia.

Conley's excellence is also a multi-sport one, as he was a two-way star for his football team the last three seasons; his Tornadoes team made the first round of the "old school" playoffs in 2019, before advancing to the state semifinal last year, and this school year they lost in the regional quarterfinal 28-25 to eventual state semifinalists West Holmes.

The journey to a state title for Conley will most likely involve three finals collisions with Welch, a senior who has yet to win a state tournament bout in his career. The Appalachian State signee wrestled at Culver Academies in Indiana as a freshman and sophomore, where he lost in the opening round each year, which in the Hoosier State means you're out of the tournament. Then last year, Welch lost 5-1 to Conley in the sectional final at Clyde, but had to pull out prior to the district tournament due to injury.

Welch has bounced back in very good form, falling one match short of placement at Junior National freestyle in Fargo this summer. He bumped up in weight to beat returning state runner-up McDanel on the opening weekend before placing seventh at the Walsh Ironman. The next week, he lost 3-2 to Conley during a dual meet. Since then, he was champion at Ashland, and beat Burroughs by technical fall in a dual meet.

Four additional ranked wrestlers seek the other two state spots at Norwalk. The junior Kessler qualified for state last year, and this year was first at Defiance before taking third at Perrysburg then fourth at Maumee Bay; Badiu placed at district as a freshman last year, but has missed a large chunk of the season due to injury and his post-season run will be an early season series of events for him; the senior Tracy was third at Defiance and fifth at Perrysburg, as well as beating Patterson 7-1 during a dual meet; while fellow senior Patterson is a returning state alternate, taking seventh at Marion Harding and second at Lima Senior.

Outside of Conley, fellow senior Burroughs is the only other state medalist in this weight class, taking weight at state in the 195-pound bracket last year. His season includes going 2-2 at the Ironman before finishing second at the Carnahan, first at GMVWA, and fourth at Wadsworth. Just one other ranked wrestler features at Wilmington, and that is the junior Iams, who was runner-up at Franklin and champion at Eaton.

Two returning state qualifiers feature among six ranked wrestlers at the Gallia district. The senior Kenworthy won a state match last year, while fellow senior Kiser went two-and-out. Kenworthy has titles in three tournaments (including at Cambridge), runner-up finishes in two others, and was third at the Gorman; while Kiser was champion at Beaver Local and Berkshire, along with taking third at Mt. Vernon and the OVAC.

Fellow senior Knapp was third at Cambridge, GMVWA, and Logan Elm before taking the title at Miami Trace; the sophomore Morgan was runner-up at Cambridge and Beaver Local before taking sixth at OVAC and fourth at EOWL; the senior Chaddock was fourth at Cambridge and Marengo Highland; while the freshman Llewelyn was eighth at OVAC and runner-up at Beaver Local after entering high school as a Junior High state runner-up.

Rounding out the districts is Perry, where there are just three ranked wrestlers, led by returning state qualifier Peterson. The senior went 2-2 at the Ironman before taking sixth at Maumee Bay and third at the EOWL. Wheatley lost 13-3 to Peterson in a consolation semifinal at district last year as a freshman when competing up at 195, while this year he was second at Hawken and third at CIT. The junior Brink was fourth at Perry Pin City and third at Berkshire.

190 pounds

1. Dylan Fishback, Aurora, senior (Perry)
2. Blake Schaffer, Louisville, senior (Perry)
3. Austin Starr, Indian Creek, senior (Gallia)
4. Hunter Hutcheson, Mansfield Madison, junior (Norwalk)
5. Carson Miller, Granville, junior (Wilmington)
6. Dillon Smith, Poland, senior (Perry)
7. Evan Lykins, St. Paris Graham, senior (Wilmington)
8. Reid Beddow, Norton, senior (Perry)
9. Landon Campbell, Galion, sophomore (Norwalk)

10. Dillon Davidson, Cleves Taylor, senior (Wilmington)
11. Manny Aller/Landon Cook, Tiffin Columbian, sophomore/junior (Norwalk)
12. Brayden Easton, Gallia Academy, junior (Gallia)
13. Angelo Gonzalez, Napoleon, senior (Norwalk)
14. Jayden LeBeau, Miami Trace, senior (Gallia)
15. Caleb Chippus, Medina Buckeye, senior (Norwalk)
16. Ben Zinda, Carrollton, junior (Gallia)
17. Brandon Kinney, Steubenville, senior (Gallia)

GAL – Starr, Easton, LeBeau, Zinda; Kinney

NOR – Hutcheson, Campbell, Aller/Cook, Gonzalez; Chippus

PER – Fishback, Schaffer, Smith, Beddow; Jacob Heath (Akron SVSM, freshman)

WIL – Miller, Lykins, Davidson, Kaiden Starks (Hamilton Badin, junior); Clay Dozer (Bloom-Carroll, senior)

Like Conley, returning state champion Fishback is on a winning streak of protracted length that goes back to his sophomore year. The North Carolina State signee last lost in a consolation match at the Beast of the East in December 2019. He won his last 33 matches before the state tournament cancellation, which started with a title at Brecksville, and was favored to earn gold at 160 after finishing runner-up at 145 the year before. Then it was a 27-0 mark of complete and utter dominance on the way to state gold at 190.

During the summer, Fishback was undefeated on Ohio's Junior Duals freestyle team and was a Junior National freestyle title beating Shumate in the championship match. His senior season started with a title at Solon before winning Outstanding Wrestler honors at the Walsh Ironman, as he cleared the tournament's toughest weight despite navigating an injury during the semifinal and final matches. Fishback then has come back to dominate to titles at Boardman and the Suburban League, and has a winning streak closing in on 90 matches.

His closest challenge will come from Kent State signee Schaffer, who has made marked improvement this season after transferring from Green, where he placed seventh in Division I at 182 pounds last season. Schaffer placed sixth at the Ironman, and since then is without a loss; including titles at North Canton, Maumee Bay, the Hephner, and EOWL tournaments. Two other wrestlers, both seniors, join Fishback and Schaffer in the rankings at Perry. Returning state qualifier Smith was champion at Howland, fourth at Hephner, and third at EOWL; while returning state alternate Beddow was first at Smithville and second at the Gorman.

Ranked third in this weight class is fellow senior Starr, who placed third at state last year at 195, including a pin over Shulaw in the consolation final. This season for Starr features titles at the OVAC, West Holmes, and Buckeye Local. Four other ranked wrestlers join him in the field at Gallia. The junior Easton is a returning district placer, and this season was champion at Gallia before finishing second at Nelsonville-York and Washington C.H.; the senior LeBeau was first at Cambridge and Logan Elm, runner-up at Miami Trace, and a quarterfinalist at GMVWA; the junior Zinda placed sixth at Hoover before taking third at Licking Valley, first at Claymont, then fourth at West Holmes; while the senior Kinney is a returning state alternate, with his current season including a seventh at North Canton and a fourth at OVAC.

Five ranked wrestlers also feature at Norwalk, led by returning state qualifier Hutcheson. The junior was runner-up at North Canton and fourth at Maumee Bay, along with winning the Gorman and at Marion

Pleasant; the sophomore Campbell placed at district last year, and has three tournament wins in the current season to go with a fourth at the Gorman; for Tiffin Columbian, Aller was a district placer last year as a freshman; while the senior Chipgus was third to open the season at Milan Edison, runner-up at the Mike Lewis, seventh at the Gorman, and third at West Holmes.

Rounding it out is a group of three ranked wrestlers at Wilmington, led by Miller, who qualified for state as a freshman in 2020 before missing last season; this season he was a finalist at Defiance before taking fifth at New Lexington. The senior Lykins won a state tournament match last year, while this year he was second at GMVWA and third at the Carnahan and Wadsworth. Fellow senior Davidson is a returning district placer, who has titles at three tournaments (including at Miami Trace) and was fourth at SWOWCA. It should be noted that returning state qualifier Jude Hess (Hamilton Ross, senior) exits this district but is not ranked.

215 pounds

1. Max Shulaw, Columbus DeSales, sophomore (Wilmington)
2. Carter Neves, St. Paris Graham, sophomore (Wilmington)
3. Kyle Snider, CVCA, junior (Perry)
4. Bryson Getz, Akron SVSM, junior (Perry)
5. Eli Emmons, Hamilton Badin, senior (Wilmington)
6. Steven Marra, West Branch, senior (Perry)
7. Kaiden Haines, Minerva, junior (Gallia)
8. Bryce Bennett, Miami Trace, senior (Gallia)
9. Antonio Burns, London, senior (Wilmington)
10. Evan Straub, Bellevue, senior (Norwalk)
11. Cruz Mobley, Warsaw River View, junior (Gallia)
12. Elisha Baldridge, West Holmes, junior (Galia)
13. Davian Greenlee, Akron Buchtel, junior (Norwalk)
14. Mekhi Bradley, Mansfield, junior (Norwalk)
15. Jeffrey Blair, Dayton C-J, freshman (Wilmington)
16. Jimmy Bechter, Dayton Carroll, freshman (Wilmington)

GAL – Haines, Bennett, Mobley, Baldridge; Charles Souther (Washington C.H., sophomore)

NOR – Straub, Greenlee, Bradley, Cayden Spotts (Ashland, sophomore); Uzonna Nzekwe (Beachwood, junior)

PER – Snider, Getz, Marra, Aiden Mozden (Alliance, sophomore); Jimmy Scharrer (Canfield, junior)

WIL – Shulaw, Neves, Emmons, Burns; Blair, Bechter

The tradition-rich Columbus DeSales program last had a wrestler earn a state title in 2005 when Daniel Earley won gold at 103 pounds with an 8-1 victory over Jeff Pelton of Bellevue. It was their 35th state champion in program history, a mark that still remains fifth-most in Ohio history. Two years later, Mark Marinelli would coach his last match for the Stallions before taking the head coaching position at Olentangy Liberty, an overtime tiebreaker loss by John Hiles in the heavyweight state final. Since then, it's been a program in flux at DeSales, while Marinelli has built sustained success for the Patriots with six individual state champions and multiple top ten finishes in the team standings at state.

However, it seems like Collin Palmer has taken over at DeSales in the last few years and has things going in the right direction. Most notably with Shulaw, who is kind of an anchor figure for this revival after taking fourth at 195 last year as a freshman. This season has seen him make a profound leap with titles

in three tournaments, including an 8-4 win over Shepherd in the final of the Edison Holiday; along with placing fourth at the Ironman and third at the Beast of the East. Only a 9-3 semifinal loss to Howard at Dublin Scioto could really be viewed as a flaw. Additional key wins came over Shepherd in the semifinal at the Beast of the East and 11-3 over Neves in the consolation semifinals at the Walsh Ironman.

Fellow sophomore Neves finished runner-up last year at state in the 182-pound weight class losing somewhat unexpectedly 3-1 to Zayne Lehman in the final. He was a 16U national freestyle All-American this summer before taking fifth at the Ironman, first at the GMVWA, and second at Wadsworth. From an Ohio perspective his season includes three losses to Shepherd (6-3/OT/3-2), the 11-3 loss to Shulaw, two wins over Snider (5-2 both times) and a 5-3 win over Russo. Both Shulaw and Neves feature at the Wilmington district.

Last year's state finals match at 220 saw Snider beat Getz by an 8-2 decision in a battle of at-the-time sophomores. This year, Snider who is a superlative running back on the football field, started with a sixth-place finish at the Ironman before winning titles at North Canton, Ashland, and Maumee Bay; and then taking third at Wadsworth after a hotly contested overtime loss to Shepherd in the semifinal, and then beating Russo 3-1 in the consolation final. Getz was 2-2 at the Ironman before missing placement at the Powerade by one match, both losses coming to nationally ranked wrestlers, and taking third at Boardman. Both wrestlers exit district competition at Perry.

The weight class features three other wrestlers that are returning state qualifiers, two of whom join Shulaw and Neves at Wilmington. The senior Emmons is a returning state placer, and was runner-up at SWOWCA before winning titles at Milton-Union and Miamisburg; while fellow senior Burns placed second at Miami Trace and first at Marion Pleasant. Also ranked in this district composition are a pair of freshmen. Blair was runner-up at Dayton Christian, sixth at GMVWA, then one match away from top six at CIT before winning titles at Washington C.H. and Eaton; while Bechter was first at Franklin and Kettering Fairmont before taking fifth at CIT and third at Eaton.

Last of the returning state qualifiers is the senior Bennett, who went two-and-out last season; while this season includes titles at Cambridge, Logan Elm, and Miami Trace to go with a fourth-place finish at GMVWA. Three additional ranked wrestlers are also in the field at Gallia. The junior Haines was third at Cambridge and fourth at North Canton; fellow junior Mobley was runner-up at Cambridge, won three tournaments, and then was third at New Lexington; while Baldrige was state alternate last year as a sophomore, and has a dual meet win over Bennett on the season, but was third at West Holmes.

Just one other ranked wrestler joins Snider and Getz at Perry, that being the senior Marra, a returning state alternate. His season includes titles at Perry Pin City, Berkshire, and the EOWL.

Three ranked wrestlers at Norwalk conclude this weight's discussion, including a pair of returning state alternates in Straub and Greenlee. The senior Straub was first and Bellevue and runner-up at Perrysburg, while the junior Greenlee was first at Hudson and seventh at Wadsworth. Fellow junior Bradley was second at the Gorman and third at Mapleton in this weight class.

285 pounds

1. Nolan Neves, St. Paris Graham, senior (Wilmington)
2. Cameron Brazek, Louisville, senior (Perry)
3. Gauge Samson, Maysville, senior (Gallia)
4. Todd Allen, Medina Buckeye, junior (Norwalk)

5. Thadd Huff, London, senior (Wilmington)
6. Gage Gibson, Warren Howland, senior (Perry)
7. Alistair Larson, Woodridge, senior (Perry)
8. Cody Logan, Canal Fulton Northwest, senior (Perry)
9. Bruce Wagers, Wyoming, senior (Wilmington)
10. Mason Mustain, Washington C.H., senior (Gallia)
11. Peyton Tuttle, Steubenville, senior (Gallia)
12. Alex Griffith, Galion, sophomore (Norwalk)
13. Brock Nunez, Bellevue, senior (Norwalk)
14. Nick Bowser, Hubbard, sophomore (Perry)
15. Keegan Jacks, Hebron Lakewood, sophomore (Wilmington)
16. Cael Rostorfer, Wapakoneta, senior (Norwalk)

GAL – Samson, Mustain, Tuttle, Zane McCoy (Beaver Local, junior); Joey Tristano (Dover, junior)

NOR – Allen, Griffith, Nunez, Rostorfer; Dominic Burch (Bowling Green, junior)

PER – Brazek, Gibson, Larson, Logan; Bowser

WIL – Neves, Huff, Wagers, Jacks; Bret Brooks (Wilmington, senior)

For all the in-season dominance shown last year by Columbia “signee” Neves, it did not end with a state title, as he was upset 2-1 in the semifinal round by eventual state champion Allen of Buckeye. For Neves that had to augment the disappointment of 2020, where he was projected to win the state tournament at 220 before the event got cancelled. After losing by fall in the opening weekend against Kohlhofer, he bounced back to place fourth at the Ironman, including a 5-4 win of extreme quality of Missouri signee Ryan Boersma from Illinois in the consolation semifinal. Neves also has tournament titles at the Carnahan (3-2 over nationally ranked Leighton Jones in that final), GMVWA, and Wadsworth tournaments on the season. Neves enters this state series yet again as the favorite.

Returning state champion Allen chose not to compete at the Ironman, instead on that weekend won the Mike Lewis Invitational that his team hosted with a pin over returning state placer Owen in the final. He would also pin Owen to win the Gorman, before losing 2-1 to returning state qualifier Samson in the final at Claymont; Samson lost 4-3 to Neves in the state quarters last year. Samson’s season-to-date includes that title at Claymont, along with titles at Licking Valley, Heath, and New Lexington.

Three additional wrestlers in the field are returning state placers. The senior Huff placed fourth last year, and has three tournament titles this year (including a pin over Wagers in the Miami Trace final) to go with a runner-up finish to Ucker at Licking Hts; fellow senior Larson placed sixth last year, and this year was runner-up at Hudson; while fellow senior Brazek took eighth at state last year, but has been most excellent this year in losing 2-1 to Fockler to fall one match short of Ironman placement to start his season. The resume continues with titles at North Canton (pinned Ries in alternating tiebreakers during the semi), the Hephner, and EOWL along with a runner-up finish to Kohlhofer at Maumee Bay.

The ordinal ranking for this weight is Neves, Brazek, Samson, Allen, and Huff.

Neves and Huff both exit district competition at Wilmington, where there are two additional ranked wrestlers. Fellow senior Wagers was third at SWOWCA before finishing second at Perrysburg, Sycamore, and Miami Trace; he’s a big move waiting to happen. The sophomore Jacks was champion at his home tournament and at Eaton, while taking sixth at Western Brown and Heath.

Brazek and Logan exit district competition at Perry, as do three other wrestlers that made the state tournament last year. The senior Gibson beat Larson in the final at Hudson after beating Logan 6-4 in the semifinal, which came after a second-place finish at Solon and before a title at Howland; fellow senior Logan was third at Hudson; while the Bowser advanced to state last year as a freshman but was a pre-tournament scratch and has finished as runner-up to Brazek at both the Hephner and EOWL.

Samson is joined by just two other ranked wrestlers at Gallia. The senior Mustain has titles in four tournaments this season, including at Cambridge and Western Brown, to go with a second at Barnesville and fifth at GMVWA; while fellow senior Tuttle was fifth at North Canton sandwiched around titles at Union Local and the OVAC.

Three other ranked wrestlers join Allen at Norwalk, including returning state qualifier Griffith and returning state alternate Nunez. The sophomore Griffith beat Gibson in consolation last year at state, but this year won at Galion before taking fourth at Marion Harding, third at the Gorman and Van Buren, and sixth at Maumee Bay. The senior Nunez was champion at Bellevue, a 7-6 loser to Griffith in the Galion final, and then placed fourth at both the Edison Holiday and Perrysburg. Finally, fellow senior Rostorfer was champion at Sidney, second at Kettering Fairmont and Wapakoneta, as well as fourth seventh at GMVWA.

Team

1. St. Paris Graham (Wilmington)
2. Louisville (Perry)
3. Aurora (Perry)
4. Medina Buckeye (Norwalk)
5. Tiffin Columbian (Norwalk)
6. Columbus DeSales (Wilmington)
7. Ashland (Norwalk)
8. Akron SVSM (Perry)
9. Wauseon (Norwalk)
10. Beaver Local (Gallia)
11. CVCA (Perry)
12. Lake Catholic (Perry)

NOTE – margin between second and third is REAL close

DIVISION THREE

106 pounds

1. Cole Schulke, Columbia, junior (Garfield Hts)
2. Hunter Lacy, Seneca East, senior (Rossford)
3. Casper Caizzo, Norwalk St. Paul, sophomore (Rossford)
4. Abe Hermes, Milan Edison, freshman (Rossford)
5. Adam Mattin, Delta, freshman (Rossford)
6. Thayne Kleman, Bluffton, junior (Rossford)
7. Kyle Schroer, Troy Christian, junior (Troy)
8. Tristen Rossiter, Shenandoah, sophomore (Heath)
9. Branden Boggs, Sandy Valley, junior (Heath)
10. Gage Murphy, Reading, freshman (Troy)
11. Corbin Kimmel, Wayne Trace, freshman (Troy)
12. Caiden Heller, Waynedale, senior (Garfield Hts)
13. Hunter Newell, South Range, junior (Garfield Hts)
14. Carson Taylor, Covington, sophomore (Troy)
15. C.J. Graham, Fairland, freshman (Heath)
16. Tanner Allen, Alexander, sophomore (Heath)

GHTS – Schulke, Heller, Newell, Quintin Burns (Youngstown Liberty, junior); Mason Simms (Wellsville, junior)

HEA – Rossiter, Boggs, Graham, Allen; Justin Sampson (Harrison Central, senior)

ROS – Lacy, Caizzo, Hermes, Mattin; Kleman

TROY – Schroer, Murphy, Kimmel, Taylor; Brandon Day (Springfield Shawnee, sophomore)

The last state champion for Columbia came back in 1995 when Neal Harvey knocked off Licking Valley's Rocky Tate 14-13 in the 189-pound championship match. That capped a stretch in which the Raiders had a state champion in four of five seasons. Other state champions during that run were Keith Mescan (1994 at 112 beating Anthony Ralph 14-7), Kyle Rutledge (1993 at 189), and Bo Wilkovich (1991 at 112, winning under a previous iteration of overtime rules, 2-2 in regulation and then 5-3).

Schulke is the only returning state medalist in this field, having finished fourth last year in this weight class as a sophomore. His current season includes titles at North Coast, Columbia, and Howland; however, he had to scratch after his first match at Wadsworth when he was going to get more rigorously tested. Two of the other six with state qualification achievement in this weight join him as ranked wrestlers from the Garfield Hts district. The senior Heller was third at Lima Central Catholic, while the junior Newell was runner-up at Waterloo and the EOWL along with taking third at the Hephner.

Outside of Schulke there is a grand total of one state tournament win in this field, and that comes from the junior Boggs, who beat Heller in consolation last year at state; the season for Boggs includes a title at Waterloo. Boggs is one of four ranked wrestlers at the Heath district, a group anchored by the sophomore Rossiter, a returning state qualifier who was first at Union Local before placing fourth at OVAC. The freshman Graham has three tournament titles on the year, along with a runner-up at Washington C.H.; while Allen finished as a district placer last year a freshman. His current season includes a runner-up finish in OT to Graham at Gallia, two other runner-up finishes, and a third at Washington C.H.

The other two with state tournament qualification credential exit from Rossford. The senior Lacy was two-and-out last year in the 113-pound field; he was champion at Clear Fork in that weight before winning titles at Clyde and Rossford in this weight. Kleman qualified for state as a freshman in 2020 before dropping back to the alternate spot last year; up one weight class he was champion at Allen County and runner-up at Defiance, before he missed placing at Perrysburg by one match in this weight.

Three ranked wrestlers at Rossford sit between Lacy and Kleman in the rankings, which means that a projected podium finisher will not be making the state tournament in all likelihood. Caizzo won two district matches last year in this weight as an undersized freshman, while this year he was first at Beaver Local and Defiance before taking third at Perrysburg and second at CIT (that one was at 113). The freshmen Hermes and Mattin are younger brothers of state champions in their own right; Abe's older brother Max won state last year while Adam's three older brothers (Zack, Cole, and Drew) all won state title(s).

Mattin was champion at Toledo St. John's before taking third at Olentangy Liberty, fourth at Perrysburg, and fifth at Maumee Bay; while Hermes lost 4-0 to Limbert at the Edison Opener before taking first at the Edison Holiday and second at Maumee Bay. Mattin beat Hermes 3-2 in the state quals qualifying final, but Hermes beat Mattin at Maumee Bay.

Closing things out is a group of four ranked wrestlers at Troy. Schroer was state alternate last year as a sophomore, and started this season up at 113 where he was champ at Dayton Christian, second to Lacy at Clear Fork, and sixth at the Edison Holiday; while in this weight he was fifth at Perrysburg and beat Taylor 6-2 in his conference meet. The freshman Murphy has titles at Franklin and Lima Central Catholic to his credit this season. Fellow freshman Kimmel was runner-up at Defiance and Lima Central Catholic, along with winning titles at Troy, Van Buren, and his conference; while the sophomore Taylor was runner-up at GMVWA and Troy, along with fifth at Lima Central Catholic.

113 pounds

1. Max Hermes, Milan Edison, junior (Rossford)
2. Cooper Shore, Miami East, junior (Troy)
3. Eli Campbell, Legacy Christian, sophomore (Troy)
4. Trevor Wilcox, Otsego, sophomore (Rossford)
5. Lane Bergman, Versailles, sophomore (Troy)
6. Jericho Quinter, Covington, sophomore (Troy)
7. Dylan Ward, Martins Ferry, junior (Heath)
8. Zachary LaPlante, Toledo Christian, senior (Rossford)
9. Kyle Miller, Garaway, senior (Heath)
10. Riley Hanefeld, Delta, senior (Rossford)
11. Nick Roberts, Plymouth, senior (Rossford)
12. Cowin Becker, Galion Northmor, freshman (Heath)
13. Drew Spreng, Loudonville, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
14. Khadyn Jacobs, Brookville, junior (Troy)
15. Eli Guyton, Millbury Lake, senior (Rossford)
16. Trace Williams, North Union, junior (Heath)

GHTS – Spreng, Dominic Leone (Youngstown Liberty, senior), Brady Funk (Mogadore, senior), Owen McDevitt (Jackson-Milton, junior); Kayden Welker (South Range, freshman)

HEA – Ward, Miller, Becker, Williams; Antony Hoty (Westfall, junior)

ROS – Hermes, Wilcox, LaPlante, Hanfeld; Roberts, Guyton
TROY – Shore, Campbell, Bergman, Quinter; Jacobs

Three wrestlers from “wrestling families” sit on top of this weight class. Hermes won state last year as a sophomore, and his father is the head coach at Milan Edison; while Cooper is the younger brother of state champions Max and Graham, along with Olivia (who became the first female to place at state last year); while Campbell’s relative Dillon dominated his way to a state title last year as a freshman.

This season Hermes won titles at both Edison tournaments before taking third at Maumee Bay, losing 6-2 to Marcus Blaze in the semifinal round. Shore was runner-up in this weight class last year to Dillon Campbell, an opponent to whom he lost by technical fall in the sectional and state finals, along with 10-2 in the district final for his only three losses of the season. During the current season, Shore was champion at Troy and Lima Central Catholic. Eli Campbell lost 1-0 to Hermes in last year’s state final, and this year went 2-2 at the Ironman before placing third at the Carnahan (up one weight class) and GMVWA.

Four others with state tournament experience are among the possible field. Two of those exit the Heath district, the junior Ward went 1-2 last year at state, while Miller qualified back in 2019. They are among four ranked wrestlers at that site. Ward this season was champion at Waterloo and Shadyside, before taking fifth at OVAC and second at Buckeye Local; Miller was third at Marion Pleasant; the freshman Becker was champion at Big Walnut before taking fifth at Marion Harding, second at the Gorman, and fourth at Marion Pleasant; while the junior Williams is a returning state alternate, who was first at North Union and second at Marion Pleasant.

The additional returning state medalist is Wilcox, who was seventh as a freshman at 106. This season he was fourth at Perrysburg and second at Lima Central Catholic. Hermes and Wilcox are joined by four other ranked wrestlers, all seniors, at Rossford. LaPlante finished fifth at Lima Central Catholic and first at Rossford in this weight after placing fourth at Marion Harding up one weight, and finishing runner-up in two tournaments up at 126; senior Hanefeld placed at district in this weight last year, and his current season includes a runner-up finish at Olentangy Liberty plus an eighth at Perrysburg; Roberts placed fourth at Marion Harding and first at Margaretta in this weight; while Guyton won two district matches in this weight last year.

Last among the state qualifiers in this field is Bergman, who upended Rossiter in consolation wrestling last year as a freshman at state. Bergman joins Shore and Campbell in the Troy district field, as do another pair of ranked wrestlers in the sophomore Quinter and junior Jacobs. Quinter missed placement by one match up at 120 in the GMVWA, while in this weight he was second at Troy and third at Lima Central Catholic (loss 2-0 to Shore); while returning district placer Jacobs missed placement by one match at GMVWA, and has a 6-5 dual meet loss to Bergman.

Finally, the Garfield Hts district features just one ranked wrestler, Spreng, who was state alternate last year as a freshman. This season he was fourth at Clear Fork and the Gorman before taking second at West Salem Northwestern.

120 pounds

1. Dillon Campbell, Legacy Christian, sophomore (Troy)
2. Gavin Caprella, Lima Central Catholic, senior (Troy)
3. Dakota King, Barnesville, sophomore (Heath)

4. Landen Duncan, Chalker, junior (Garfield Hts)
5. Phoenix Contos, Genoa, freshman (Rossford)
6. Ramakrishna Gandhi, Reading, senior (Troy)
7. Nathan Parks, Seneca East, sophomore (Rossford)
8. Michael Hagan, Covington, sophomore (Troy)
9. Evan Hanefeld, Delta, junior (Rossford)
10. Gavin Pahanish, South Range, senior (Garfield Hts)
11. Ethan Dixon, Coshocton, senior (Heath)
12. Johnny Walker, Malvern, senior (Heath)
13. Trent Sigler, West Salem Northwestern, junior (Garfield Hts)
14. Hayden Herman, Edgerton, senior (Rossford)
15. Trevor Herbert, Buckeye Local, senior (Heath)
16. Evan Kusmits, Manchester, freshman (Garfield Hts)

GHTS – Duncan, Pahanish, Sigler, Kusmits; Grayson Hoover (Garrettsville Garfield, junior)

HEA – King, Dixon, Walker, Herbert; Haedyn Parman (Johnstown Northridge, junior)

ROS – Contos, Parks, Hanefeld, Herman; Drew Matthews (Liberty Center, sophomore)

TROY – Campbell, Caprella, Gandhi, Hagan; Evan Carpenter (Benjamin Logan, sophomore)

Outside of Beric Jordan, Dillon Campbell is probably the state's best overall Class of 2024 wrestlers, and one of the better overall nationally. A pair of Super 32 placements and a Junior National freestyle All-American honor speak to that ability level, as does that comprehensive evisceration of the state tournament last season as a freshman. This season he placed fourth at the Ironman before winning titles at GMVWA and Beavercreek. It would be a complete shock if he did not repeat as champion.

Five returning state placers and another five state qualifiers are prime among the resistance to Campbell repeating as state champion. Two of those medalists, Caprella and Hagan, join Campbell in the field at Troy for district; while returning state qualifier Gandhi rounds out the ranked group in this district.

Caprella has four tournament titles, including at Lima Central Catholic over Gandhi, but it was a run to fourth place at the Powerade that put him ever so briefly into the national rankings; at that event, he earned wins over Ohio State verbal commits Kamdyn Williams (c/o 2024) and Vincent Kilkeary (c/o 2023) from Pennsylvania. However, the next weekend he placed third at Perrysburg with a 3-1 loss to Ryan in the semifinal, though he did respond with a pair of wins over returning state placers in consolation. The senior Gandhi was runner-up at Madeira and Lima Central Catholic, where he pinned Hagan along the way; while Hagan placed fourth at GMVWA down at 113 before moving up to this weight class to win at Troy and take third at Lima Central Catholic.

Outside of Campbell, the highest returning state placer is Parks, who was third at 106, losing just to Eli Campbell 6-1 at the state tournament. His current season includes titles at Van Buren and Utica, along with a loss by fall to Contos in the final at Rossford. The freshman Contos was a Junior High state champ last year, and this year placed sixth at Perrysburg in addition to that title at Rossford. The pair is joined by two other ranked wrestlers at Rossford for district. Hanefeld qualified for state last year at 106 as a sophomore, while this year he placed fifth at Olentangy Liberty before falling one match short of the podium at Perrysburg; and the senior Herman placed at district in this weight last year, with the current season including a fifth at Defiance and second at Lima Senior.

Three state qualifiers feature among the field at Heath, led by returning state medalist King, sixth last year at 113 as a freshman. His season was spent mostly up one weight class where he was champion at Barnesville, OVAC, and New Lexington; along with taking second at Union Local and Ashland. The senior Dixon was third at Union Local and first at Coshocton, while fellow senior Walker was first at Hanoverton United and runner-up at Waterloo. Also ranked is fellow senior Herbert, who was champion at Buckeye Local.

Wrapping things up is the district at Garfield Hts, which features four ranked wrestlers, led by returning state placer Duncan who has spent time both in this weight class and up at 126. In this weight he was fifth at the Edison Holiday and Wadsworth, while up one weight class he has two tournament titles to go with a third at Perry Pin City and second at Howland. The senior Pahanish was a state alternate last year, but this year beat Walker to win at Waterloo and also won the EOWL, along with finishing seventh up one weight class at the Hephner; returning state qualifier Sigler was champion at Columbia; while the freshman Kusmits was third at Waterloo and missed placing at the Gorman by one match.

126 pounds

1. Max Shore, Miami East, senior (Troy)
2. Logan Attisano, Legacy Christian, senior (Troy)
3. Jesse Stroud, Mechanicsburg, senior (Troy)
4. Carson Chiesa, Delta, senior (Rossford)
5. Reese Stephen, Barnesville, sophomore (Heath)
6. Brock Durbin, Mapleton, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
7. Patrick Reineke, Hawken, senior (Garfield Hts)
8. Wesley Wydick, Utica, senior (Heath)
9. Caden Schmeltzer, Waynedale, freshman (Garfield Hts)
10. J.P. Wrobel, Crestwood, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
11. Mason Amodio, Ravenna Southeast, senior (Garfield Hts)
12. Brian Luft, Newark Catholic, sophomore (Heath)
13. Chase Vanderhorst, Covington, freshman (Troy)
14. Carder Miller, Spencerville, junior (Troy)
15. Johnny Heiden, Berkshire, junior (Garfield Hts)
16. Gabe Hansen-Jackson, North Union, senior (Heath)

GHTS – Durbin, Reineke, Schmeltzer, Wrobel; Amodio, Heiden

HEA – Stephen, Wydick, Luft, Hansen-Jackson; Christian Browning (Crooksville, freshman)

ROS – Chiesa, Connor Robbins (Willard, senior), Andrew Miller (Plymouth, junior), Grant Bomer (Lakota, freshman); Noah Tipton (Genoa, sophomore)

TROY – Shore, Attisano, Stroud, Vanderhorst; Miller

Like the two weight classes immediately preceding, there is a returning state champion in this field, and said wrestler is a rather solid favorite. Max was runner-up at 106 as a freshman in 2019, before finally getting his state title last year at 120 in completely dominant fashion; it was all pins or techs in the state series, but for an 11-2 major decision over Cmil in the state semifinal. Max started the season at 132, where he was champion at Tippecanoe and Troy before coming into this weight class to win at Lima Central Catholic.

Six state placers and four other state qualifiers are prime among the challengers to Shore in this weight class. Two of those state placers, Attisano and Stroud sit right behind Shore in the rankings, and join him

at the Troy district. Attisano placed fourth at state last year as a junior, losing by fall to Shore in both the sectional and district finals; this season includes a 4-2 performance at the Ironman, a fourth place at the Carnahan, and taking third at GMVWA. Fellow senior Stroud was eighth up at 132 last season, with this season featuring runner-up finishes at Marion Harding and Lima Senior.

An addition pair of ranked wrestlers will seek that fourth state spot at Troy. The freshman Vanderhorst was champion at Bellefontaine up one weight class before taking fourth at Lima Central Catholic in this weight; while the junior Miller has two tournament titles to go with a third at Lima Senior and runner-up at Lima Central Catholic.

A pair of state placers and two additional state qualifiers feature among six ranked wrestlers at the Garfield Hts district. The sophomore Durbin and senior Reineke are the returning state medalists, while the sophomore Wrobel and senior Amodio are the qualifiers.

Durbin was runner-up at the Mike Lewis and fourth at Marion Harding, before earning titles at the Gorman and Mapleton; Reineke is a two-time state placer, who has three tournament titles including a pin over Wrobel at the CVC to go with a runner-up at Eastlake North; the freshman Schmeltzer placed third at both Cuyahoga Hts up a weight and Lima Central Catholic in this weight; Wrobel was third at Kenston, beat Amodio 4-3 to win the title at Portage County, took fifth at Boardman, and was runner-up at CVC; Amodio was runner-up at Portage County and EOWL (plus the Mike Lewis up one weight), along with fourth at the Hephner; while the junior Heiden was third at Defiance and sixth at Boardman in this weight along with second at Berkshire and third at CVC up a weight. Quite frankly, it would not shock me to see someone try to move up to 132 to try and snag a relatively open fourth state spot.

State placer Stephen plus state qualifiers Wyardick and Luft are among four ranked wrestlers at the Heath district. Stephen was fifth at 106 last year as a freshman and started this season at 120, where he was champion at Union Local, Barnesville, and Shadyside before he could no longer make the weight class; since then, he has weighed in at 126, including at the state duals where he bumped to 132 to beat returning state medalist Chase in overtime. The senior Wyardick was runner-up at Licking Valley and Heath before taking gold at Utica, while the sophomore Luft was runner-up at Marengo Highland, third at Sheridan, fourth at Licking Valley, and a semifinalist at Lima Central Catholic. Also ranked here is the senior Hansen-Jackson, who was first at North Union and second at Marion Pleasant.

The lone ranked wrestler at Rossford is the senior Chiesa, a returning state placer; who was third at Olentangy Liberty and fifth at Perrysburg, before missing placement by one match at Maumee Bay.

132 pounds

1. Hunter Long, Wayne Trace, senior (Troy)
2. Will Davidson, Kirtland, senior (Garfield Hts)
3. Trey Allen, Mechanicsburg, senior (Troy)
4. Hayden Kuhn, Ashland Crestview, junior (Rossford)
5. Raymond Cmil, South Range, senior (Garfield Hts)
6. Jeremiah McKee, Wellington, senior (Garfield Hts)
7. Jason Shaffer, Troy Christian, junior (Troy)
8. Alec Homan, Monroeville, senior (Rossford)
9. Daxton Chase, Marion Pleasant, sophomore (Heath)
10. Brayden Brown, Legacy Christian, sophomore (Troy)
11. Griffin Stephen, Barnesville, senior (Heath)

12. Joseph Manley, Otsego, junior (Rossford)
13. Anden Ankney, Defiance Tinora, sophomore (Rossford)
14. Ashtan Hendricks, Greeneview, junior (Troy)
15. Christian Lecki, Millbury Lake, senior (Rossford)
16. Luke Herron, Amanda-Clearcreek, senior (Heath)

GHTS – Davidson, Cmil, McKee, Braeden Stallowrth (Columbiana Crestview, junior); Nehemiah Sanderfer (Lutheran West, sophomore)

HEA – Chase, Stephen, Herron, Drake Kanyuch (Shenandoah, junior); Jesse Maple (Ridgewood, junior)

ROS – Kuhn, Homan, Manley, Ankney; Lecki

TROY – Long, Allen, Shaffer, Brown; Hendricks

Prior to 2021, the only wrestler for Wayne Trace to have placed higher than fifth at the state tournament was George Clemens, a 2016 state champion at 126 pounds. Last season that account moved up to three as Long placed fourth in this weight, while Jarrett Hornish took home the title at 126. Based on the weight classes immediately below, and the presence of returning state champ Lacure in the weight class above, this weight class was bound to be stacked with credentialed talent; and it is indeed with seven returning medalists and seven others that have made the state tournament.

On the season, projected state champion Long has five tournament titles between three weight classes, most notably pinning Kuhn in the final at Lima Central Catholic; his lone loss of record came 3-2 to 2019 state runner-up Gavin Owens in the Defiance final up at 138. Long is joined at Troy by returning state runner-up Allen (5-4 to Hornish in the state final), two-time state qualifier Shaffer, state alternate Brown (who lost 3-1 to Allen and 4-3 to Kellan Anderson on district Saturday), and 2020 state qualifier Hendricks.

Allen was runner-up at Marion Harding and champion at Lima Senior this season; Shaffer missed the first half or so of the season before returning to win his conference tournament; Brown was third at GVMWA and champion at Beaver creek; while Hendricks was runner-up at Dayton Christian (up at 138) and Xenia before taking fifth at GMVWA.

The Rossford district features a pair of returning state placer and another pair of wrestlers with state qualification credentials among five ranked wrestlers. Leading the way is Kuhn, who was third at state last year as a sophomore; this season includes a third at Kenston, first at the Gorman, and a second at Lima Central Catholic. The senior Homan is twice a state placer, and three times a state qualifier; while this season has been about trying to navigate a spot in a congested lineup situation (notable results include a 5-2 dual meet loss to Allen and a 2-0 win over Manley). The junior Manley made state last year, and was a semifinalist at Perrysburg this year before taking third at Lima Central Catholic. Ankney was state alternate last year as a freshman, and has been mostly excellent this year; third at Perrysburg to go with runner-up finishes at Van Buren and the conference tournament. While Lecki qualified for state in 2020 as a sophomore before not competing last year, and this year opened the season with a title at Northwood in this weight before taking seventh at Maumee Bay and second at Rossford up at 138.

Just three ranked wrestlers come from Garfield Hts, though all won a state tournament bout last year, two of the trio earning podium spots. The senior Davidson placed third at 120, and this season has been superb with titles at Cuyahoga Hts, Kenston, Perry Pin City, and CVC; fellow senior Cmil was fifth in that same weight, and this season was first at Waterloo before losing to projected DII state champ Castro 5-0

in the EOWL final; while the senior McKee started his season at 138 with titles at Avon Lake and Bellevue before taking third at Waterloo, but then dropped to this weight where he was third at Ashland and beat Mellon to take the title at West Salem Northwestern.

Another group of just three is ranked at Heath, led by Chase, who was eighth last year as a freshman at 113. This season he has three tournament titles, including one at Olentangy Liberty, and took fourth at Marion Harding. The senior Stephen is a three-time state qualifier, but after his first state medal; this season includes four tournament titles, along with a sixth at Ashland and fourth at OVAC. Finally, it's fellow senior Herron, a district placer last year up at 138, whose season includes five tournament titles (four of which came up at 138) plus a third at New Lexington. Also in this weight are returning state qualifiers Maple and Kanyuch, who each went two-and-out at last year's state tournament.

138 pounds

1. Cameron Lacure, Legacy Christian, senior (Troy)
2. Gavin Owens, Eastwood, senior (Rossford)
3. Ashton Homan, Monroeville, sophomore (Rossford)
4. Anwar Alli, Marion Pleasant, junior (Heath)
5. Michael Markulin, South Range, senior (Garfield Hts)
6. Arlie Benson, Greenon, senior (Troy)
7. Skyler King, Barnesville, sophomore (Heath)
8. Andrew Huck, Bidwell River Valley, junior (Heath)
9. Troy Kennedy, Troy Christian, senior (Troy)
10. Owen Miller, Oak Harbor, junior (Rossford)
11. P.J. Murphy, Reading, sophomore (Troy)
12. Zach Lyons, Tuslaw, senior (Garfield Hts)
13. Brock Wygle, Utica, senior (Heath)
14. Marcus Cortez, Galion Northmor, senior (Heath)
15. Amari Bowers, Conneaut, junior (Garfield Hts)
16. Jeff Camp, Patrick Henry, junior (Rossford)

GHTS – Markulin, Lyons, Bowers, Jake Sundberg (Waynedale, senior); Andrew Sas (Mapleton, senior)

HEA – Alli, King, Huck, Wygle; Cortez

ROS – Owens, Homan, Miller, Camp; Aiden Naseman (Norwalk St. Paul, senior)

TROY – Lacure, Benson, Kennedy, Murphy; Connor Mitchell (South Charleston Southeastern, junior)

Returning state champion Lacure and multi-time state champion Gavin Brown are the flagship figures for this Legacy Christian squad, which is prohibitively favored to repeat in the individual state tournament. Lacure was third as a freshman in 2019 before beating 2019 state champion Zack Mattin 7-2 to win the 132-pound state title last season. This season has been imperfect for the Campbell signee, though he is the clear favorite to take state gold; he was champion at GMVWA, but went 1-2 at the Ironman and finished fourth at the Carnahan.

Like many other weight classes in this division, the field is very deep with credentials, as there are four state medalists and ten other state qualifiers among the challenge pack. The highest placer outside of Lacure is Homan, who placed third at 113 last year as a freshman. This season he has competed mostly at 132, where he was 1-2 at the Ironman before taking third at Marion Harding and Maumee Bay; while in this weight class he was first at the Edison Opener. Sandwiching Lacure and Homan in the rankings is two-time state placer Owens, who was second at 106 as a freshman in 2019 before taking fifth at 132

last year; his campaign includes titles at Waterloo, Defiance, Van Buren, and Lima Central Catholic along with a runner-up finish at Perrysburg.

Two additional ranked wrestlers join Owens and Homan at Rossford for district. Miller snagged a rather unexpected state berth last year with a 1-0 consolation semifinal victory over 2020 state qualifier Vogus; while his junior campaign has included runner-up finishes at Bellevue and Clyde, a fifth at the Edison Holiday, a sixth at Perrysburg, and third place at Rossford. Also ranked here is the junior Camp, who was runner-up at Van Buren and third at Lima Central Catholic.

State placer Benson, three-time state qualifier Kennedy, and state alternate Murphy join Lacure as ranked wrestlers at the Troy district. Benson was seventh at 132 as a junior last year, while this season has seen him win three different tournaments; fellow senior Kennedy also placed seventh at 106 in 2019, while this year has seen him win three tournaments, placed third at the Edison Holiday, along with taking fifth at Barnesville (up at 144) and Perrysburg; while Murphy competed last year at Division I Elder before transferring home to Reading for his sophomore season, in which he has finished runner-up at Franklin, Madeira, and Lima Central Catholic.

Five ranked wrestlers make this an absolute grinder at the Heath district, along with the fact 2020 state qualifier Caden Canning (Newark Catholic, senior) is not even ranked. Leading the way here is Alli, who was a 44-1 district champion at 106 as a freshman in 2020, but missed the back two-thirds of last season due to injury. This year he was runner-up at Mt. Vernon, losing 2-1 to Ayoub in the final, before earning titles at Olentangy Liberty and Marion Pleasant.

The sophomore King won a state bout last year at 126, and this year has titles at three tournaments (notably pinning Huck in the Barnesville final), runner-up finishes at Union Local and the OVAC, and a fourth-place finish at Ashland. The junior Huck also won a state bout last year at 126, while this season includes four tournament titles along with the runner-up finishes at Barnesville and up a weight at New Lexington, plus placing third at Boardman; the senior Wygle has three tournament titles plus a runner-up at Licking Valley on the season; while fellow senior Cortez was runner-up at Big Walnut and fourth at Marion Harding.

It's just three ranked wrestlers at Garfield Hts, a group led by returning state medalist Markulin whose season includes runner-up finishes at Waterloo and the Hephner before taking third at the EOWL; fellow senior Lyons is a returning state qualifier who took seventh at North Canton; while the junior Bowers was a state alternate last year losing 11-4 to Bowers in the consolation semifinal after beating 2020 state qualifier Sundberg 6-2 the match before.

144 pounds

1. Pierce Taylor, Cincinnati McNicholas, senior (Troy)
2. Brodie Dominique, Archbold, sophomore (Rossford)
3. Jarrett Hornish, Wayne Trace, senior (Troy)
4. Hunter Vogus, Monroeville, junior (Rossford)
5. Cade Petersen, Oak Harbor, senior (Rossford)
6. Michael Harris, Smithville, senior (Garfield Hts)
7. Jace Margraf, Mohawk, junior (Rossford)
8. Boede Campbell, Legacy Christian, junior (Troy)
9. Kade Wireman, Allen East, junior (Troy)
10. Ayden King, Barnesville, freshman (Heath)

11. Luke Bischoff, Seneca East, senior (Rossford)
12. Luke Dolan, Brookville, sophomore (Troy)
13. Brody Marks, Sandy Valley, senior (Heath)
14. Clayton Smith, Utica, senior (Heath)
15. Alex Munn, Berkshire, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
16. Xavier Escobedo, Eastwood, senior (Rossford)

GHTS – Harris, Munn, Collin Wonner (Columbiana Crestview, senior), Jacob Richardson (South Range, junior); Brian Youngblood (Rootstown, freshman)

HEA – King, Marks, Smith, Skyler Wolf (Marion Pleasant, sophomore); Ridge Barkley (Morral Ridgedale, sophomore)

ROS – Dominique, Vogus, Petersen, Margraf; Bischoff, Escobedo

TROY – Taylor, Hornish, Campbell, Wireman; Dolan

There are many star wrestlers at the smaller schools who also make key contributions to other sports teams in different seasons. One of the many doing so is Ohio University wrestling signee Taylor, who is a three-sport athlete, including serving as a star quarterback for his football team that was one play away from beating the eventual state champions Clinton-Massie in the regional final.

Taylor led McNicholas down the field to score a touchdown on basically the last play of the game, where an extra point would force overtime. The Rockets then chose to go for the win, but Taylor was stopped just short (literally just short) of the end zone on the two-point conversion. In a bit of irony, Clinton-Massie was faced with a similar situation in the state final, though on that occasion there was closer to a minute left on the clock; they went for the two-pointer, succeeded and beat Youngstown Ursuline to win the state title.

On the wrestling mat last year, Taylor took third at state at 138, losing 4-2 in overtime in the state final to eventual two-time state champion Casey Barnett. This season he has titles in four tournaments, including at SWOWCA, and was runner-up at CIT losing 4-3 to Younger in the final. Four additional ranked qualifiers will join him at the Troy district, including returning 126-pound state champion Hornish.

On the season, Hornish has five tournament titles, including those at Van Buren and Lima Central Catholic in this weight class; however, he lost 4-3 to returning state medalist Dominique in a dual meet. The pair of juniors Wireman and Campbell both won a state tournament bout last year at 138, Campbell placed sixth at the GMVWA, while Wireman has competed this season across three weight classes (champion at Allen County up at 157, fifth at the Edison Holiday up at 150, before taking first at Lima Senior, third at Van Buren, and second at Lima Central Catholic in this weight). Finally, the sophomore Dolan was third at Edgewood and eighth at GMVWA before picking up a 10-9 dual meet victory over returning state qualifier Marks.

Dominique, seventh at state last year as a freshman at 138, anchors a group of six ranked wrestlers at the Rossford district. On the season, he was champion at Defiance and runner-up at Maumee Bay losing just 3-1 to state champion Joey Blaze. Vogus qualified for state in 2020 as a freshman, and has competed both down at 138 (champion at Marion Harding and third at Maumee Bay) and in this weight class (champion at the Edison Opener, also 3-2 dual meet win over Petersen); the senior Petersen is a returning state medalist, whose season includes taking third at the Edison Holiday, second at Perrysburg, sixth at Maumee Bay, and first at Rossford; Margraf placed at district last year as a

sophomore, and this year was champion at West Jefferson before taking third at the Gorman and losing in overtime to Hornish in the final at Van Buren; the senior Bischoff placed in district at 145 last year, and this year has two tournament titles to go with missing top six at Van Buren by a match and taking third at Rossford; while fellow senior Escobedo was champion at Waterloo, third at Defiance, and seventh at Perrysburg.

Returning state medalist Harris is one of two ranked wrestlers at Garfield Hts. This season Harris has tournament titles at Smithville and Findlay before taking second at West Salem Northwestern; while the sophomore Munn was fifth at Defiance and Boardman, first at Berkshire, and fourth at CVC.

Last among the districts is Heath, which features three ranked wrestlers, two of whom have qualified for state. The freshman King has been most excellent this season placing second at Union Local and Barnesville, third at OVAC and New Lexington, fourth at West Holmes, and fifth at Ashland. Returning state qualifier Marks was champion at Waterloo, while 2020 state qualifier Smith has a pair of tournament titles on the season.

150 pounds

1. Gavin Brown, Legacy Christian, senior (Troy)
2. Westyn Moyer, Mechanicsburg, senior (Troy)
3. Nathan Cadle, Bidwell River Valley, senior (Heath)
4. Will Stieber, Norwalk St. Paul, senior (Rossford)
5. Josh Brown, Berkshire, junior (Garfield Hts)
6. Duke Hermes, Milan Edison, junior (Rossford)
7. A.J. Coppersmith, Columbiana Crestview, junior (Garfield Hts)
8. Greyson Siders, Dalton, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
9. Hayden Buhro, Oak Harbor, junior (Rossford)
10. Jacob Lyons, Tuslaw, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
11. Chance Wooley, Southern Local, senior (Garfield Hts)
12. Lane Cline, Waterford, junior (Heath)
13. Aiden Helmke, Defiance Tinora, freshman (Rossford)
14. Grant Guiler, Amanda-Clearcreek, senior (Heath)
15. Xander Myers, Liberty Center, sophomore (Rossford)
16. Kaleb McFee, West Muskingum, senior (Heath)

GHTS – Brown, Coppersmith, Siders, Lyons; Wooley

HEA – Cadle, Cline, Guiler, McFee; Logan Tague (Barnesville, junior)

ROS – Stieber, Hermes, Buhro, Helmke; Myers

TROY – Brown, Moyer, Trenton Gatchell (Allen East, sophomore), Michael Osborne (Versailles, sophomore); Mason Starnes (Brookville, senior)

Back in 2019, when Gavin Brown beat returning state champion Ethan Turner for the second time as many weeks, this time by a 2-1 score to earn a state title, one knew this young man had the potential to be a superb talent. He has more or less been that, as the Ohio State signee added a second state title last year (winning all but one match by bonus) and then would place at the Super 32 Challenge this fall. During the current season, Brown was eighth at the Ironman and champion at the GMVWA, and is once again the strong favorite to add yet another state title on the resume.

Just one additional state medalist calls this weight home, and it's fellow senior Moyer, who was seventh at state last season. He was third at Marion Harding and champion at Lima Senior during the course of the season. Brown and Moyer are the lone wrestlers in the rankings from the Troy district.

Five ranked wrestlers each exit from Garfield Hts and Rossford, with three contestants at each tournament site having qualified for state last year.

The field at Garfield Hts saw two of those qualifiers win a state bout, with the juniors Brown and Coppersmith getting it done. This year Brown was champion at North Coast and Berkshire sandwiched around a fourth at Defiance, along with taking second at CVC up one weight class; while Coppersmith was a finalist in the EOWL meet. The sophomore Siders also made state last year, and this season was runner-up at North Canton and Berkshire in this weight, while taking first at Smithville and third at West Salem Northwestern up at 157. The sophomore Lyons was a state alternate last year, and missed placing at North Canton by one match; while the senior Wooley lost to Lyons in the consolation medal bout last year at district, and this year has a pair of tournament titles to go with a fifth at Beaver Local and sixth at OVAC.

At Rossford, just Stieber picked up a state tournament win, while Hermes and Burho went two-and-out. The senior Stieber was champion at Beaver Local before taking second at Defiance and fourth at Perrysburg; the junior Hermes was runner-up at both Milan Edison tournaments, and missed placing at Maumee Bay by one match; while fellow junior Buhro was runner-up at Bellevue, fourth at the Edison Holiday, and fifth at Perrysburg. The freshman Helmke placed fourth at Defiance and eighth at Perrysburg up at 157 before dropping into this weight to go 2-2 at Maumee Bay and win the title at Van Buren; while the sophomore Myers was fourth at Marion Harding and went 1-2 at Perrysburg up one weight class, before taking fifth at Marion Pleasant and pinning Buhro in a dual meet at this weight class.

Finally, it's a group of four ranked wrestlers at Heath led by the senior Cadle, a three-time state qualifier that is seeking his first state medal. On the season, Cadle was champion at two tournaments before taking third at Boardman. The junior Cline is a returning state alternate, and was champion at Waterford; the senior Guiler was runner-up at Watterson, champion at Logan Elm, along with taking third at West Jefferson, Athens, and New Lexington; while 2019 state qualifier McFee started the season at 157 taking first at Waterford and third at Union Local, before coming into this weight to take fourth at New Lexington. Also here is returning state qualifier Tague.

157 pounds

1. Tate Geiser, Dalton, senior (Garfield Hts)
2. Jake Hurst, Mechanicsburg, senior (Troy)
3. Connor Smith, Gibsonburg, junior (Rossford)
4. David Davis, Miami East, senior (Troy)
5. Remington Bauer, Milan Edsion, senior (Rossford)
6. Kane Epperly, Versailles, junior (Troy)
7. Ethan Cooper, Legacy Christian, junior (Troy)
8. Evan Perry, Delta, senior (Rossford)
9. Niko Christo, Galion Northmor, senior (Heath)
10. Cody Coontz, Rootstown, junior (Garfield Hts)
11. Jake Starkey, South Range, junior (Garfield Hts)
12. Justin Stamp, Bidwell River Valley, junior (Heath)
13. Brayden Doran, Preble Shawnee, junior (Troy)

14. Dickie Engel, Reading, freshman (Troy)
15. Brendan Sheehan, Newark Catholic, junior (Heath)
16. Grant Heuing, Coldwater, senior (Troy)

GHTS – Geiser, Coontz, Starkey, Brandon Rollin (Black River, senior); Devyn Vanest (Tuslaw, junior)
HEA – Christo, Stamp, Sheehan, A.J. Keyt (West Jefferson, senior); Brandon Mulvaine (Marion Pleasant, junior)
ROS – Smith, Bauer, Perry, Jack Zeitzheim (Oak Harbor, senior); Brencyn Evans (Monroeville, freshman)
TROY – Hurst, Davis, Epperly, Cooper; Doran, Engel, Heuing

Being the weight immediately above Gavin Brown, it is natural to see a rather congested field. Six returning state medalist and seven additional state qualifiers are among the expected contenders. Leading the way are the wrestlers that took second, third, and fourth last year at 152 pounds behind Brian Palmer, who became Buckeye Local's first state champion in 15 years.

Geiser beat Hurst 3-1 in overtime in the quarterfinal, who would beat Smith 4-3 in the consolation final. Last year Geiser became Dalton's highest-ever state placer by finishing as runner-up, as the Bulldogs also doubled their all-time state medalist count from two to four when accounting for Austin Ryder's seventh at 220. The Cleveland State signee Geiser is also a multi-sport athlete, as he was a star two-way player for a regional runner-up team this past season in football. On the mat, he was runner-up at Mt. Vernon before winning title sat North Canton, West Salem Northwestern, and Berkshire.

Hurst was second at Marion Harding at first at Lima Senior this season, while also picking up quality dual meet match victories over Metzger and Cramblett. Should the junior Smith be able to win a state title, he would become the first state champion at his school in exactly forty years, and only the second in all; Paul Sanchez won the Class A unlimited final by a 10-5 decision on that occasion. This season, Smith has split finals matches with Scavuzzo, winning at Perrysburg then losing at Maumee Bay; while also taking home titles at Van Buren and Rossford.

Each will exit a different district tournament: Geiser from Garfield Hts, Hurst from Troy, and Smith from Rossford.

The missing district is at Heath, which only has three ranked wrestlers, led by returning eight-place finisher Christo. The senior was a quarterfinalist at Marion Harding before defaulting out, second at the Gorman, and champion at Marion Pleasant. The junior Stamp is also a returning state qualifier, whose season includes runner-up finishes at Barnesville and Nelsonville-York, a fifth at New Lexington, and a seventh at Boardman; while fellow junior Sheehan has three tournament titles on the season (two of those coming at 165) before taking second at CIT and seventh at Lima Central Catholic in this weight. Not listed among the five on the above chart, but in this district, are returning state qualifiers Paul Martello (Bishop Ready, senior) and Brock Moyer (Sandy Valley, junior).

Hurst will exit what is clearly the most congested district with six additional ranked wrestlers seeking state tournament spots. It's a group led by returning state placer Davis, returning state qualifier Epperly, and two-time state alternate Cooper. The senior Davis has won six different tournament titles this season, most notably at the Edison Holiday and Lima Central Catholic; the junior Epperly was fourth at GMVWA, but avenged that consolation medal loss in the state duals qualifier; while fellow junior Cooper placed third at the GMVWA.

The junior Doran was third at Edgewood, 2-2 at SWOCA, first at Valley View, and second at Lima Central Catholic; the freshman Engel was champion at Franklin before placing third at both Madeira and Lima Central Catholic; while the senior Heuing is a returning district placer but has spent much of the season up one weight class (first at Findlay, third at Lima Senior, fourth at Lima Central Catholic, and second at Dublin Jerome), coming down here for the Wapakoneta tournament.

Just two other ranked wrestlers join Geiser at Garfield Hts, returning state qualifiers Coontz and Starkey. The junior Coontz was champion at Waterloo and Portage County, along with placing second at Kenston and the Hephner; while fellow junior Starkey was third up a weight class at Waterloo, before coming down to place fourth at Hephner and second at EOWL.

Also, just two other ranked wrestlers join Smith at Rossford, returning state placer Bauer and returning state qualifier Perry, both seniors. Bauer started the season up at 165, where he was first at the Edison Opener and second at the Edison Holiday, before moving into this weight class to finish sixth at Maumee Bay; while Perry had a similar path finishing fifth at Olentangy Liberty and then missing placing by one match at both Perrysburg and Maumee Bay up at 165 before dropping in this weight when he lost 5-1 to Ewen at the Anthony Wayne Duals.

165 pounds

1. Shadrick Slone, Willard, senior (Rossford)
2. Hunter Andel, Garrettsville Garfield, junior (Garfield Hts)
3. Nick Alvarez, Legacy Christian, senior (Troy)
4. Carter Chase, Marion Pleasant, senior (Heath)
5. Carson Bey, Versailles, senior (Troy)
6. Logan Cormell, South Range, senior (Garfield Hts)
7. Chase Miller, Allen East, senior (Troy)
8. Bryce Hesselbart, Eastwood, junior (Rossford)
9. Isaac Gray, Adena, senior (Heath)
10. Cannon Endicott, Elmwood, junior (Rossford)
11. Justin Hershberger, Waynedale, senior (Garfield Hts)
12. Camren Foster, Liberty Center, senior (Rossford)
13. Justin Fox, Waterloo, junior (Garfield Hts)
14. Marshal Sayre, Caldwell, junior (Heath)
15. Gage Summit, Carey, junior (Rossford)
16. Louka Babic, Kirtland, junior (Garfield Hts)

GHTS – Andel, Cormell, Hershberger, Fox; Babic

HEA – Chase, Gray, Sayre, Ayden Krupinski (Buckeye Local, senior); Michael Conkle (Bidwell River Valley, junior)

ROS – Slone, Hesselbart, Endicott, Foster; Summit

TROY – Alvarez, Bey, Miller, Dylan Starnes (Brookville, senior); Jacob Groeber (Clermont Northeastern, senior)

The 2020 edition of Milan Edison qualified ten wrestlers to state after dominating their way to the dual team state title. Then the state tournament was cancelled one day before it was supposed to commence, which denied the Chargers that elusive individual bracket state title. Since then, three members of that team have left to attend other high schools, and are still contending for state titles. In addition, two wrestlers that were eighth graders that year, and placed at state as freshmen, are out for

the rest of this season due to injury. All that, and it's pretty impressive that Milan Edison finished second at the OHSWCA State Duals and is legitimately in position to take second to Legacy Christian in the individual tournament next month.

One of those wrestlers who moved on is Slone, who was runner-up for Milan Edison at 160 last year losing 10-0 to Hayden Pummel (now at Northern Illinois) in the state final after qualifying for state the prior two years. Now at Willard for his senior season, Slone has five tournament titles to go with an 8-4 loss to Lillard in the final at Perrysburg. He is well positioned to get that elusive state title.

Five other state medalist and four additional returning state qualifiers are in the challenge group. Two placers each exit district tournaments at Garfield Hts and Troy.

The district at Garfield Hts has five ranked wrestlers in total, including the second-ranked wrestler in Andel, who placed fourth at 145 last year after qualifying for state at 126 in 2020 as a freshman. So far this season, he lost 1-0 to Lillard in the final at Solon before going 3-2 at the Beast of the East, then winning titles at Portage County and the EOWL. The senior Cormell placed fifth at state last year up at 170, while this year he was champion up one weight class at Waterloo before taking fourth at the Hephner and third at EOWL. Fellow senior Hershberger was a state alternate last year, and this year was champion up at weight at Cuyahoga Hts before taking third at Lima Central Catholic. The junior Fox placed at district last year, and this year has titles at Hanoverton United and Waterloo before taking third at Portage County and fourth at EOWL; while fellow junior Babic was champion at Cuyahoga Hts and CVC, along with third at Kenston.

Five ranked wrestlers also feature at Rossford, four others plus Slone. The junior Hesselbart is a returning state qualifier who started the year up at 175 where he was runner-up at Waterloo and Van Buren sandwiched around a fourth at Defiance, before taking second at Lima Central Catholic in this weight class; fellow junior Endicott placed at district last year, and this year was eighth at Perrysburg before taking first at Van Buren and second at Margaretta; the senior Foster is a returning state alternate whose season includes fourth place finishes at Marion Harding and Marion Pleasant sandwiched around missing placement at Perrysburg by one match; while returning state qualifier Summit was runner-up at Bellevue up a weight before taking second at Van Buren and missing placement by one match at Lima Central Catholic in this weight.

At Troy, the seniors Alvarez and Bey are the state placers, while returning state qualifier Miller is the other ranked wrestler. Alvarez was third at the GMVWA and champion at GMVWA with a 9-7 win over Bey in the semifinal; while Bey was fourth at GMVWA after spending all fall at quarterback for a football team that won state, as they knocked off behemoth Kirtland in the championship game ending a multi-year Hornets' winning streak. Miller has titles at Allen County and Lima Central Catholic to his credit on the season.

Finally, it's a group of three ranked wrestlers at Heath led by returning state placer Chase and returning state qualifier Gray, both of whom are seniors. Chase has tournament titles at Olentangy Liberty and Marion Harding, along with a 5-1 loss to Burns in the final at Marion Pleasant; while Gray has four tournament titles to go with runner-up finishes at Logan (up at 175) and Miami Trace (pinned by Burns). The other ranked wrestler here is the junior Sayre, a returning district placer, who took fourth at the OVAC and has runner-up finishes in three other tournaments on the season between 165 and 175.

175 pounds

1. Peyton Lemon, Waynedale, senior (Garfield Hts)
2. Bryce Keckley, West Jefferson, senior (Heath)
3. Connor Havill, Troy Christian, junior (Troy)
4. Gunner Endicott, Elmwood, senior (Rossford)
5. Keegan Sell, Garrettsville Garfield, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
6. Logan Lloyd, Milan Edison, senior (Rossford)
7. C.J. Smith, Marion Pleasant, senior (Heath)
8. Tabor Lackey, Trimble, senior (Heath)
9. Anthony Gencarelli, Kirtland, senior (Garfield Hts)
10. Brier Godsey, Ashland Crestview, senior (Rossford)
11. Matt Gentry, Sandy Valley, senior (Heath)
12. Owen Berner, Defiance Ayersville, junior (Rossford)
13. Ronnie Thomas, Mechanicsburg, freshman (Troy)
14. Izaiah Sherman, Covington, freshman (Troy)
15. Mason Vonderwell, Delphos St. John's, senior (Troy)
16. Kaden Basil, Bluffton, senior (Rossford)
17. Colton Sparks, Plymouth, junior (Rossford)
18. Caden Conner, Reading, senior (Troy)
19. Gus Kyser, Madeira, junior (Troy)

GHTS – Lemon, Sell, Gencarelli, Luke Torgerson (Cuyahoga Hts, senior); Neil Miller (Chippewa, sophomore)

HEA – Keckley, Smith, Lackey, Gentry; Nathan Brown (Bidwell River Valley, senior)

ROS – Endicott, Lloyd, Godsey, Berner; Basil, Sparks, Cameron Urivez (Defiance Tinora, sophomore)

TROY – Havill, Thomas, Sherman, Vonderwell; Conner, Kyser

Lots of football and wrestling going hand-in-hand here in Division III. In this weight class, it's projected state champ Lemon, who is going to enroll at NCAA Division II Ashland as a quarterback. In high school, he played the position on the gridiron for his head wrestling coach Louie Stanley, who also served as the head football coach. Stanley is one of the long-standing servant leaders as a wrestling coach with 500 career dual meet wins, who has built an excellent community-based program at Waynedale, while also finding time to be head football coach for the last five years (a responsibility he stepped down from last month).

Lemon was state runner-up last year at 170, beating Keckley 3-0 in the semifinal before losing 5-2 to Wayne County rival Sevi Garza, a result that gave Rittman their first state champion in wrestling program history. This season saw a delayed start, but since return he is undefeated including a title at Lima Central Catholic.

There are five-to-seven other returning state medalists in this weight class, along with four additional state qualifiers. Two of those wrestlers are the other two in the rankings at Garfield Hts. Sell made the state semis at 152 last year as a freshman, then did the slide back to sixth; while this year he was runner-up at Solon and EOWL, along with his title at Portage County. The senior Gencarelli was third at Kenston before winning titles at Perry Pin City and the CVC.

Three-time state participant Keckley, who was third at state last year, is the direct rival in the rankings to Lemon. This season he is undefeated with titles at seven different events. Three others, all seniors with state experience, join Keckley in the rankings from the Heath district. Three-time state participant Smith

was eighth at 160 last year, and this season started with runner-up finishes at Mt. Vernon and Olentangy Liberty before titles came about at Marion Harding, North Union, and Marion Pleasant; Lackey has titles in six tournaments, including a win at Nelsonville-York, along with a runner-up finish at New Lexington; while Gentry placed fourth at Waterloo.

Three returning state placers are ranked in the district weight class at Rossford, though each has uncertainty surrounding them. The senior Lloyd took fourth last year at 182, and has been here most of the season, winning the Edison Opener and taking third at the Edison Holiday; however, he made a foray up to 190 to take second at Maumee Bay, and that might be a more attractive weight in terms of the state title challengers. Fellow senior Endicott was fifth at 152 last season, but has missed virtually all of this season with injury, though it is rumored he is going to make an attempt to get back for post-season; while the same can be said for Godsey, who placed eighth last year at 182 as a junior, is certified in Track Wrestling but has yet to compete that I have seen this season.

Three additional wrestlers sit in the rankings report at Rossford. The junior Berner was runner-up at Defiance, and has split matches with the freshman Ronnie Thomas this season; the senior Basil is a returning state qualifier who was runner-up at Allen County and Lima Central Catholic, a semifinalist at Defiance, fourth at Perrysburg, and champion at Van Buren; while the junior Sparks is a returning state alternate, and was runner-up at Clear Fork to Keckley before winning titles at Mapleton and Margaretta.

Last, but not least, is the six ranked wrestlers at Troy led by returning state medalist Havill, who was seventh at 160 as a sophomore last season. This season Havill went 1-2 at the Ironman, but it was a quality win over Michael Altomer from New York, before he would take second at the Edison Holiday with an 8-5 win over Lloyd along the way. Next up are a pair of freshmen in Thomas and Sherman; Thomas was third at Marion Harding and champion at Lima Senior, while Sherman was champion at Troy over Vonderwell and fourth at GMVWA.

The senior Vonderwell is a returning district placer, who has titles at Bellevue, Allen County (including wins over Basil and returning state alternate Wireman of Allen East), and two other tournaments; along with a runner-up at Troy, third at Lima Central Catholic, and fourth at CIT. Fellow senior Conner was champion at Franklin before taking third at Madeira and fifth at Lima Central Catholic; while the junior Kyser was second at Madeira and fourth at Lima Central Catholic.

190 pounds

1. Lucas Stoddard, Berkshire, senior (Garfield Hts)
2. Jaydin Sapp, Ravenna Southeast, senior (Garfield Hts)
3. Tyler Knight, Mogadore, senior (Garfield Hts)
4. Will Hash, Bidwell River Valley, senior (Heath)
5. Trevor Slider, Malvern, senior (Heath)
6. Brennon Braud, Kirtland, senior (Garfield Hts)
7. Spencer Franks, Lakota, senior (Rossford)
8. Abe Delano, Defiance Ayersville, sophomore (Rossford)
9. Jackson Daugherty, Manchester, junior (Garfield Hts)
10. Owen Pummel, Indian Lake, freshman (Troy)
11. Sean Gast, Mapleton, senior (Garfield Hts)
12. Sean Geiser, Dalton, senior (Garfield Hts)
13. Lee Burkett, Troy Christian, junior (Troy)
14. Owen Johnson, Liberty Center, senior (Rossford)

15. Jonah Bibler, Marion Pleasant, senior (Heath)

16. Jenson Wagoner, Covington, senior (Troy)

GHTS – Stoddard, Sapp, Knight, Braud; Daugherty, Gast, Geiser

HEA – Hash, Slider, Bibler, Donovan Weddell (Marion Elgin, senior); Garrett George (Mt. Gilead, junior)

ROS – Franks, Delano, Johnson, Aidan Godsey (Ashland Crestview); Hayden Dickman (Archbold, junior),

Mason Oliver (Elmwood, junior), Dominick Whetsel (Gisbonsburg, senior)

TROY – Pummel, Burkett, Wagoner, Caleb Stammen (Coldwater, senior), John Edwards (Lehman Catholic, senior); Preston Sellers (Dayton Christian, junior)

Fourteen years have gone by since Berkshire last won an individual state title, that came in 2008 when Travis Porter earned a 10-2 major decision in the 215-pound state final over Cory Akin of Triway. Also on that day, Don Stocum from Kirtland won the title at 285, so maybe the CVC Valley peers can repeat that feat this season?

The senior Stoddard is one of five returning state placers in the present composition of this weight class, and the highest of the medalists, placing third last year at 182, losing 3-2 in the semifinal to eventual state champion Carson Meyer. This season includes a finals appearance at the North Coast, third place at Defiance, and runner-up at Boardman (only losing 8-1 to Fishback) before taking titles at Berkshire and the CVC.

Much of his direct challenge is going to come from Garfield Hts district peers. Fellow seniors Knight and Sapp are the next two highest returning placers, taking fourth and fifth last year at 195. The pair advanced to the finals at Portage County this year, but the match was not contested. In addition, Knight was champion at Alexander and runner-up at Hephner; while Sapp was champion at Mike Lewis, third at the Hephner, and second at EOWL. Fellow senior Braud won a state tournament match last year at 182, while this year he was first at Kenston and Perry Pin City before losing 5-0 to Stoddard in the CVC final.

There are three additional ranked wrestlers at the district in its present composition. Daugherty was a state alternate last year in Division II at Akron Hoban, while this year at Manchester he was runner-up at Waterloo before taking third at the Gorman; the senior Gast missed placing at the Gorman by one match before taking second at West Salem Northwestern and first at Mapleton; while fellow senior Geiser placed at district last year, and this year has placed second at Smithville and third at West Salem Northwestern.

Three of the other four wrestlers that have qualified to state before in this weight are the ranked trio at the Heath district. The senior Hash placed seventh at state last year, while this year he has four tournament wins to go with a third at Barnesville, second at New Lexington, and fifth at Boardman; fellow Slider qualified for state in 2020 when competing for Division II Minerva, while this season he has three tournament titles, including at Waterloo; and another senior in Bibler was runner-up at Mt. Vernon before taking fourth at Marion Pleasant.

Three ranked wrestlers are among the field at Troy for district, but one of them is not returning state placer Stammen. Leading the way here is the freshman Pummel, whose older brother Hayden was an undefeated state champion last season. This season Owen won titles at Columbus DeSales and Olentangy Orange while taking sixth at Defiance and second at Marion Pleasant; the junior Burkett has three tournament titles to go with a fourth at Barnesville, and missing placement by one bout at

Perrysburg; while the senior Wagoner was seventh at GMVWA and third at Lima Central Catholic, but has an in-season 3-1 loss to Burkett.

Wrapping things up are the three ranked wrestlers at Rossford, none of whom have qualified for the state tournament. The senior Franks was champion at Lima Central Catholic and two other tournaments, along with placing seventh at Perrysburg; the sophomore Delano placed fifth at Defiance, and has a win up at 215 over returning state qualifier May in a dual meet; while the senior Johnson is a returning state alternate having missed placement by one match at both Perrysburg (top 8) and Marion Pleasant (top 6), but he does have a dual meet pin over Bibler.

215 pounds

1. Trevor Stewart, Greenon, senior (Troy)
2. Julien Griffith, Marion Pleasant, sophomore (Heath)
3. Lucas Thomas, Harrison Central, sophomore (Heath)
4. Zakary Dobson, Martins Ferry, senior (Heath)
5. Wyatt Moyer, Sandy Valley, senior (Heath)
6. Brayden Kiehl, Versailles, senior (Troy)
7. Austin Ryder, Dalton, senior (Garfield Hts)
8. Spencer Mesaros, Ravenna Southeast, senior (Garfield Hts)
9. Jacob Thompson, Milan Edison, senior (Rossford)
10. Brett Ogborn, Liberty Benton, senior (Rossford)
11. Michael Lowe, Mogadore, senior (Garfield Hts)
12. Preston Brown, Middletown Madison, senior (Troy)
13. Christopher Colucci, South Range, junior (Garfield Hts)
14. Isaac Carmen, Carey, senior (Rossford)
15. Alek Winner, Allen East, senior (Troy)
16. Zane Finley, Lucas, senior (Rossford)

GHTS – Ryder, Mesaros, Lowe, Colucci; Payne Brereton (Hanover United, senior)

HEA – Griffith, Thomas, Dobson, Moyer; Aiden Greene (Bidwell River Valley, senior)

ROS – Thompson, Ogborn, Carmen, Finley; Caleb Cunningham (Ashland Crestview, sophomore)

TROY – Stewart, Kiehl, Brown, Winner; Bronson Stacy (Brookville, junior)

Going into last year, Greenon had never had a top three state place finisher. After placing eighth as a freshman in 2019 and qualifying for state in 2020 for Division II Urbana, Stewart moved on to Greenon where he was undefeated headed in to last year's 182-pound state final, a match that he lost 3-2. Therefore, Greenon now has a state finalist in program history, but not a state champion, something that Stewart hopes to eliminate this year. The senior seemingly missed the first portion of the season, but has since returned to win his conference title.

The next four wrestlers in the rankings all exit from the Heath district. It's a group that features two sophomores then two seniors. Griffith made the state semifinals as a freshman on the way to taking fourth at state; while Thomas was a district placer, including a first-period loss by fall to Griffith in the district quarters. Both Dobson and Moyer advanced to state, Dobson going 1-2 with Moyer finishing fifth.

This season, Griffith was runner-up at Mt. Vernon before pinning Howard on the way to a title at Marion Harding, but then taking third at North Union; Thomas was champion at Smithville and the OVAC (beat

Dobson 12-9 before a massive finals upset pin over Brothers from West Virginia), but then lost 7-2 to Brothers in the final at Buckeye Local; Dobson was champion at Waterloo (over Moyer) and Shadyside before taking third at OVAC (loss to Thomas) and Buckeye Local (loss to Brothers); while Moyer was runner-up at Waterloo.

Three additional state qualifiers join Stewart in the district tournament at Troy, though Adam Waller (Mechanicsburg, senior) is not among the four ranked wrestlers in this district. The senior Kiehl placed sixth at state last year, while this year he was fifth at GMVWA; fellow senior Brown spent much of this season at 285 where he was fourth at Edgewood, second at Bellbrook, and third at Eaton before dropping to this weight class; while fellow senior Winner is a returning state qualifier, and has finished runner-up in four tournaments this season (Lima Senior and Van Buren losing to Ogborn, Lima Central Catholic to Carman).

The fifth of five returning state medalists is the senior Ryder, whose season includes third place finishes at Mt. Vernon and North Canton before taking first at West Salem Northwestern and second at Berkshire. He is the lone wrestler that has made state before at the Garfield Hts district, where he is joined by three other ranked wrestlers. Mesaros was a district placer as a sophomore in 2020 before not competing the back part of last year, and this year took third at the Mike Lewis before placing second at Portage County and the EOWL, and winning the Hephner; fellow senior Lowe was third at Waterloo, champion at Portage County and Alexander, then runner-up at the Hephner; while the junior Colucci placed fifth at Waterloo and Hephner before taking fourth at EOWL, and getting a total upset win by fall in the state duals final against Thompson.

Two-time state qualifier Thompson leads a group of four ranked senior wrestlers from the Rossford district. This season he was first at the Edison Opener, third at the Edison Holiday, and fifth at Maumee Bay; he also has a 6-3 dual meet loss to Mesaros. Ogborn has four tournament tittles on the season, those coming at Toledo St. John's, Defiance, Lima Senior, and Van Buren; Carmen started his season up at 285, where he was runner-up at Bellevue, before moving into this weight to take fifth at Van Buren then first at Lima Central Catholic; while Finley was first at Clear Fork, fifth at the Gorman, and second at Fredericktown.

285 pounds

1. Austin Kohlhofer, Delta, senior (Rossford)
2. Eli Criblez, Allen East, junior (Troy)
3. Javen Gaines, Defiance Tinora, junior (Rossford)
4. Travis Owen, Black River, senior (Garfield Hts)
5. Ryan Elrod, Ashtabula St. John, senior (Garfield Hts)
6. Taran Tyo, Versailles, senior (Troy)
7. Jackson Berardi, Milan Edison, senior (Rossford)
8. Owen Box, Liberty Center, junior (Rossford)
9. Gavyn Mendenhall, Columbus Academy, senior (Heath)
10. Marshall Bier, Hannibal River, junior (Heath)
11. Logan Johnson, Spencerville, junior (Troy)
12. Seth Stanley, Margareta, junior (Rossford)
13. Jacob Wetzel, Fremont St. Joseph Central Catholic, sophomore (Rossford)
14. Landon Thomas, Harrison Central, freshman (Heath)
15. Joe Shoup, Mapleton, senior (Garfield Hts)
16. Cody Sheller, Evergreen, senior (Rossford)

GHTS – Owen, Elrod, Shoup, Tyler Schellenbarger (Mogadore, junior); Dallas McCracken (Hanoverton United, sophomore)

HEA – Mendenhall, Bier, Thomas, Jacob MacLean (Liberty Union, senior); Isaiah Fisher (Mt. Gilead, senior)

ROS – Kohlhofer, Gaines, Berardi, Box; Stanley, Wetzel, Sheller

TROY – Criblez, Tyo, Johnson, Dustin Winner (Miami East, junior); Austin Skinner (Middletown Madison, senior)

As is the tradition with this manifesto of a state tournament prediction report, it is ranked DI, then DII, then DIII in weight class order; and then it is typed out in weight class order going DI, DII, then DIII. Therefore, we have made it all the way to the end of the process. If you're still reading and enjoying this thing some 70-odd pages in, you might need a new hobby, but I thank you for your continued support!

Army West Point signee Kohlhofer finished 2020-21 an undefeated 52-0 on the way to state gold at 220 after winning a district title in 2020 as a sophomore. If not for a loss that I can't recall during the current season, he might have the longest active winning streak in Ohio. Kohlhofer had the quality wins over Thurston and Neves on the opening weekend, and has gone on to win tournament titles at Olentangy Liberty, Perrysburg, and Maumee Bay.

Six other ranked wrestlers join Kohlhofer at Rossford to go after the three remaining state spots. It's a group led by Gaines, who placed at district as a freshman in 2020 before missing out on last season; and this year he was champion at Defiance, runner-up at Van Buren, and missed placing by one match at Perrysburg. The senior Berardi is a returning state alternate, who was champion at the Edison Opener, second at the Edison Holiday, and fifth at Maumee Bay; the junior Box qualified for state last season, while this season includes runner-up finishes at Marion Harding and Marion Pleasant sandwiched around a fifth at Perrysburg, but does have a 4-1 dual meet loss to Berardi; fellow junior Stanley was runner-up at the Edison Opener and champion at Margaretta; the sophomore Wetzel was runner-up at Northwood and Margaretta sandwiched around a fifth at CIT; while the senior Sheller missed placing at Defiance by one match, was first at Wapakoneta, and has dual meet wins over Berardi along with Division I state qualifier Ling.

Criblez became the highest place finisher in program history for Allen East when he finished second in last year's state tournament at this weight class. Said result also gave Columbus Grove their second state champion in program history, as Jeff Meyer joined Kyle Blankemeyer, who beat Hawken's Jeff Walton 6-4 in overtime at 171 in 199. During the current season Criblez does not have a loss to my knowledge, and has won five tournament titles (most notably the Edison Holiday, Van Buren, and Lima Central Catholic).

Two wrestlers join the junior Criblez in the rankings at the Troy district. The senior Tyo placed third at GMVWA; while the junior Johnson was champion at Lincolnview and Parkway, runner-up to Criblez at Allen County and Lima Senior, and fifth at Lima Central Catholic.

The third and final returning state medalist in this weight class is Owen, who took eighth last year here as a junior. In the current season, he was champion at West Holmes along with two other tournaments, second at the Mike Lewis and Gorman, but missed placement by one match at Marion Harding. Just two additional ranked wrestlers feature at Garfield Hts, both seniors in Elrod and Shoup. Two-time state

qualifier Elrod was champion at CIT; Shoup was runner-up at Mapleton, third at the Mike Lewis, fourth at the Gorman, and fifth at West Salem Northwestern.

Rounding out the district tournaments is the one at Heath, which has three ranked wrestlers, led by the senior Mendenhall. The two-time state qualifier was runner-up at Olentangy Liberty before winning titles at North Union and his conference tournament; the junior Bier placed at district last year, while this year he was champion at Coshocton and third at the OVAC; and finally the freshman Thomas was first at Smithville and Buckeye Local, sandwiched around a fourth-place at OVAC.

Team

1. Legacy Christian (Troy)
2. Milan Edison (Rossford)
3. Mechanicsburg (Troy)
4. Delta (Rossford)
5. Marion Pleasant (Heath)
6. Miami East (Troy)
7. Versailles (Troy)
8. South Range (Garfield Hts)
9. Wayne Trace (Troy)
10. Barnesville (Heath)
11. Bidwell River Valley (Heath)
12. Dalton (Garfield Hts)