

## **Introduction**

Thank you for taking the time to read the State Tournament Predictions Report. As I embark on year number twenty – 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, along with the current landscape of Ohio high school wrestling.

After the cancellation of the 2020 state wrestling tournament, a far from normal 2020-21 season, and a mostly normal but with a few disruptions 2021-22 season – knock on wood – it has almost been like things were prior to the world turning on its head in March of 2020. We can all count our blessings for that to put it mildly.

With this only being the third year after the lost state tournament, there are no wrestlers that can win a fourth state title this year. That being said, there are three seniors seeking a third state title: Joey Blaze (Perrysburg) and Dylan Russo (Olentangy Liberty) in Division I, along with Max Hermes (Milan Edison) in Division III; Ty Wilson (Dublin Scioto) in Division I at 144 pounds and Dillon Campbell (Legacy Christian) in Division III at 126 are juniors with the chance to win a third state title, which would put them one year away from adding to the list of 24 wrestlers to have won four state titles in their careers.

Thirteen others won state last year, and can repeat as champions in March. Marcus Blaze and Cole Evans (Perrysburg) in Division I, along with Brogan Tucker (St. Paris Graham) and Mitchell Younger (Bishop Watterson) in Division II won state last year as freshmen. Additionally in Division I, you have Jaxon Joy and Chris Earnest (Wadsworth) as well as Omar Ayoub (Dublin Coffman); Division II features Bryce Skinner (Akron SVSM), David McClelland (Columbus DeSales), and Dominic Hoffarth (Louisville); while Division III features Casper Caizzo (Norwalk St. Paul), Connor Smith (Gibsonburg), and Connor Havill (Troy Christian).

It should be noted that Gibsonburg's Smith has not been around for most of the season due to an injury from football. In addition, 2022 state champions Beric Jordan and Carter Neves – who both competed for St. Paris Graham last year – have left the state and are continuing their high school wrestling careers elsewhere. Three additional wrestlers won state in 2021, did not win in 2022, and could regain state titles this season: Ryan Bennett (St. Edward) in Division I, Kyle Snider (CVCA) and Todd Allen (Medina Buckeye) in Division III.

The state tournament is yet again slated to be held at Value City Arena (aka "The Schott"), with the opening rounds on Friday, March 10<sup>th</sup> and concluding with championship matches slated for Sunday, March 12<sup>th</sup>. An OHSAA sanctioned state wrestling tournament for girls' wrestlers will be held concurrently with the boys' event.

Looking at the team landscape, St. Edward has won seven consecutive state tournament titles in Division I when the event has been contested (2015-2019, 2021, 2022), and is the favorite to repeat yet again this season. Perrysburg, who was runner-up last year and in 2014, is the favorite to finish as runner-up. They return six state finalists (3 state champions) from last season's squad, so it will be interesting to see if they can make it as close a chase for the state title as they did last year. Ultimately, St. Edward won by 10.5 points, though it was not clinched until the 165-pound match of the state finals on Sunday night.

St. Paris Graham has now won 21 consecutive state tournament titles when the event has been contested (2001-2019, 2021, 2022). It is going to be a tight battle between them, Columbus DeSales, and Medina Buckeye for the title. Collin Palmer has the Stallions back and relevant, as they return all seven

state tournament qualifiers from last year. They most recently finished second 20 years ago in 2003 under Mark Marinelli, who has been the head coach at Olentangy Liberty for over 15 years already. In addition, Columbus DeSales won three state tournament team titles in the 1970's. Medina Buckeye beat Graham 35-32 via pin in the last match of the dual to win the OHSWCA state dual meet invitational this past Sunday.

Legacy Christian is the strong favorite to win a third straight state title in Division III, while Barnesville and Milan Edison would be the leading contenders to take second.

From an individual perspective, Ohio does not have a single national number one in a weight class as of the beginning of February per *MatScouts*. In addition, there are only three even holding a top five national position: Marcus Blaze (Perrysburg) is third at 120, Joey Blaze (Perrysburg) is second at 165, and Camden McDanel (Teays Valley) is fifth at 190/195. In all, 27 wrestlers sit in the top 20 of their respective weight classes; 22 of those wrestlers are in Division I, with at least one in each of the weight classes. There are a trio in Division II, and a pair in Division III.

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). Refer to the below chart for 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

2022 – DI 7(or8)/14, DII 8/14, DIII 10/14 (TOTAL = 25 or 26)

Where were the other champs ranked? (note this may not be perfect): 2nd - 136, 3rd - 66, 4th - 30, 5th - 16, 6th - 7, 7th - 4, 8th - 3, 9th - 4, 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 1<sup>st</sup> through February 13<sup>th</sup>. For the most recent two weekends, the state dual invitational regional and finals results are 100% captured, while other events may or may not have gotten captured in the data compilation. The ordinal ranking was done at the end of this research process, with the commentary then 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 present, along with 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, said year showed even those that seemed to normally be obvious could be rendered wrong:

\*The state tournament will be staged March 10<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> at the Schott.

\*42 boys 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**

Last year was the “count” year, so this year is the first year of what traditionally are two-year enrollment cycles. That means there are new divisions and representation models for this year’s state tournament, which will also be in force for the 2023-24 school year.

There is no change to the composition within Division I: all-NE district at North Canton, also includes Dover from the East (sectionals are at Austintown Fitch, Euclid, Massillon Perry, and Wadsworth); mixed district at Perrysburg (sectionals at Midview, Oregon Clay, St. Edward, and Strongsville); all-Central district that also includes Logan from the Southeast; and all-SW district at Kettering Fairmont.

There is a change to composition within Division II. The central district picked up a sectional, while the NE district lost a sectional. The resulting district compositions are as follows: all-NE district at Garfield Hts; mixed district at Norwalk (all three northwest sectionals plus the Central sectional at Licking Valley); mixed district at Wilmington (all three southwest sectionals plus the Central sectional at Jonathan Alder); and a mixed district at Steubenville (two east sectionals and two southeast sectionals). There are 21 schools that had the right to choose between the Licking Valley and Jonathan Alder sectionals.

There is a slight change in composition for Division III, though it is not too material. The southeast district lost its sectional, with teams being split out between multiple sectional tournaments. There is an all-NE district at Perry (Lake County); an all-NW district at Rossford (sectionals at Archbold, Oak Harbor, Plymouth, and Van Buren); a mixed district at Troy (three southwest sectionals, one of which will include Ironton and West Union from the southeast, plus the Lima Central Catholic sectional in the northwest); and a mixed district at Harrison Central (two central sectionals that will also include Paint Valley and Westfall from the southeast, and two east sectionals that will also include the remaining four southeast schools).

There are no state tournament performance statistics for 2020, but this section will detail performance data from 2018-2019 and 2021-2022.

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)**

2022: 117-114, 50.6% (overall); 52-54, 49.1% (championship only); 11 (two-and-out)

2021: 127-105, 54.7%; 59-53, 52.7%; 7

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

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

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

2022: 118-95, 55.4% (overall); 62-51, 54.9% (championship only); 14 (two-and-out)

2021: 114-97, 54.0%; 62-51, 54.9%; 12

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

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

**Note** – this composition will be like the last two years, but different than 2018-2019 because the northeast district has seven sectionals, compared to the six in previous years.

DIV I - All Southwest (Kettering Fairmont)

2022: 96-111, 46.4% (overall); 48-55, 46.6% (championship only); 14 (two-and-out)

2021: 77-115, 40.1%; 41-55, 42.7%; 20

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

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

DIV I - All Central (Hilliard Darby)

2022: 89-100, 47.1% (overall); 48-50, 49.0% (championship only); 17 (two-and-out)

2021: 102-103, 49.8%; 48-51, 48.5%; 17

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

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

DIV II - All Northeast (now Garfield Hts)

2022: 112-103, 52.1% (overall); 60-51, 54.1% (championship bracket); 13 (two-and-out)

2021: 119-106, 52.9%; 61-51, 54.5%; 11

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

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

**NOTE:** Unlike 2018-2019 and 2021-2022, this is all schools in the northeast district, as opposed to some going to a different tournament; the selection/allocation of teams for that other tournament involved a “draft” in 2021 and 2022, while it was imposed in 2018 and 2019

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

2022: 100-109, 47.8% (overall); 36-55, 39.6% (championship only); 14 (two-and-out)

2021: 111-106, 51.2%; 58-52, 52.7%; 13

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

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

**NOTE:** 2018-2019 and 2021-2022 had one of five northeast district sectionals as the fourth sectional at the site, while this year it will be one of the two central sectionals.

DIV II - Combined East (2)/Southeast (2) <now Steubenville>

2022: 88-109, 44.7% (overall); 45-55, 45.0% (championship only); 17 (two-and-out)

2021: 91-110, 45.3%; 39-55, 41.5%; 13

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

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

**NOTE:** 2018-2019 had composition of Central (1)/East (2)/Southeast (1)

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

2022: 120-99, 54.8% (overall); 69-49, 58.5% (championship only); 12 (two-and-out)

2021: 99-98, 50.3%; 52-52, 50.0%; 19

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

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

**NOTE:** In 2018-2019 this was 3 SW and 1 SE sectional, and in 2021-2022 this was every single central district team whereas it is now just half the teams

DIV III - Combined Central (2)/East (2) with some southeast teams <now Harrison Central>

2022: 87-115, 43.1% (overall); 37-55, 40.2% (championship only); 15 (two-and-out)

2021: 73-114, 39.0%; 27-55, 32.9%; 22

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

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

**NOTE:** 2021-2022 this was Central (1), East (2), Southeast (1); 2018-2019 this was Central (2) and East/Southeast (2)

DIV III - All Northeast (now Perry)

2022: 91-110, 45.3% (overall); 44-55, 44.4% (championship only); 18 (two-and-out)

2021: 110-108, 50.5%; 54-55, 49.5%; 10

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

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

DIV III - All Northwest (Rossford)

2022: 115-101, 53.2% (overall); 61-52, 54.0% (championship only); 12 (two-and-out)

2021: 111-99, 52.9%; 57-51, 52.8%; 16

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

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

**NOTE:** this reflects four of the five northwest sectionals

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

2022: 127-94, 57.5% (overall); 68-48, 58.6% (championship only); 11 (two-and-out)

2021: 126-99, 56.0%; 72-49, 59.5%; 8

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

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

**NOTE:** For 2021-2022 this was Southeast (3)/Northwest (1) with no southeast teams; 2018-2019 this was Southwest (3) and Northwest (1), though one of three southwest sectionals featured half of the southeast district teams

## DIVISION ONE

### **106 pounds**

1. Ethan Timar, St. Edward, sophomore (Perrysburg)
2. Rylan Seacrist, Brecksville, freshman (North Canton)
3. Emeric McBurney, Massillon Perry, sophomore (North Canton)
4. Alex Williams, Olentangy Liberty, freshman (Hilliard Darby)
5. Ayden Dodd, Perrysburg, freshman (Perrysburg)
6. Kurt Mokros, Olentangy, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
7. Brock Blankenhorn, Mount Vernon, junior (Hilliard Darby)
8. Luke Green, Aurora, sophomore (Massillon Perry)
9. Becan Hahn, Mentor, senior (North Canton)
10. Adam Gelman, Sycamore, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
11. Blake Frantz, Wadsworth, freshman (North Canton)
12. Alijah Mohanna, Cincinnati LaSalle, freshman (Kettering Fairmont)
13. Greyson Clemens, Uniontown Lake, sophomore (North Canton)
14. Ethan Dimos, Massillon Jackson, sophomore (North Canton)
15. Brody Palm, Harrison, freshman (Kettering Fairmont)
16. Edward Skiba, Brunswick, junior (Perrysburg)

HD – Williams, Mokros, Blankenhorn, Colton Russell (Westerville North, freshman); Nick Lawrensen (Dublin Coffman, junior)

KF – Gelman, Mohanna, Palm, T.J. Murray (Troy, freshman); Joey Franz (Springboro, junior)

NC – Seacrist, McBurney, Green, Hahn; Frantz, Clemens, Dimos

PBG – Timar, Dodd, Skiba, Joshua Medina (Oregon Clay, sophomore); Jayshawn Eggleton (Maple Hts, senior)

Unlike last year at this weight class where there was little in the way of state tournament experience and next to nothing in the way of elite national level ability, this year's field has a pair of wrestlers in the national rankings and much more state tournament experience. Last year's field had only one previous state placer, and another go-to-state bout loser; while this year's field has five returning state tournament participants, including three that have wins at the state tournament on their resume.

Leading the way here are the sophomore Timar and the freshman Seacrist. Timar was closed out of the post-season lineup last year at St. Edward by fellow Class of 2025 member Adam Butler, who finished as runner-up in this weight class. It has been a most excellent sophomore season, including a fourth-place finish at the Ironman, title at the Carnahan in Indiana, and a fifth-place finish at the Powerade. At the Ironman, he had two wins over Powerade champion Davis Motyka from Wyoming Seminary (Pa.) as well as a win over Beast of the East champion Javaan Yarbrough.

Seacrist entered high school a runner-up at the OAC Junior High state tournament and off a run to the semifinals in the 16U Freestyle Nationals during the summer. His freshman season includes a round of 12 finish at the Ironman, fourth place at the Beast, a title at Brecksville, and a runner-up finish at the Suburban League where he lost 6-4 to Yarbrough. This past weekend, the two met in the finals match of the OHSWCA state duals invitational. While Seacrist got the bout's opening takedown, Timar countered a Seacrist attack into a takedown midway through the second period and then locked up a cradle to secure the fall. Should the two meet in the semifinal or final at state, look forward to a great bout.

Seacrist anchors the deepest district at this weight (and at many weights with Brecksville, Wadsworth, and Massillon Perry all together at the North Canton District), where there are six other ranked wrestlers. Said group is led by McBurney, who placed sixth at state in this weight last year. After going 2-2 at both Ironman and Beast of the East, he placed third at Brecksville before winning the Wadsworth GIT and Delaware Hayes events.

The sophomore Green and returning state qualifier Hahn are next in line at North Canton. Green was third at Solon and the Suburban League, champion at Solon, and round of 12 at Brecksville; while Hahn has titles at Perry Pin City and the Hephner, along with an in-season loss to Green during December. Also ranked here from this district are the freshman Frantz, returning district placer Clemens, and fellow sophomore Dimos; Frantz had wins over Clemens and Dimos at Maumee Bay, while Hahn had wins over the same two wrestlers at the Hephner.

Timar leads the field at the Perrysburg district, which just has two other ranked wrestlers in last year's 96-pound OAC junior high state champ Dodd and returning district placer Skiba. Dodd was a U16 Nationals freestyle All-American at 94 pounds, and this season placed fourth at Brecksville before winning at Perrysburg and taking second at Maumee Bay; while the sophomore Skiba was runner-up at the Bill Dies in this weight, and has most notably taken fifth at Medina and second at the Hephner up at 113.

Two of the three additional wrestlers with state experience exit the Hilliard Darby district, a tournament site that is led in rankings by the freshman Williams, who went 2-2 at the Ironman before winning at Olentangy Liberty and finishing third at Wadsworth. Among the notable data points in his season are just losing 6-3 to Seacrist at the Ironman and losing by fall to McBurney in a late January dual meet bout where he led prior to getting pinned. Mokros won a state tournament bout last year as a freshman, and this season has been a finalist in four tournaments (most notably second at North Canton), while finishing third at Delaware Hayes and fifth at Medina. The junior Blankenhorn was champion at Maumee Bay, but needed to get pins in both the semifinal (vs. Blake Bartos) and final (vs. Dodd) in matches that he was trailing by a substantive margin prior to the fall; the rest of his major events this season came up at 113 pounds.

The remaining three ranked wrestlers are at Kettering Fairmont, though returning state qualifier Joey Franz is not one of them. The junior Gelman, a returning state alternate, leads this group; his season includes a runner-up at Defiance sandwiched around titles at SWOWCA and Sycamore. The freshman Mohanna was runner-up at SWOWCA, sixth at Brecksville, and seventh at Wadsworth; while fellow freshman Palm was third at SWOWCA before winning titles at Fairfield and Watkins Memorial (13-10 over Franz in that finals match).

### **113 pounds**

1. Karson Brown, St. Edward, freshman (Perrysburg)
2. Kaiyon McKinney, Elyria, sophomore (Perrysburg)
3. Jaxson Rosselli, Olentangy Liberty, junior (Hilliard Darby)
4. Mason Rohr, Massillon Perry, freshman (North Canton)
5. Johnny Green, Aurora, sophomore (North Canton)
6. Konner Lambers, Cincinnati Elder, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
7. Brett Stanley, Brecksville, junior (North Canton)
8. Garrison Weisner, Oregon Clay, freshman (Perrysburg)
9. Gunner Havens, Teays Valley, senior (Hilliard Darby)



10. Carter Slubowski, Hilliard Darby, senior (Hilliard Darby)
11. Adom Sharpley, Solon, sophomore (North Canton)
12. Alex Denkins, Perrysburg, freshman (Perrysburg)
13. Kolt Mellon, Wadsworth, freshman (North Canton)
14. Jake Lentz, Fairfield, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
15. Preston Schuler, Olentangy, freshman (Hilliard Darby)
16. Braylon Young, Lancaster, freshman (Hilliard Darby)

HD – Rosselli, Havens, Slubowski, Schuler; Young

KF – Lambers, Lentz, Jordan Miller (Hamilton Ross, senior), Gavin Boner (Oxford Talawanda, sophomore); Nathan Moser (Lemon Monroe, sophomore)

NC – Rohr, Green, Stanley, Sharpley; Mellon

PBG – Brown, McKinney, Weisner, Denkins; Anthony Mrosko (Avon, freshman)

Given what the 106-pound weight class was at last year's state tournament, one might be surprised that there is this much quality present at 113 this year. However, it is the combination of some 106-pound wrestlers from last year, some of the 113 field, along with the injection of a couple of freshmen. The resulting field features six returning state placers and two others with state tournament experience.

The data of the season yields only one candidate to be the favorite, that would be the freshman Karson Brown. He was round of 12 in the summer at the 16U freestyle nationals, before finishing round of 12 at the Walsh Ironman then finishing third at Carnahan and Powerade. Three of the four losses at those in-season events were to nationally ranked opponents, while there is a key win over nationally ranked Jayden James from New Jersey at Powerade. Then at the DCC Super Duals, he picked up wins over wrestlers that are state title contenders in Michigan D1, D2, and D3 respectively.

Even so, the depth in this weight is such where Brown could just as easily finish fifth or seventh as he does first. For purposes of there being a true team race, it is going to take a few stumbles from St. Edward along with an almost perfect tournament from Perrysburg, which the Yellow Jackets almost pulled off last year.

The Perrysburg district also the second-ranked wrestler to Brown, the sophomore McKinney, who placed seventh at state in this weight class last year. He went 3-2 at the Ironman before winning the title at Brecksville (beating Rosselli in overtime in the quarters) and finishing runner-up at Maumee Bay. Also ranked at this district in this weight class are the freshmen Weisner and Denkins. Weisner was champion at Solon up at 120 before coming down to this weight to take third at Maumee Bay and win the title at Berkshire (splitting matches with Johnny Green in that event); while Denkins was round of 12 at Brecksville, second at Perrysburg, and sixth at Maumee Bay.

Rosselli placed third at state in this weight last year as a sophomore. His December included going 3-2 at the Ironman and taking sixth at Brecksville; while in January he beat Rohr 5-2 in the Wadsworth semis on the way to the title, and had a win by fall over the same opponent the next week in a dual meet. Four other ranked wrestlers join Rosselli at Hilliard Darby for district competition.

Two-time state placer Havens went two-and-out at the Ironman and 2-2 at Brecksville, along with winning titles at Barnesville and Watkins Memorial this season. Fellow senior Slubowski has a title at Big Walnut to go with a sixth at Medina and second at Jonathan Alder; the freshman Schuler started his season with a pair of runner-up finishes up at 120 pounds before going round of 12 at North Canton in

this weight class and then winning at Mason and placing third at Delaware Hayes; while fellow freshman Young placed third at Olentangy and Olentangy Liberty before taking second at Marion Harding, all in December.

Five ranked wrestlers also exit district competition at North Canton led by the freshman Rohr, whose season started by going 1-2 at the Ironman and then advancing to the round of 12 at the Beast of East (including a front-side win over tournament third-place finisher Martin from Virginia). He was then second at Brecksville (pinning Lambers and beating Green), third at Wadsworth, and champion at Delaware Hayes (1-0 over Lambers). Green (Division II last year) and Stanley both placed fourth at 106 pounds last year in the state tournament.

This season for Green includes titles at Solon, Top Gun, and the Suburban League; finishing second at Berkshire, third at Brecksville, and going 0-2 at the Ironman. The junior Stanley went 5-4 between the Ironman and Beast, and then was round of 12 at Brecksville before finishing runner-up to Green in the Suburban League meet. Green is 2-1 vs. Stanley on the season, losing in a January dual meet before winning at the Suburban League and in a February dual meet.

Sharpley was state alternate as a freshman last year, and this season includes placing third at Solon, second at North Coast, and fourth at Maumee Bay along with a round of 12 finish at Medina. He has a dual meet pin over the freshman Mellon; who was sixth at North Canton, went 3-2 at the Powerade and 2-2 at Maumee Bay, before placing fourth at Wadsworth and third in the Suburban League.

Just two ranked wrestlers exit district competition at Kettering Fairmont, led by Lambers, who was third at state last year at 106 pounds as a freshman. This season includes a tittle at SWOWCA to go with finishing seventh at Brecksville and second at the CIT (at 120) and Delaware Hayes. The senior Lentz was fifth at SWOWCA in this weight class, while placing fifth at Kenston and winning the title at Fairfield up at 120. Also here is returning Division II state qualifier Miller, who lost 15-7 to Lentz in the fifth-place bout at SWOWCA.

### **120 pounds**

1. Marcus Blaze, Perrysburg, sophomore (Perrysburg)
2. Adam Butler, St. Edward, sophomore (Perrysburg)
3. Aiden Allen, Cincinnati LaSalle, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
4. Micah Medina, Oregon Clay, senior (Perrysburg)
5. Andrew Myers, Upper Arlington, junior (Hilliard Darby)
6. Zach Bergman, Anthony Wayne, junior (Perrysburg)
7. Jack Dinwiddie, Wadsworth, sophomore (North Canton)
8. Joey Thamann, Cincinnati Elder, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
9. Salvatore Palmisano, Mayfield, junior (North Canton)
10. Ryan Kennedy, North Olmsted, sophomore (Perrysburg)
11. Toby Hutsler, Lancaster, senior (Hilliard Darby)
12. Rahul Raghuram, Dublin Coffman, senior (Hilliard Darby)
13. Jack DeBoe, Mentor, sophomore (North Canton)
14. Prestyn Parks, Olentangy Liberty, junior (Hilliard Darby)
15. Jaiden Sarabia, Toledo Whitmer, sophomore (Perrysburg)
16. Blake Cancel, Elyria, freshman (Perrysburg)
17. Cayden Pluhar/Harrison Haffner, Brecksville, sophomore (North Canton)

HD – Myers, Hutsler, Raghuram, Parks; Abdul Khalaf (Dublin Scioto, junior)  
KF – Allen, Thamann, Marsel Sabirdjanov (Mason, junior), Evan Boulton (Springboro, junior); Laben Green (Lemon Monroe, senior)  
NC – Dinwiddie, Palmisano, DeBoe, Pluhar/Haffner; Liam Montgomery (Massillon Perry, freshman)  
PBG – Blaze, Butler, Medina, Bergman; Kennedy, Sarabia, Cancel

Prior to the 2014 state tournament in which Perrysburg finished second to Massillon Perry, the Yellow Jackets had just two state champion individuals in program history; the last coming in 1974 by Robin Rayfield, who would be a long-time head coach at Delta, where they won four state tournament titles under his leadership. Rocco Caywood won a state title that year, then four others added titles through 2021 to make it seven total headed to last year's event.

Perrysburg put six in the state finals last year, with three winning titles to up the program total to ten individual championships. One of those state champions was Marcus Blaze, who went undefeated on the season in winning the title at 113 pounds; his state tournament run featured a technical fall, two pins, and a major decision.

Since his freshman season ended, Blaze added a 16U national freestyle title and a second consecutive Super 32 Challenge placement prior to the season. The sophomore season included one blemish in the quarterfinals of the Walsh Ironman (2-1 in overtime to Leo Deluca from Blair Academy), which would be avenged in the third-place bout. Since then, it has been mostly a scorched earth run through Brecksville, Perrysburg, and Maumee Bay. Expect similar dominance in this state tournament weight class.

Three of the other five additional returning state medalists join Blaze at the Perrysburg district. Leading that group is the sophomore Butler, who lost 4-0 to fellow Perrysburg wrestler Cole Evans in the 106-pound final of last year's state tournament. Butler went 3-2 at the Ironman before placing third at Carnahan and seventh at Ironman. Up at the DCC Super Duals, Butler lost 2-1 to Kluce, an opponent who Blaze beat by technical fall in the Brecksville semifinal. The senior Medina was sixth at state last year, but had a late start to the season with a round of 12 appearance up at 126 at Maumee Bay being his first major competition; since then he dropped into this weight class. Bergman placed eight at state last year as a sophomore down at 106, with this season including third place finishes at Solon and Perrysburg, as well as a fifth at Maumee Bay.

Three additional ranked wrestlers exit Perrysburg as well. Kennedy was a state alternate last year at 106 as a freshman, and this season has four tournament titles, most notably at Kenston and Perry Pin City. Fellow sophomore Sarabia has been at both 113 and 120 this season; in this weight class he was round of 12 at Perrysburg, while down at 113 he was round of 12 at Brecksville and fifth at Maumee Bay. The freshman Cancel was 0-2 at the Ironman and round of 12 at Brecksville, including a win over returning state qualifier Raghuram.

Three with state experience are among the four ranked wrestlers at Hilliard Darby. The junior Myers placed eighth at 113 last year, but spent much of the season at 126 (including finishing second at Upper Arlington and finals wins over Sears at Kettering Fairmont and Fairfield) before dropping to this weight class. The senior Hutsler is twice a state qualifier, and has been a finalist in four different tournaments this year (runner-up at Olentangy Liberty and Marion Harding losing 1-0 to Tate Hisey on both occasions). Fellow senior Raghuram is a returning state qualifier who went 3-4 between Ironman and Brecksville, had a pair of tournament titles in December, along with finishing third at Mason and second

at Delaware Hayes this season. Rounding out the group is the junior Parks who was third at Olentangy Liberty, round of 12 at Brecksville, and sixth at Wadsworth.

The remaining returning state placer is the Dinwiddie, seventh at 106 last year as a freshman. December featured going 6-4 between Ironman and Powerade as well as placing third at North Canton; while January included a seventh at Maumee Bay, third at Wadsworth, and a Suburban League title. Three additional ranked wrestlers join him in the district field at North Canton. Palmisano placed at the National Prep Invitational in 2021 as a freshman when competing for Hudson WRA, while this season includes three tournament titles along with placing fourth at Medina and third at Top Gun. The sophomore DeBoe qualified for state last year, and this season was round of 12 at Brecksville before losing in overtime to Kennedy in the Perry Pin City and then winning the Hephner. Rounding out the group is the Brecksville starter, be it Haffner or Pluhar, both sophomores.

Returning state qualifier Sabirdjanov, who went 1-2 at the Schott at 106, is not among the two ranked wrestlers at Kettering Fairmont. The junior Allen was runner-up at SWOWCA, seventh at Brecksville, and champion at Wadsworth in this weight class; while the sophomore Thamann is a returning state qualifier, who was fourth at SWOWCA and fifth at CIT up a weight class, while finishing round of 12 at Brecksville and winning the Delaware Hayes title in this weight class.

### **126 pounds**

1. Phoenix Contos, Toledo Waite, sophomore (Perrysburg)
2. Ryan Avalos, Perrysburg, senior (Perrysburg)
3. Austin McBurney, Massillon Perry, senior (North Canton)
4. Joseph Sanderfer, St. Edward, sophomore (Perrysburg)
5. Jace Jett, Brecksville, freshman (North Canton)
6. Kade Mellon, Wadsworth, junior (North Canton)
7. Jared Johnston, Cincinnati Moeller, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
8. Bryce Sears, Colerain, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
9. Joseph Baumann, Dublin Coffman, junior (Hilliard Darby)
10. Jayden Cochran, Miamisburg, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
11. Marshall Morency, Cincinnati Anderson, freshman (Kettering Fairmont)
12. Roman Parobek, Ashland, senior (Perrysburg)
13. Jibreel Smith, Newark, senior (Hilliard Darby)
14. Jake Piontkowski, Olentangy, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
15. Braxton Sheets, Teays Valley, senior (Hilliard Darby)
16. Jonathan Campbell, Walsh Jesuit, junior (North Canton)

HD – Baumann, Smith, Piontkowski, Sheets; David Backus (Marion Harding, senior)

KF – Johnston, Sears, Cochran, Morency; Sebastian Vega (Cincinnati LaSalle, junior)

NC – McBurney, Jett, Mellon, Campbell; Pedro Garcia (Dover, senior)

PBG – Contos, Avalos, Sanderfer, Parobek; Will Jolliff (Findlay, sophomore)

The lone state title in Toledo Waite wrestling history came from Mark Kerr in 1986, who won the 175-pound title as a junior in a weight class that Rex Holman took fourth. Both wrestlers would go on to win NCAA titles, Kerr doing so for Syracuse (which no longer has collegiate wrestling) in 1992 and Holman winning for Ohio State in 1993.

Contos, who finished fourth last year at state in the 120-pound weight class competing for Division III Genoa, could end the long hiatus for Toledo Waite should he win this weight class. It is certainly possible, as he has four tournament titles on the season, including those at Defiance and Perrysburg; the title at Perrysburg came by 11-10 decision over returning state runner-up Avalos. This past weekend, he split matches against a pair of returning Division III state champions, beating Casper Caizzo 5-2 in the semifinal before losing 8-3 to two-time state champ Max Hermes in the final.

It goes without saying that returning state runner-up Avalos is right behind in a relatively wide-open weight class. Two concerns for Avavlos – first is the fact he has missed two of his four potential major tournaments on the season (Ironman and Maumee Bay), and a second is a track record for not having the strongest of first halves in his bouts. When on the mat this season, he was runner-up at both Brecksville and Perrysburg, and had a notable front side win from a fully contested match in each event: 3-1 over returning state champ Bryce Skinner at Brecksville, and a pin over returning state placer Johnston at Perrysburg.

Two additional ranked wrestlers join this pair at Perrysburg. The sophomore Sanderfer was closed out of the post-season lineup last year by Kade Brown, who would place seventh at 120; and returning Division II state qualifier Parobek (Ashland moved up divisions in the enrollment count). Sanderfer went 5-4 between the Ironman and Powerade, while finishing fifth at the Carnahan, only losing 6-0 to Dillon Campbell. He had a high-quality 1-0 dual meet win over Jackson Blum up at the DCC Super Duals, though that is not in line with transitive results, and has split bouts with Jace Jett this season (2-0 overtime win at Ironman, 2-1 loss in the state duals invitational final). The senior Parobek placed third at Medina, won the Gorman, and was fifth at Maumee Bay. Returning state qualifiers Michael Valerino (Avon Lake, senior) and Candio DeLuna (Oregon Clay, senior) are also at this district; though DeLuna is up three weights from last year because he cannot beat out Weisner or Medina.

The three other wrestlers ranked in the top six at this weight class exit district competition at North Canton, a group led by two-time state placer McBurney. The senior bound for Brown was round of 12 at the Ironman, sixth at the Beast, fourth at Brecksville, and runner-up at Wadsworth. The freshman Jett went two-and-out at the Ironman before going 3-2 at the Beast, placing seventh at Brecksville, and winning the Suburban League. He is 2-1 against Mellon on the season, even though he lost the most recent meeting at the state duals invitational. Mellon was state alternate up at 132 last year as a sophomore. This season went 0-2 at the Ironman before placing third at North Canton, going 3-2 at the Powerade, winning Maumee Bay, along with placing fourth at Wadsworth and second in the Suburban League.

The junior Campbell is the remaining ranked wrestler at North Canton. His season includes a runner-up finish at Solon, going 0-2 at the Ironman, and then taking fourth at both North Canton and CIT. Returning Division II state qualifier Garcia is also in the field at this district.

Last among the returning state medalists in this weight is the junior Johnston, who was fourth last year at 113. His current season includes going 2-2 at the Ironman, winning the SWOWCA title, placing fourth at Perrysburg, second at CIT, and third at Wadsworth. Three additional ranked wrestlers join him at Kettering Fairmont. The junior Sears qualified for state last year, and won his most recent tournament at Mason 3-1 over a returning Indiana state qualifier; earlier in the season he was second at Kettering Fairmont and Fairfield, sandwiching a third-place finish at SWOWCA. Cochran qualified for state in 2021 as a freshman, and has titles on the season at Trenton Edgewood and Miamisburg; while the freshman

Morency was seventh at SWOWCA, then fourth at GMVWA and Maumee Bay, before winning titles at Washington C.H. and Milford.

Rounding it out is a group of four ranked wrestlers at Hilliard Darby. The junior Baumann is a returning state qualifier, whose season includes a title at Mount Vernon, a round of 12 finish at Brecksville, and a third at Mason. The sophomore Piontkowski was a finalist up a weight class at tournaments the first two weeks of the season, before placing fifth at North Canton, Medina, and Mason in this weight class. The senior Smith qualified for state last year, and has titles at Olentangy Liberty and Licking Valley to go with a runner-up at Mount Vernon and seventh at Maumee Bay; while fellow senior Sheets qualified for state in 2021, with this season including a third at Barnesville and round of 12 at Brecksville in this weight before finishing third at Watkins Memorial up a weight. Returning state qualifier Backus is also in this weight class.

### **132 pounds**

1. Jaxon Joy, Wadsworth, junior (North Canton)
2. Vinnie D'Alessandro, Mayfield, senior (North Canton)
3. Kaden Jett, Brecksville, senior (North Canton)
4. Kaden Brown, St. Edward, junior (Perrysburg)
5. Nick Blackburn, Mentor, junior (North Canton)
6. Cole Evans, Perrysburg, sophomore (Perrysburg)
7. Jack McCall, Lebanon, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
8. Wyatt Moore, Hilliard Davidson, senior (Hilliard Darby)
9. Jovanni Greco, Hamilton Ross, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
10. Slade Waller, Grove City, senior (Hilliard Darby)
11. Nate Stevens, Centerville, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
12. Malakhi Sharpley, Solon, senior (North Canton)
13. Cameron Plotts, Massillon Perry, freshman (North Canton)
14. Eli Marengo, Cincinnati LaSalle, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
15. Ryan Wissmar, Springboro, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
16. Adam Makour, Dublin Coffman, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)

HD – Moore, Waller, Makour, Rylan Firebaugh (Mount Vernon, senior); Daniel Jang (Upper Arlington, junior)

KF – McCall, Greco, Stevens, Marengo; Wissmar

NC – Joy, D'Alessandro, Jett, Blackburn; Sharpley, Plotts

PBG – Brown, Evans, Milan Parobek (Ashland, senior), Owen Tarnai (Brunswick, senior); Jack Valerino (Avon Lake, sophomore)

If not for squandering a lead that he had for almost five minutes by giving up a four-point move in the last minute of the 2021 state final against Ryan Bennett – an opponent he had beaten in a late December dual meet that year – we would be talking about Jaxon Joy being on the four-time state champion track. None the less, Joy is a most excellent wrestler having a Junior National freestyle All-American finish from this summer, and being on pace to eclipse his head coach Clay Wenger in this season for most takedowns in a season at Wadsworth.

During the current season, the junior placed seventh at the Ironman and fourth at the Powerade; while it has been relative domination in the Ohio portion of the schedule with titles at North Canton, Maumee

Bay, Wadsworth, and the Suburban League. Three of the next four wrestlers in the rankings will join Joy at the North Canton district.

The senior D'Alessandro placed is a two-time state placer, and was runner-up at the NHSCA Junior Nationals last spring. He has four tournament titles on the current season to go with a runner-up finish at the Top Gun and a 3-2 performance at the Ironman. To the most notable good is a 13-4 major decision over returning state champion Brogan Tucker; while on the other side of the house is a 3-2 decision loss in the Top Gun final to Donovan Paes, an opponent Joy was absolutely dominating in the Wadsworth final prior to an injury default.

Fellow senior Jett placed at state two years ago before an injury in his opening state tournament bout derailed last year's run for the district champion. Jett was round of 12 at Beast, seventh at Ironman, and runner-up in the Suburban League. He has three losses by decision to Joy on the season (7-2, 6-1, and 7-1), along with dual meet victories during February over Blackburn (3-1) and Brown (2-2 UTB RO). Blackburn has been a state alternate in each of his first two high school seasons, and was runner-up at Brecksville before winning titles at Perry Pin City and the Hephner.

Two additional ranked wrestlers exit North Canton. The senior Sharpley was champion at Solon up a weight class before taking third at North Coast, second at Medina, and sixth at Maumee Bay in this weight class; while the freshman Plotts was 3-2 at the Beast and 2-2 at Brecksville before placing sixth at Wadsworth and second at Delaware Hayes.

The remaining two wrestlers ranked in the top six at this weight class exit district competition at Perrysburg, and are the only two ranked wrestlers in that field. Brown placed seventh as a junior last year at 120, and was round of 12 at both Ironman and Powerade this season. That is sandwiched around a runner-up finish at the Carnahan, where he beat Brogan Tucker 7-6 before losing 8-5 to a nationally elite Vincent Robinson from Illinois. Evans won state last year at 106 pounds, but is up four weight classes because he cannot beat Blaze or Avalos for lineup spots; his season started at 138, where he was 2-2 at Brecksville and runner-up at Perrysburg, before dropping to place fourth at Maumee Bay in this weight class.

Two-time state medalist McCall headlines five ranked wrestlers at Kettering Fairmont. The senior was third at SWOWCA and fifth at Maumee Bay. The junior Greco won a state tournament bout in Division II down at 113 last year (Hamilton Ross went up a division in the enrollment count), while this season includes third place finishes at Olentangy and Jonathan Alder sandwiching a second at SWOWCA and first at Fairfield. The senior Stevens qualified for state two years ago, beat Greco for a title at Olentangy before placing fourth at SWOWCA and then finishing round of 12 at both Brecksville and Perrysburg. Marengo qualified for state last year as a sophomore, while this season includes a third-place finish at DeSales and a seventh at Wadsworth sandwiching round of 12 finishes at SWOWCA and Brecksville. Finally, the senior Wissmar placed fifth at GMVWA, was round of 12 at Maumee Bay, and champion at Watkins Memorial.

Rounding things out are three ranked wrestlers at Hilliard Darby led by returning state qualifier Moore, who was champion at Delaware Hayes after runner-up finishes at DeSales, Marion Harding, and Jonathan Alder. Fellow senior Waller was state alternate last year in this weight class, and his current season includes runner-up finishes at Upper Arlington and Dublin Scioto, titles at Olentangy Liberty and West Jefferson, along with a fifth-place finish at Delaware Hayes. Lastly, it is the sophomore Makour, who was 1-2 at both Ironman and Brecksville, and most recently won the title at Mason.

### **138 pounds**

1. Omar Ayoub, Dublin Coffman, junior (Hilliard Darby)
2. Ryan Bennett, St. Edward, junior (Perrysburg)
3. Dy'Vaire VanDyke, Walsh Jesuit, senior (North Canton)
4. Charles Curtis, Massillon Perry, junior (North Canton)
5. Chase Pluhar, Brecksville, senior (North Canton)
6. Holden Huhn, Cincinnati LaSalle, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
7. Hudson Goebel, Findlay, senior (Perrysburg)
8. Londen Murphy, Cincinnati Moeller, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
9. Antonio Shelley, Mentor, junior (North Canton)
10. Diego Chavez, Perrysburg, junior (Perrysburg)
11. Kyle Bizjak, Aurora, senior (North Canton)
12. Micah Cottrell, Princeton, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
13. Mannix Wasco, North Royalton, sophomore (Perrysburg)
14. Zisi Giatis, Medina Highland, sophomore (North Canton)
15. Nathan Perry, Avon Lake, senior (Perrysburg)
16. Ryan Foster, Hamilton Ross, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
17. Cohl Wandsnider, Harrison, junior (Kettering Fairmont)

HD – Ayoub, Scott Speakman (Watkins Memorial, sophomore), Trent VandenEyden (Hilliard Darby, junior), Vince Giordano (Big Walnut, senior); Roger Lee-Anderson (Pickerington North, senior)

KF – Huhn, Murphy, Cottrell, Foster; Wandsnider

NC – VanDyke, Curtis, Pluhar, Shelley; Bizjak, Giatis

PBG – Bennett, Goebel, Chavez, Wasco; Perry, Jackson Collins (Berea-Midpark, senior)

Like Joy, Ayoub was a Junior National freestyle All-American in the summer, and is a state finals loss in 2021 away from being on the four-time state champion track. In the case of Ayoub, his state finals loss came via 3-0 decision against Ty Wilson, an opponent he had beaten for titles at both the sectional and district levels that year. Outside of two losses to Kollin Rath from Pennsylvania on the way to a fourth-place finish at the Ironman, it's been a rather decisive journey for Ayoub in his junior campaign. This includes titles at Mount Vernon, Brecksville, Mason, and Sheridan (major decision over Curtis in the final). It also featured a 6-4 decision victory over Ryan Bennett this past week at the state dual meet invitational, with a pair of third period takedowns sealing the bout.

No other ranked wrestler joins Ayoub at Hilliard Darby, though Speakman is a returning state alternate and Giordano went 0-2 at the state tournament, both in this weight class.

Bennett, a Class of 2024 commitment to Illinois, lost 5-3 to Brennen Cernus in the state semifinal last year at 126 pounds on the way to a fourth-place finish; which came after his 2021 title at 106 pounds. This season includes a round of 12 at the Ironman, a title at the Carnahan, and a runner-up finish at the Powerade (wins over nationally ranked Barnhart and Simcox from Pennsylvania along the way). Other key wins include those over Justin Gates and Kade Chinavare up at Detroit Catholic Central, and a 3-2 win over Pluhar in the state dual invitational last week. Four additional ranked wrestlers will join him at Perrysburg for the district.

2021 state runner-up Goebel missed last season due to injury, and it is an open question if the University of Illinois signee will be around for this post-season. He was champion at Marengo Highland



in this weight class and advanced to the quarterfinal at Maumee Bay before defaulting from the tournament. 2021 state medalist Chavez missed last season due to injury, and started this season at 132 where he went 2-2 at Brecksville and finished sixth at Perrysburg, but will be pushed to this weight due to Evans. Wasco was state alternate at 120 last year as a freshman, with this season including runner-up finishes at Solon and the Hephner, titles at North Coast and Hudson, along with third place finishes at Perry Pin City and Suburban League. The senior Perry is a returning state qualifier who was champion at Avon Lake and Medina before placing fifth at Maumee Bay and West Holmes.

Four returning state placers led by VanDyke, a two-time state placer bound for Michigan State, feature at North Canton. The returning state runner-up won a title at Solon then went 1-2 up a weight class at the Ironman before dropping to this weight where he has titles at North Canton and CIT. Two-time state qualifier Curtis, who placed at state in 2021, went 2-2 at the Ironman and was round of 12 at the Beast before placing seventh at Brecksville, first at Wadsworth (6-3 over Huhn in the semifinal), and second at Delaware Hayes; he has an 8-6 dual meet win over Pluhar and 4-2 loss to VanDyke during the month of January. The junior Pluhar won five consecutive matches between district and state after a one-point quarterfinal loss to Kade Mellon on Friday night last year at North Canton to secure his state podium. This year he went 7-6 between Ironman, Beast, and Brecksville before winning the Suburban League and picking up dual meet wins over Shelley (pin) and Huhn (6-2) in the last two weeks. Fellow junior Shelley placed eighth at Brecksville, was second at Perry Pin City up a weight class, and then came back to this weight to win a title at the Hephner.

Two additional ranked wrestlers exit North Canton. The senior Bizjak went two-and-out at this state weight in Division II last year, while the sophomore Giatis was closed out of last year's post-season lineup by state qualifiers Crutchley and Hill. Bizjak was up at 144 for most of the season, including a runner-up finish at Solon and third at the Top Gun, before losing 5-1 to Pluhar in the Suburban League final. Giatis was up at 144 early in the season as well, where he took third at Solon and Medina then went round of 12 at both Perrysburg and Top Gun; since dropping in to this weight class, he was second at West Holmes and fifth in the Suburban League.

Rounding things out are five ranked wrestlers at Kettering Fairmont, led by Huhn and Murphy, both of whom placed at state last year as freshmen. Huhn is up four weight classes from his state runner-up at 113, and started off his season with a 2-1 victory over returning state champ David McClelland in the final at DeSales. It was followed up by 2-2 performances at Ironman and Brecksville sandwiching a SWOWCA title, and then he finished third at Wadsworth with a 4-3 win over Murphy in the medal bout. Murphy, a semifinalist last year at 126, went 0-2 at the Ironman and then missed a month of season before finishing second at CIT and then fourth at Wadsworth. The junior Cotrell was runner-up at SWOWCA and champion at Fairfield; fellow junior Foster qualified for the Division II state tournament last year, and this season was champion at Olentangy before taking fifth at SWOWCA, second at Fairfield, and third at Jonathan Alder; while fellow junior Wandsnider was third at both SWOWCA and Fairfield.

#### **144 pounds**

1. Brock Herman, Brecksville, senior (North Canton)
2. Ty Wilson, Dublin Scioto, junior (Hilliard Darby)
3. Jeremy Ginter, Toledo Whitmer, junior (Perrysburg)
4. Israel Petite, Nordonia, junior (North Canton)
5. Lukan O'Brien, St. Edward, junior (Perrysburg)
6. Grayson Woodcock, Dublin Coffman, freshman (Hilliard Darby)

7. Nick Humphrys, Wadsworth, senior (North Canton)
8. Matthew Szczepaniak, Lakota West, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
9. Jacob Castillo, Middletown, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
10. Nick Hart, Marysville, senior (Hilliard Darby)
11. Marshall Geckler, Massillon Perry, sophomore (North Canton)
12. Wyatt Brock, Harrison, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
13. Evan Butcher, Westerville North, senior (Hilliard Darby)
14. Egidio DiFazio, Dover, senior (North Canton)
15. Tanner Beerman, Fairfield, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
16. Ethan Mitchell, Findlay, senior (Perrysburg)
17. Stone Busler, Cincinnati Moeller, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
18. Aric Smith, Austintown Fitch, senior (North Canton)
19. A.J. Parrish, Perrysburg, senior (Perrysburg)

HD – Wilson, Woodcock, Hart, Butcher; Ian Cho (Dublin Jerome, junior)

KF – Szczepaniak, Castillo, Brock, Beerman; Busler, Kyler Kostoff (Colerain, sophomore)

NC – Herman, Petite, Humphrys, Geckler; DiFazio, Smith

PBG – Ginter, O'Brien, Mitchell, Parrish; Luke Koprowski (North Royalton, junior)

This weight class shapes out to be a clear two-person battle of the title, and there is an interesting dynamic coming out of the Walsh Ironman. The junior Wilson beat Herman 5-2 in the quarterfinal round, but then lost a pair of consolation matches to opponents that Herman beat. In the consolation semifinal, Wilson lost 3-2 to Colin Dupill from Tennessee, while for fifth place he lost to Kael Voinovich in overtime; while Herman beat Voinovich in the tiebreakers in the consolation semifinal, and knocked off Dupill 5-2 for third place. Wilson's front side loss at the Ironman came 2-1 in the semifinal to Sam Cartella of Hudson WRA.

Other notable wins for Wilson on the season include a 4-3 win over Layton Schneider from Oklahoma at the Ironman and a 15-5 win over Humphrys in the final at North Canton. Wilson also was champion at Olentangy, Marion Harding, Dublin Scioto, and Delaware Hayes. Herman had three additional quality wins at the Ironman: 6-3 over Logan Rozynski from Blair Academy, 5-1 over Powerade champion Jaydon Robinson from Illinois, and a major decision over Brodie Dominique. He also was champion at Brecksville with an 8-3 decision over nationally ranked Aiden Davis from Michigan in the final, won by technical fall over Humphrys in a January dual meet, beat Petite 7-1 to win the Suburban League, and pinned O'Brien in the state duals invitational final.

Herman – runner-up in 2021 to Dustin Norris at 126 pounds – has two other returning state placers, another two state qualifiers, and a returning state alternate in his district tournament weight class. The junior Petite was seventh at 138 last year, and has been a finalist in six tournaments this season: champion at North Coast, Perrysburg, and Top Gun; runner-up at Barnesville, Wadsworth, and Suburban League. The senior Humphrys placed sixth at state last year in this weight class, went 1-2 at the Ironman and took second at North Canton before placing third at Maumee Bay, Wadsworth, and the Suburban League (losses to Petite in the semis of the latter two of those events).

The sophomore Geckler beat Kade Mellon to make state last year at 132, and this season went 4-2 at the Beast after going 1-2 at the Ironman before placing eighth at the Brecksville and winning his preliminary pool at Delaware Hayes. DiFazio was a state quarterfinalist at 138 last year in Division II, with this season featuring titles at Beaver Local and the OVAC sandwiched around a round of 12 at

Brecksville. Fellow senior Smith was a state alternate last season and was runner-up to DiFazio at Beaver Local before winning titles at the Hephner and EOWL, though he did have a foray down at 138 when he was fifth at Medina.

Wilson is joined by three other ranked wrestlers at Hilliard Darby. Leading that group is the freshman Woodcock, an OAC junior high state champion and 16U national freestyle All-American. His season to date includes a seventh at Brecksville, a major decision over 2021 Indiana state placer Dillon Graham in the final at Mason, and a 5-1 finals loss to Wilson at Delaware Hayes. The senior Hart placed at state in 2021 for Graham where he sustained an injury in his medal bout, and missed all of last season; he has returned to competition during January this season. Fellow senior Butcher won a state bout last year at 132, and this season has titles at Olentangy Liberty and Licking Heights to go with a third at Hebron Lakewood and a trip to the semis at Medina.

The four ranked wrestlers at Kettering Fairmont all were state tournament participants last year. The senior Szczepaniak was eighth in this weight last year, and started his season at 150 placing fifth at SWOWCA and GMVWA before taking second at Fairfield; since coming down to 144, he was third at Delaware Hayes. Fellow senior Castillo was champion at SWOWCA, 15-8 over Brock in the final. The sophomore Brock was runner-up at SWOWCA and Fairfield before winning the title at Watkins; while the senior Beerman was third at SWOWCA, second at Kenston, and pinned Brock to win the Fairfield title.

Finally, there are four ranked wrestlers at Perrysburg led by two-time state placer Ginter, who has been at 138 for most of the season where he went 3-2 at the Ironman (eliminated via overtime loss to Bennett) before winning at Maumee Bay. Next is the junior O'Brien, who was 1-2 at the Ironman and sixth at the Carnahan in this weight class before advancing to the round of 12 at the Powerade up one weight. Back in this weight class for dual meets, he lost narrowly to Michigan state champ Clayton Jones and has a pair of wins over high quality freshmen: 12-9 over Blake Cosby from Michigan and 3-2 over Woodcock. The senior Mitchell is a returning state alternate, with a second at Marengo Highland, first at Defiance, and fifth at Maumee Bay this season. Rounding it out is fellow senior Parrish, who was round of 12 at both Perrysburg and Maumee Bay.

### **150 pounds**

1. Wynton Denkins, Perrysburg, senior (Perrysburg)
2. Eugene Harney, Sycamore, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
3. Conner Kleinberg, Springboro, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
4. Bradley Eaton, St. Edward, sophomore (Perrysburg)
5. Christian Giltz, Massillon Perry, senior (North Canton)
6. Jake Keirn, Wadsworth, senior (North Canton)
7. Tyler Deericks, Olentangy Liberty, junior (Hilliard Darby)
8. Connor Holm, Elyria, junior (Perrysburg)
9. Josh Jordan, Uniontown Lake, junior (North Canton)
10. Colin Wooldridge, Cincinnati LaSalle, freshman (Kettering Fairmont)
11. Hunter Martin, Beaver Creek, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
12. Flint Guerra, Lebanon, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
13. Creed Hill, Medina Highland, senior (North Canton)
14. David Zambounis, Brecksville, junior (North Canton)
15. Hunter Randolph, Walsh Jesuit, senior (North Canton)
16. Michael Frenk, Solon, senior (North Canton)

HD – Deericks, Brenden Allberry (Watkins Memorial, senior), Jamie Ramirez (Central Crossing, senior), Eli Justice (Newark, junior); Alex Moore (Franklin Hts, senior)  
KF – Harney, Kleinberg, Wooldridge, Martin; Guerra  
NC – Giltz, Keirn, Jordan, Hill; Zambounis, Randolph, Frenk  
PBG – Denkins, Eaton, Holm, John Paul Smith (Findlay, junior); Hunter Anderson (Midview, junior)

Denkins is one of four Perrysburg seniors that made it to the state finals last year, and have now signed with Division I colleges. He lost 4-2 in this weight class to Earnest last year for the title, and joins Earnest as a signee at Campbell. Prior to the start of this season, he placed at the Super 32 Challenge. In the Ironman, he finished round of 12; he since has titles at Brecksville, Perrysburg, and Maumee Bay to his credit.

The most direct challenger in this weight class is Harney, a junior who has twice placed at the state tournament, including third last year with the lone loss being 3-1 to Joey Blaze in the semifinal. One figures that Harney will be able to come up with a plan to again shrink he bout, and possibly come up with that winning score. His season includes a 2-2 performance at the Ironman, an overtime loss to Dominique in the final at Defiance, along with titles at SWOWCA, Fairfield, and Sycamore.

There are four additional ranked wrestlers joining Harney in his district at Kettering Fairmont. The senior Kleinberg has twice placed eighth at state, with this season including titles at GMVWA and Watkins Memorial sandwiched around a third-place finish at Maumee Bay. The freshman Wooldridge was round of 12 at SWOWCA, eighth at Brecksville, went 2-2 at Escape the Rock, and placed fourth at Wadsworth. The senior Martin was a go-to-state bout loser last year up two weight classes at 165, while this season he was runner-up at SWOWCA to Harney and won Medina before losing by pin to Wooldridge in a dual meet earlier this month. Finally, Guerra placed seventh in this weight class last year as a junior; the current season includes a third at SWOWCA and round of 12 at Maumee Bay, along with an 8-3 upset loss to Busler in a recent dual meet.

Denkins is joined by just two other ranked wrestlers at Perrysburg, returning state placer Eaton and returning state qualifier Holm. The sophomore Eaton is one of the state's best overall athletes; he played varsity soccer as a freshman before starting as a defensive back on the state title football team this year, and additionally was part of an all-state 4x800 meter relay last spring. It was a slow start coming off football as he placed sixth at the Carnahan in this weight and went 1-2 at Powerade down a weight class; January included a 7-4 loss to nationally ranked Dylan Gilcher and a 6-5 decision victory over returning Ohio state placer Maddox Simcoe (Lowell, Mich.). The junior Holm went 1-2 at the Ironman losing 6-2 to Harney along the way, was fourth at the Carnahan, round of 12 at Brecksville, and fifth at Maumee Bay.

Even though there is not a true title contender among the lot at North Canton, there are seven that sit in the rankings. The senior Giltz, a returning state qualifier, started his season at 157 where he was eighth at Wadsworth then second at Delaware Hayes before coming down to this weight in February where he beat Randolph 12-4 and Keirn 7-5 in overtime. The just mentioned fellow senior went 2-2 at the Ironman and 4-2 at the Powerade while placing fourth at North Canton and Maumee Bay, before taking second at Wadsworth and winning the Suburban League. The junior Jordan placed third at North Canton and seventh at Maumee Bay.

Returning state qualifier Hill was champion at North Coast (up a weight beating Perrine) and Top Gun, runner-up at Suburban League and Perrysburg, and third at Medina; but also has a baffling 8-5 loss to Fumic in an early February dual meet. Fellow senior Randolph was champion at Solon and CIT to go with a fifth-place finish at North Canton. Another senior Frenk qualified for state last year, started his season up a weight placing third at Solon, while in this weight class he was champion at North Coast before round of 12 performances at Medina and Maumee Bay. Finally, the junior Zambounis is coming off a massive 7-5 upset over Eaton this past week, but lost 6-2 to Cole Waton the previous week; other results include going 4-2 at the Beast, round of 12 at Brecksville, and finishing third in the Suburban League.

The lone ranked wrestler at Hilliard Darby is the junior Deericks, who was runner-up at DeSales, champion at Olentangy Liberty, seventh at Brecksville (overtime win over Holm secured placement), and fifth at Wadsworth.

### **157 pounds**

1. Ethan Birden, Dublin Coffman, junior (Hilliard Darby)
2. Chris Earnest, Wadsworth, senior (North Canton)
3. Maclain Morency, Cincinnati Anderson, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
4. Aydan George, Centerville, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
5. Logan Smalley, Reynoldsburg, senior (Hilliard Darby)
6. Jake Wood, Perrysburg, junior (Perrysburg)
7. Jack Willen, Cincinnati LaSalle, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
8. Gino Perrine, Nordonia, junior (North Canton)
9. Andrew Supers, Medina, senior (North Canton)
10. Evan Rizzo, Brecksville, sophomore (North Canton)
11. John Metzger, Ashland, senior (Perrysburg)
12. Donavyn Watts, Pickerington North, junior (Hilliard Darby)
13. Aidan Peterson, St. Edward, freshman (Perrysburg)
14. Chase Crutchley, Medina Highland, junior (North Canton)
15. Broc Fitzpatrick, Olentangy Liberty, junior (Hilliard Darby)
16. Jake Taylor, Mount Vernon, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)

HD – Birden, Smalley, Watts, Fitzpatrick; Taylor

KF – Morency, George, Willen, Hayden Randolph (Beavercreek, senior); Jayden Little (Harrison, sophomore)

NC – Earnest, Perrine, Supers, Rizzo; Crutchley

PBG – Wood, Metzger, Peterson, Isaac DeVincenzo (Berea-Midpark, senior); Joe Marconi (Avon Lake, senior)

Like at 144, this is a clear two-person battle for the state title. The returning champion is Earnest, who upended Denkins in this weight class; while Birden was state runner-up to Joey Blaze, losing 1-0 in a hotly contested final to end a season-long five match series against the Perrysburg opponent who won all five meetings. The two wrestlers also met in the 2021 state quarterfinal round, where Earnest came through with an 8-4 victory at 132 pounds.

These two wrestlers met in the quarterfinal round at the Walsh Ironman. In that bout, Earnest had a 3-0 lead midway through the third period before Birden shot in and won a scramble situation, where he was able to secure the fall. The following day, Birden upset Cadet World champion Joe Sealey 5-3 in the semifinal despite giving up the first takedown of the bout, before losing in the final; while Earnest would

again squander a lead in losing by fall to Andrew Harmon from Pennsylvania to end up one match of placement.

The pair just wrestled this past Saturday in the third-place dual meet at the state duals invitational. Birden had a 1-0 lead through two periods after a second period escape. Three quarters of the way to a third period ride out and the win, Birden was called for an illegal move; with Earnest unable to continue, the match ended in an Earnest victory. This should be one of the best matches of the whole state tournament program, one everyone should look forward to.

In additional competition this season, Birden was champion at Mount Vernon, Brecksville (12-4 over Darius Marines), Mason, and Delaware Hayes; while Earnest was champion at North Canton, Maumee Bay, Wadsworth (11-2 over Marines, though the first period of that match had an interesting sequence that skews the score), and the Suburban League with a seventh-place finish at Powerade.

Four additional ranked wrestlers join Birden at Hilliard Darby, led by returning state placer Smalley; the senior has titles at Upper Arlington, Olentangy Orange, and Watkins Memorial on the season. The junior Watts is also a returning state qualifier, whose season started up in weight classes (fifth up at 175 at Mount Vernon, then at 165 he was second at Olentangy Liberty, third at Dublin Scioto, and sixth at Top Gun) before losing 5-2 to Smalley in the Watkins Memorial final. Fitzpatrick has lost go-to-state bouts in his first two high school seasons, and spent much of this one up at 165 where he was fourth at Olentangy Lierty and failed to place at Wadsworth; in this weight, he lost 4-1 to Willen this past weekend. Finally, the sophomore Taylor has runner-up finishes in four tournaments (Mount Vernon, North Canton, Olentangy Orange, and Jonathan Alder) along with a seventh at Maumee Bay and fifth at Delaware Hayes.

Four additional ranked wrestlers also join Earnest at North Canton. Perrine was state alternate two years ago as a freshman, and has finished third in every tournament this season: North Coast, Barnesville, Perrysburg (split with George), Top Gun, Wadsworth, and Suburban League. Supers qualified for state two years ago as a sophomore, and he has five tournament titles on the season (Milan Edison, Marengo Highland, Hudson, Medina, and Hephner) to go with a fourth at Maumee Bay. Rizzo was state alternate in this weight last year as a freshman, and this season started by going 4-4 between Ironman and Beast before placing sixth at Brecksville and second in the Suburban League; this past weekend he pinned Willen and lost 6-2 to Peterson at the state duals invitational. Finally, the senior Crutchley qualified for state at 138 last year, while this season includes a title at Top Gun, second at West Holmes, and fourth in the Suburban League.

Three ranked wrestlers, all with state experience, exit from Kettering Fairmont. That group is led by the senior Morency, a returning state placer who was finalist at SWOWCA before missing some time and coming back to win the title at Milford. Next is George, who was eighth in the 165-pound state weight class last year. He was 1-2 at the Ironman with a win over Peterson and a loss to Wood, before placing third at Brecksville (wins over Wood, Rizzo, and Willen) and fourth at Perrysburg (loss to Wood, split Perrine); he also was third up at 165 at SWOWCA. Finally, the junior Willen has titles at DeSales and SWOWCA to go with a fourth at Brecksville and fifth at Wadsworth; while he also went 1-2 at Ironman and 2-2 at Escape the Rock.

The remaining three ranked wrestlers come out from Perrysburg. The junior Wood opened the season with a dual meet win over Rizzo before going 2-2 at the Ironman, finishing seventh at Brecksville, and making the finals of both Perrysburg (winning) and Maumee Bay (runner-up). The senior Metzger placed

fifth in this weight class in Division II last year, with this season including runner-up finishes at Medina and the Gorman. The freshman Peterson entered high school with an OAC junior high state title, while his December included an 0-2 Ironman, placing sixth at the Carnahan, and going 4-2 at the Powerade.

### **165 pounds**

1. Joey Blaze, Perrysburg, senior (Perrysburg)
2. Tyrel Miller, St. Edward, sophomore (Perrysburg)
3. Brandon Batson, Canton Glen Oak, senior (North Canton)
4. Carson Thomas, Cincinnati LaSalle, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
5. Tyler Lintner, Austintown Fitch, senior (North Canton)
6. Jack Marconi, Avon Lake, senior (Perrysburg)
7. Tyler Hicks, Beavercreek, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
8. A.J. Dolph, North Canton Hoover, sophomore (North Canton)
9. Devin Halliday, Delaware Hayes, senior (Hilliard Darby)
10. Lawson Hampton, Pickerington Central, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
11. Carson Mize, Marysville, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
12. Isaiah Schlegel, Toledo Whitmer, senior (Perrysburg)
13. Jack Hoffman, Springboro, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
14. Fletcher Rose, Miamisburg, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
15. Austin Holman, Milford, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
16. Sammy Moloney, Dublin Coffman, junior (Hilliard Darby)
17. Aiden Stuczynski, Twinsburg, junior (North Canton)

HD – Halliday, Hampton, Mize, Moloney; Idell Ferguson (Olentangy Orange, senior)

KF – Thomas, Hicks, Hoffman, Rose; Holman

NC – Batson, Lintner, Dolph, Stuczynski; Caleb Ridgley (Nardon, senior)

PBG – Blaze, Miller, Marconi, Schlegel; Austin Sertell (Findlay, junior)

The last two seasons have seen the Purdue signee Joey Blaze win instant classics in the state finals bout. It was a pin in the 30/30 at 138 pounds over Jake Niffenegger in 2021, before last year's 1-0 win over Birden. Things should be more comfortable this season for the 2022 Super 32 Challenge champion in this year's state tournament. Though he missed the Ironman, Blaze has looked dominant on the way to titles at Brecksville, Perrysburg, and Maumee Bay.

His most direct challenger will come from the Perrysburg district in the sophomore Miller, a 16U National freestyle All-American, who went 1-2 in last year's state tournament at 150 with losses by fall to the eventual state champion and third-place finisher (Ethan Smith). The most notable in-season result for Miller is a 14-8 victory over Cramblett in January, while there are some rather positive narrow losses during the season to nationally ranked opponents: 5-4 to Cade Ziola from Nebraska at the Ironman and then essentially up a weight at Powerade to Dom Federici from Wyoming Seminary (overtime) and Rocco Dellagatta from New Jersey (6-4).

Two additional ranked wrestlers exit said district. The senior Marconi was a state alternate last year, and recently lost 12-4 to Miller, while he has two losses by fall against Blaze on the season (Maumee Bay final and regional final dual meet); additional results include a second at Medina and title at West Holmes. Fellow senior Schlegel qualified for state from this weight class last year, and spent almost all the season up one weight class before district composition motivated this drop: round of 12 at Brecksville, seventh at Perrysburg, and eighth at Maumee Bay.

There are just two other returning Ohio state placers in this weight classes, those being Batson and Lintner, both seniors. They exit district competition at North Canton, along with two other ranked wrestlers. Batson has four tournament titles on the season, most notably beating Andel 3-1 to win at Solon, to go with a 2-2 performance at the Ironman. Lintner has titles at Beaver Local and the Hephner to go with runner-up finishes at Top Gun and EOWL (10-0 loss in the final to Andel) and a third at Medina (split matches against Rose). The sophomore Dolph is a returning qualifier, and missed the first month-plus of the season before placing third at Top Gun and second at West Holmes; while the junior Stuczynski was third at North Coast and champion in the Suburban League. Returning Arizona state placer Bear Horgan (Mentor, senior) is otherwise not mentioned, but resides in this district tournament.

Five ranked wrestlers feature at the Kettering Fairmont district, led by returning state qualifier Thomas; the sophomore was champion at DeSales and SWOWCA, placed third at Brecksville and Wadsworth, and took eighth at Escape the Rock along with going 3-2 at the Ironman. Hicks qualified for state as a sophomore in 2021, while this season includes a runner-up finish at SWOWCA and a semifinal berth at Medina, along with a 6-3 dual meet loss to Thomas this month. The sophomore Hoffman was closed out of last year's post-season lineup by state qualifiers Kowalski and Weimer, while this season features a round of 12 at GMVWA before placing seventh at Maumee Bay and first at Watkins Memorial; in addition, there is a 7-3 dual meet victory over returning state qualifier Rose. The junior placed fourth at GMVWA and SWOWCA, as well as winning the title at Miamisburg. Finally, it is fellow junior Holman, who placed fifth at SWOWCA before winning titles at Fairfield and Milford.

Finally, it is a group of four ranked wrestlers at Hilliard Darby led by returning state qualifier Halliday, a senior who placed fifth at Olentangy Liberty, third at GMVWA and fourth at Top Gun before winning at Delaware Hayes. Fellow senior Hampton was sixth at Olentangy Liberty, second at Dublin Scioto, and fourth at Maumee Bay. The sophomore Mize was closed out of last year's post-season lineup by state qualifier Seger and two-time state placer Powers; while this season he took third at Olentangy Liberty, seventh at Brecksville, fourth at Dublin Scioto, and sixth at Maumee Bay. Rounding it out is the junior Moloney, who was runner-up at Mount Vernon and Delaware Hayes sandwiching a round of 12 at Brecksville and a title at Mason.

### **175 pounds**

1. Myles Takats, Perrysburg, senior (Perrysburg)
2. J.R. Miller, St. Edward, sophomore (Perrysburg)
3. Luke Vanadia, Brecksville, senior (North Canton)
4. Jeremy Olszko, Nordonia, senior (North Canton)
5. Andrew Liber, Toledo St. Francis, senior (Perrysburg)
6. Colton Powers, Marysville, senior (Hilliard Darby)
7. Storm Beane, Dublin Coffman, senior (Hilliard Darby)
8. Sam Libby, Mason, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
9. Matthew Kowalski, Springboro, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
10. Blaine Chrisman, Medina, junior (North Canton)
11. Kyle Sandborn, North Royalton, senior (Perrysburg)
12. Louie Schaefer, Wadsworth, senior (North Canton)
13. Jarrell Young, St. Ignatius, senior (Perrysburg)
14. C.J. Karr, Reynoldsburg, senior (Hilliard Darby)
15. Kam Harden, Cincinnati LaSalle, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
16. Ferman Mirzaev, Kettering Fairmont, senior (Kettering Fairmont)



HD – Powers, Beane, Karr, Corey Howlett (Westerville North, senior); Jaden Fields (Thomas Worthington, senior)

KF – Libby, Kowalski, Harden, Mirzaev; Calob Heilman (Loveland, sophomore)

NC – Vanadia, Olszko, Chrisman, Schaefer; Matthew Haney (Medina Highland, senior)

PBG – Takats, Miller, Liber, Sandborn; Young

Three national caliber wrestlers dominate the narrative in this weight class. The pair of returning state runners-up both have wins over Luke Vanadia, a two-time state placer (7<sup>th</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup>) who is signed with Michigan State. The sophomore Miller was runner-up at 157 last season, using a rideout to force overtime in his 4-2 state semifinal win over James Scavuzzo; while the senior Takats was runner-up at 165, losing 6-5 to Evan Bennett via a very late reversal, though the top position is also probably the best position for the Bucknell signee.

Both Miller and Takats exit district competition at Perrysburg, so the district final between the two of them is going to be a massively critical bout. The winner of that bout will be in the opposite half-bracket from the loser, as well as Vanadia (barring some upset/s along the way at district). Miller was a 16U national freestyle champion this summer before finishing runner-up at both the Ironman and Carnahan, with losses to the top two wrestlers in the country at those tournaments (Rocco Welsh and Josh Barr). However, essentially forced up a weight at the Powerade, he was round of 12 losing to a pair of wrestlers that are not ranked nationally. Miller has 4-2 (Ironman quarterfinal) and 8-5 (state duals invitational) wins over Vanadia on the season, along with one other over another nationally ranked opponent, plus a major decision victory over Neitenbach.

Takats had an Ironman in which he performed above his previous resume, finishing third with just the 11-5 loss to Welsh. There were four wins over nationally ranked wrestlers along the way, most notably from an Ohio perspective the 4-2 win over Newsome. The week before, Takats beat Vanadia 3-0. At Brecksville, Takats placed third losing 6-3 to Newsome in the semifinal; he then would win titles at Perrysburg (3-1 over Olszko) and Maumee Bay (6-2 over Neitenbach in the semi).

Three additional ranked wrestlers, all with state experience feature at the Perrysburg district. Liber qualified for state in 2021 as a sophomore, but was ineligible second half and post-season last year due to his transfer. This season he has been mostly at 190 where he won titles at Deifance and Perrysburg before finishing fourth at Maumee Bay, while he made the drop into this weight class late in January. Fellow senior Sandborn has titles at Solon (over Young) and Perry Pin City to go with a second at Hudson, third at Suburban League, fourth at North Coast, and fifth at Hephner. Two-time state qualifier Young has again missed much of the season, but when he was on the mat, he was second at Solon and North Coast.

Vanadia is the anchor figure at the North Canton district, where he is joined by three other ranked wrestlers. The Michigan State bound wrestler was seventh at Ironman and sixth at the Beast before winning the Suburban League with an 8-4 decision over Olszko in the final. Fellow senior Olszko placed fourth at 165 last season, while this season includes finals appearances in all six tournaments; 3-1 loss to Havill in the Barnesville final, 3-1 to Takats at Perrysburg, and the Suburban League runner-up. The junior Chrisman lost his go-to-state bout last year in overtime, and has three tournament titles on the season (Hudson and Hephner most notably), while placing second at Medina and seventh at Maumee Bay. Finally, the senior Schaefer is a returning state alternate who went 3-2 at the Ironman before

winning at North Canton, taking second at Wadsworth and fourth at Suburban League. Returning state tournament Will Vucetic (Chardon, junior) is otherwise not mentioned in this report.

The fifth returning state placer in this weight class is the senior Powers, who has taken eighth and seventh the last two years. He was fifth at Brecksville before taking second at Dublin Scioto and Maumee Bay. Just two ranked wrestlers join him at Hilliard Darby for the district, Beane and Karr. The junior Beane finished state alternate last year, and won a title at Mount Vernon opening weekend before finishing round of 12 at Brecksville, taking third at Mason, and winning at Delaware Hayes; in the last two weekends, he has dual meet wins over Powers, Kowalski, and Schaefer. Karr was a go-to-state loser at district two years ago as a sophomore before missing last season; in his return to competition, he has titles at Upper Arlington and Olentangy Orange to go with a second at Marion Harding and a semifinal at Watkins Memorial. Returning state qualifier Gabe Pence (Olentangy Liberty, senior) is otherwise not mentioned in this report.

Closing this weight out are four ranked wrestlers at Kettering Fairmont. The senior Libby was a go-to-match loser two years ago; this season he was third at Olentangy Liberty then 3-2 at GMVWA, before taking first at Berkshire and finishing second at Mason. Kowalski won a state tournament bout last year as a freshman, while this season he was third at GMVWA, fifth at Maumee Bay, and second at Watkins Memorial. The junior Harden was state alternate last year, but spent much of the year up at 190 where he went a combined 3-6 between Ironman, Brecksville, and Escape the Rock; while he was second at DeSales, third at SWOWCA, and failed to place at Wadsworth. He dropped to 175 this past week, and picked up a 6-4 dual meet win over Pence. Finally, it is the senior Mirzaev, who has titles at Kettering Fairmont and Troy to go with a third at SWOWCA and round of 12 at Maumee Bay.

### **190 pounds**

1. Camden McDanel, Teays Valley, senior (Hilliard Darby)
2. Myles Johnson, Springboro, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
3. Brady Quillin, Olentangy Liberty, junior (Hilliard Darby)
4. Wyatt Ferguson, Oak Hills, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
5. Coen Grimm, Wadsworth, senior (North Canton)
6. Johnny Slaper, St. Edward, junior (Perrysburg)
7. Lukas Stiles, Medina Highland, senior (North Canton)
8. Gunnar Pool, Centerville, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
9. Gage Yackee, Toledo St. John's, junior (Perrysburg)
10. Gavin Beasley, North Olmsted, senior (Perrysburg)
11. Ryder Hartshorn, Massillon Perry, junior (North Canton)
12. Riley McPherson, Brecksville, sophomore (North Canton)
13. Ryan Iams, Hamilton Ross, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
14. Payton Lupton, Northmont, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
15. Kody Hoffman, Lancaster, senior (Hilliard Darby)
16. Richard Lawrence, Hilliard Davidson, senior (Hilliard Darby)

HD – McDanel, Quillin, Hoffman, Lawrence; Brady Seger (Marysville, senior)

KF – Johnson, Ferguson, Pool, Iams; Lupton

NC – Grimm, Stiles, Hartshorn, McPherson; J.T. Hill (Stow, senior)

PBG – Slaper, Yackee, Beasley, Nick Hartzell (Perrysburg, senior); Cornell Beard (Shaker Hts, sophomore)

For a good nine-month stretch, the Nebraska-bound McDanel seemed to perpetually finish in second place. After upsetting Seth Shumate in the district final, McDanel lost 7-4 to Shumate in the state final, which relegated him to being a two-time state runner-up. Then seven weeks later, he lost in the last seconds of a third match in a best-of-three for the Cadet World Team against Max McEnelly from Minnesota. During the summer, McDanel was part of an Ohio team that took second in the Junior National freestyle duals before he would finish second himself in Junior National freestyle. It would continue into December, where he lost 3-2 in the Ironman final to Oklahoma State signee Brayden Thompson and 7-5 via a very late takedown in the Beast of the East final against Jude Correa from Wyoming Seminary.

Finally, McDanel ended that spate of second-place finishes with a pin over nationally ranked Remy Cotton from Michigan in the Brecksville final, and continued the winning vibe with a 7-2 decision over Super 32 placer Johnson in the Watkins Memorial final, an opponent he beat 11-3 in the state quarterfinal last year. Should the state final go in his favor, he would join Mike Wilson from back in 1975 as the only state champion wrestlers in school history.

Looking at the challengers for the title, the next four kind of reside in a mangled web. However, at this time senior Johnson holds the ranking edge given his overall body of work (highest returning state placer, third, and major event production with the Super 32 placement). He was up at 215 where he was champion at GMVWA and Maumee Bay before dropping to this weight in a loss to McDanel at Watkins. Next in line is the junior Quillin, whose titles at DeSales and Olentangy Liberty sandwiched a 2-2 Walsh Ironman, which was then followed by a fourth at Brecksville and a title at Wadsworth; this past weekend, he beat Johnson 6-5 but lost 8-7 to Grimm, who he beat in the Wadsworth final.

Ranked fourth here is the senior Ferguson, who has missed most of the previous two seasons due to injury, but was round of 12 in both Junior freestyle and the Super 32 prior to this season. Ferguson had titles at SWOWCA, GMVWA, and Fairfield before a 7-0 finals loss at Maumee Bay (to Ray), which followed victories over Grimm (10-1) and Delano (10-4) earlier in the event. Fellow senior Grimm placed fourth in this state weight last year. His season includes a round of 12 at the Ironman, a loss to Haines in the North Canton semi, a seventh at the Powerade, a sixth at Maumee Bay, runner-up at Wadsworth, and title in the Suburban League (that win avenged an earlier dual meet loss to McPherson); the last two weeks include dual meet wins over Hartshorn and Quillin.

McDanel and Quillin are joined by two other ranked wrestlers at Hilliard Darby, seniors in Lawrence and Hoffman. Lawrence qualified for state in 2021, and this season was third at Marion Harding, champion at Jonathan Alder, and second at Delaware Hayes; while Hoffman was third at Olentangy Liberty before taking second at both Marion Harding and New Lexington. Returning state qualifier Seger also is in this weight class.

Johnson and Ferguson are joined by three other ranked wrestlers at Kettering Fairmont, all seniors with state tournament experience (it's no wonder Harden found a different home). 2021 state qualifier Pool saw his post-season end last year in a go-to-state bout loss by fall against an opponent he had pinned in the opening round at district (Kamarrie Harden); his major event season started by going 3-2 at the Ironman before runner-up finishes at SWOWCA and Perrysburg sandwiched a fifth at Brecksville, plus there is a 7-5 dual meet win over Weimer along the way. Iams placed seventh in Division II at 175 last year, while this year he was at 215 in December, placing second at Olentangy and fifth at SWOWCA before hitting this weight class in a runner-up finish at Fairfield. Lupton placed at GMVWA (sixth after a pair of defaults) before a championship at Western Brown, then a second at Brookville.

Grimm is joined by three other ranked wrestlers at North Canton, the first being two-time state alternate Stiles, who missed last year's post-season run due to injury. The senior spent most of his season at 215 where most notably he was champion at Medina and West Holmes, second at Perrysburg, and third in the Suburban League (8-7 loss to T. Gregory). The junior Hartshorn did not wrestle at all last season, and came back to competition in January with a 13-8 dual meet win over McPherson the night after he had beaten Grimm; while since then he was champion at Delaware Hayes with a pin over Lawrence. The sophomore McPherson was 2-2 at the Ironman, round of 12 at Brecksville, and runner-up at the Suburban League; this past weekend, he lost 3-2 to Grimm and 6-2 to Slaper.

Finally, it is a group of three wrestlers at Perrysburg, led by two-time state placer Slaper. The junior played linebacker on a state title-winning football team, so from a wrestling perspective his December included placing third at the Carnahan (losing by fall to Anthony White, who just failed to qualify for the Indiana state tournament) and then going 1-2 at the Powerade up a weight class; he did pick up a 6-0 dual meet victory over 2x Michigan state placer Carson Crace in January. Yackee placed eighth at 215 last year as a sophomore, while third season includes a third at Perrysburg and a CIT title in this weight class. The senior Beasley is a returning state qualifier, whose season is bereft of a loss and includes tournament titles at Kenston and Perry Pin City.

### **215 pounds**

1. Dylan Russo, Olentangy Liberty, senior (Hilliard Darby)
2. Zach Delsanter, St. Edward, senior (Perrysburg)
3. Max Vanadia, Brecksville, senior (North Canton)
4. Brentan Simmerman, Little Miami, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
5. Wyatt Walker, Trenton Edgewood, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
6. Teddy Gregory, Stow, senior (North Canton)
7. Alex Taylor, Mount Vernon, freshman (Hilliard Darby)
8. Antonio Bottiggi, Painesville Riverside, junior (North Canton)
9. Mike Millin, Massillon Perry, sophomore (North Canton)
10. Will Adkins, Cincinnati Moeller, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
11. Cole Dickerson, Lancaster, junior (Hilliard Darby)
12. Maverick Blackburn, Wadsworth, senior (North Canton)
13. C.J. Crawford, Beavercreek, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
14. Aiden Weimer, Springboro, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
15. Cody Fair, Massillon, junior (North Canton)
16. Darion Thompson, Cleveland Hts, senior (Perrysburg)
17. Cayden Spotts, Ashland, junior (Perrysburg)

HD – Russo, Taylor, Dickerson, Stephen Garcia (Marysville, junior); Isaac Carter (Grove City, senior)

KF – Simmerman, Walker, Adkins, Crawford; Weimer

NC – Vanadia, Gregory, Bottiggi, Millin; Blackburn, Fair

PBG – Delsanter, Thompson, Spotts, Behlen Waugh (St. Edward, sophomore), Caleb Bowman (Toledo St. John's, sophomore); Dominic May (Brunswick, junior)

An interesting research project would be to go through the annals of the state tournament to see if there are any wrestlers that had yet to win a district tournament title when they won a second state title. There would be at least one, as Oklahoma signee Russo has lost three straight years in the district

final, but in the last two years won state tournament titles. Both of those state title runs were keyed by an upset victory in the semis over Logan Shephard of Massillon Perry (who is now at Bucknell).

One would think this season would be a much cleaner one for Russo. In the off-season between his junior and senior wrestling season, he was champion at the NHSCA Junior Nationals, a Junior National freestyle All-American, and a runner-up at the Super 32 Challenge. Russo placed fourth at the Ironman and second at Brecksville, losing to Shulaw in both tournaments, along with winning titles at Olentangy Liberty and Wadsworth. However, this weight class could feature as many as four other returning state placers, plus a slew of others with state tournament credentials.

Leading the challenge pack could be a pair of nationally ranked wrestlers in Delsanter and Vandaia, both of whom are headed to Division I colleges for wrestling next season (Penn and Michigan State respectively). Delsanter placed sixth at the Ironman with overtime wins over Vanandia and Snider before picking up a 1-0 loss to Russo on the back side, but he sustained an injury in his finals match loss at the Carnahan, and has yet to make it back to the mat. Vanandia has twice placed sixth at state, and missed out on Ironman placement by one match, when he lost to Jersey Robb 4-3 in the quarterfinal on a late takedown and then to Delsanter in the round of 12; he was fourth at the Beast, third at Brecksville, and champion of the Suburban League.

The other two returning state placers exit district competition at Kettering Fairmont, the senior Simmerman and the junior Walker. Neither is from a school exactly known for their wrestling history, Little Miami's only state champion was Pat Fitzgerald in Class AA in 1984, while Trenton Edgewood has never had a state champ. Simmerman has titles at Mount Vernon, Sheridan, Perrysburg, and Washington C.H. to go with a runner-up finish at GMVWA; while Walker has titles at Trenton Edgewood, SWOWCA, Fairfield, and Western Brown. Three other ranked wrestlers join them in the field, all with prior state tournament experience.

The sophomore Adkins was 2-2 at Ironman and round of 12 at the Powerade, while in more in-state competition, he was third at SWOCA, fourth at Perrysburg, first at CIT, and fifth at Wadsworth; he also has a 4-3 dual meet win over Weimer. The fellow sophomore qualified for state last year at 175, and was at 190 before him and Johnson flipped weights; competing at 190, he was third at GMVWA and seventh at Maumee Bay, while in this weight class he was champion at Watkins Memorial. Crawford qualified for state two years ago as a freshman, and was relegated to the state alternate match last year by a 9-3 loss to Walker and then a 12-5 loss to Adkins. This season includes a fourth at SWOWCA and sixth at Medina.

District competition for Russo features just two other ranked wrestlers at Hilliard Darby. The freshman Taylor was an OAC junior high state champ last year, and this season has been a finalist in all six of his tournaments; notably taking first at Delaware Hayes (13-9 over Bottiggi in the semi), while he was second at Mount Vernon (7-6 loss to Simmerman), North Canton, Maumee Bay, and Jonathan Alder. The junior Dickerson is a returning state qualifier, and has titles at Olentangy, Marion Harding, and New Lexington to go with a runner-up finish at Olentangy Liberty.

Vanandia will be joined by five other ranked wrestlers at North Canton, a group led by 2021 state qualifier Gregory, who missed his junior season due to injury. Gregory was undefeated entering his Suburban League final match that he lost 3-1 to Vanandia on the strength of titles at Solon, Wayne Invite, Barnesville, and the Hephner. Bottiggi made state in this weight last year as a sophomore, and this

season included titles at Riverside and Kenston in December up at 285 before he placed second at Top Gun and Wadsworth down in this weight class and then was third at Delaware Hayes.

The sophomore Millin was closed out of the lineup last year by Shephard, and went 6-4 between Ironman and Beast before placing seventh at Brecksville and then fourth at Wadsworth and Delaware Hayes. The senior Blackburn was round of 12 at Ironman, fifth at North Canton, fourth at Maumee Bay, sixth at Wadsworth, and fifth in the Suburban League; while the junior Fair placed fourth at North Canton (but lost to Blackburn), was champion at the Gorman, and took fifth at Maumee Bay.

Just two other ranked wrestlers join Delsanter in the Perrysburg district. The senior Thompson is a returning district placer, winning titles at the Bill Dies and Berkshire in this weight, while winning at Cleveland Central Catholic down at 190. The junior Spotts qualified for state in this weight class in Division II last year, with this season including a fourth at Medina, third at the Gorman, and sixth at Maumee Bay.

### **285 pounds**

1. Aidan Fockler, Massillon Perry, junior (North Canton)
2. Aaron Ries, Wadsworth, junior (North Canton)
3. Roosevelt Andrews, Barberton, senior (North Canton)
4. Lucas Stuerenberg, Cincinnati Moeller, sophomore (Kettering Fairmont)
5. Nate Gregory, St. Edward, sophomore (Perrysburg)
6. Abel Ngoh, Miamisburg, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
7. Mustafa Woodi, Shaker Hts, junior (Perrysburg)
8. Luke Cox, Lancaster, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
9. Robert Snyder, Hilliard Bradley, senior (Hilliard Darby)
10. Joey Thurston, Teays Valley, senior (Hilliard Darby)
11. Richard Thornton, Springboro, junior (Kettering Fairmont)
12. Luke Fleet, Olentangy Liberty, senior (Hilliard Darby)
13. Austin Dye, Midview, junior (Perrysburg)
14. Connor Garren, Olentangy Orange, senior (Hilliard Darby)
15. Jamell Smith, Xenia, senior (Kettering Fairmont)
16. Colten Arnold, Massillon Jackson, senior (North Canton)

HD – Cox, Snyder, Thurston, Fleet; Garren

KF – Stuerenberg, Ngoh, Thornton, Smith; Jabril Bradford (Cincinnati Northwest, senior)

NC – Fockler, Ries, Andrews, Arnold; E.J. German (Brecksville, freshman)

PBG – Gregory, Woodi, Dye, Jack Paukovits (North Royalton, senior); Tommy Ling (Anthony Wayne, senior)

There are times the data point of an isolated match needs to be taken with a grain of salt. For the second straight season, Ries has beaten Fockler in the battle of Class of 2024 wrestlers during the final of the Wadsworth GIT. Last season, Fockler would go on to beat Ries in a subsequent dual meet, and then out-place him at both district and state. This year, there has been no subsequent dual meet since Ries beat Fockler 2-1 in the Wadsworth final on a penalty point for fleeing the mat late in regulation.

If one was looking for a point of concern with Ries, you could look at the number of matches that he wins by one score or less. Per my count, he has ten wins against Ohio opponents fitting that description.

After placing eighth in last year's state tournament, Ries went undefeated in the 16U National Freestyle Duals and won the 16U National freestyle tournament in Fargo. A round of 12 at the Ironman and seventh at Powerade sandwiched a title at North Canton (3-2 over Baldrige). In January, he won titles at Maumee Bay (tiebreaker over Allen in the final to reverse a loss from December), Wadsworth, and the Suburban League.

Fellow junior Fockler, a verbal commit to Central Michigan, has placed second and third in state tournaments to date. He was runner-up at the Super 32 Challenge in the preseason. After missing the Ironman due to injury, he won the Beast of the East with a pin over nationally ranked Max Acciardi from New Jersey, and won Brecksville with a 3-2 victory over Iowa football signee Jones from Indiana (who beat Ries in the round of 12 at Ironman).

The next wrestler in the rankings also comes from the North Canton district in the senior Andrews, who beat Vandaia on multiple occasions last season. The Miami University football signee was undefeated this season until a 3-1 overtime loss to Ries in the Suburban League final. He also has titles at Lorain, the Bill Dies, and Green. Rounding out the ranked group in this district is fellow senior Arnold, a returning state alternate; his season includes a third at North Canton, seventh at Maumee Bay, and title at the Hephner.

The overall tenor of this weight class is slightly eroded by the loss of two returning state placers due to football situations. Returning state runner-up Josh Padilla (Huber Hts. Wayne), who beat Fockler 5-4 in the state semifinal, is already enrolled at Ohio State to play on the offensive line; while returning state fourth Michael Kilbane (St. Edward) is taking the wrestling season off after anchoring the Eagles' defensive line to a state title in football before matriculating at Northwestern in the summer/fall.

Stuerenberg, the OAC junior high state champion two years ago at 249, finished as a state alternate last year and anchors a group of four ranked wrestlers at Kettering Fairmont. His sophomore season includes a round of 12 at the Ironman, runner-up at SWOWCA, eighth place at Powerade, runner-up at Perrysburg, third place at Wadsworth (9-5 loss to Fockler), and a title at Watkins Memorial. The junior Ngoh beat Stuerenberg to win SWOWCA, with additional titles coming at Trenton Edgewood and Miamisburg; he also finished second at GMVWA, but lost in overtime in a recent dual against Thornton. The fellow junior from Springboro lost that same day 2-0 to Stuerenberg, and his other season-long data includes a seventh at GMVWA along with third-place finishes at Maumee Bay and Watkins Memorial. The senior Smith is a returning state qualifier who has four tournament titles, third-place finishes at Trenton Edgewood and Fairfield, along with a fifth at GMVWA.

Even without Kilbane, St. Edward has the sophomore Gregory, a 2021 OAC junior high state champion at 209 as its starter in this weight class. He contributed to the Eagles' state title football team as a linebacker, and his wrestling production includes a runner-up finish at Marion Harding. As the anchor at the Perrysburg district, he is joined by just two other ranked wrestlers. One is the junior Woodi, who lost to Fockler in the round of 12 of Junior Greco this summer, and has a title at Olentangy Liberty to go with a third at Top Gun. The other is fellow junior Dye, a returning state qualifier, who has a title at Solon to go with a second at the Bill Dies and fourth at West Holmes.

There are five ranked wrestlers at Hilliard Darby, and they all seem to reside right next to each other in the rankings. Leading said group is the sophomore Cox, who has titles at Olentangy and New Lexington to go with at third at Marion Harding. Next up is the senior Snyder, who was fourth at GMVWA and champion at Beaver Local. Two-time state qualifier Thurston went 2-2 at the Ironman, placed third at

Barnesville, was fifth at Brecksville, and then second at Watkins Memorial; he lost 7-4 to Cox in a winner-take-all bout during a recent dual meet. Returning state alternate Fleet was champion at DeSales, then went 0-2 at the Ironman, was runner-up at Olentangy Liberty, placed third at Brecksville, and was fourth at Wadsworth; in the last two weeks, he has a dual meet pin over Cox and a dual meet loss by fall to Thornton. Fellow returning state alternate Garren has titles at Upper Arlington and Olentangy Orange to go with a fourth at Brecksville and fifth at Maumee Bay.

### **Team**

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



## DIVISION TWO

### **106 pounds**

1. Javaan Yarbrough, Copley, junior (Garfield Hts)
2. Ethan Burkhart, New Lexington, senior (Steubenville)
3. Owen Nelson, CVCA, senior (Garfield Hts)
4. Neal Krysty, Bishop Watterson, sophomore (Wilmington)
5. Blake Bartos, Medina Buckeye, freshman (Garfield Hts)
6. Roman Cordoba, Napoleon, junior (Norwalk)
7. Landon Jenkins, Carrollton, junior (Steubenville)
8. Aiden Ohl, Ontario, freshman (Norwalk)
9. Dom Prospero, Canton South, freshman (Garfield Hts)
10. Lyric Dickerson, Miami Trace, sophomore (Steubenville)
11. Anthony Sindelar, Streetsboro, freshman (Garfield Hts)
12. Jake Landis, St. Paris Graham, freshman (Wilmington)
13. Joseph Lugabihl, Wauseon, freshman (Norwalk)
14. Marius Garcia, Bexley, sophomore (Wilmington)
15. Peyton Martin, West Holmes, freshman (Steubenville)
16. Layton Vennon, Unioto, senior (Steubenville)

GH – Yarbrough, Nelson, Bartos, Prospero; Sindelar

NOR – Cordoba, Ohl, Lugabihl, Konner Blaney (Marengo Highland, sophomore); Aiden McMahan (Licking Valley, sophomore)

STB – Burkhart, Jenkins, Dickerson, Martin; Vennon

WIL – Krysty, Landis, Garcia, Nash Finley (Granville, freshman); Cody Lisle (Clinton-Massie, junior)

When it comes down to ability and not size, there are few who peer Yarbrough on the mat. However, in his first two years of high school, size has been an issue, as an undersized 106-pound wrestler. In Fargo, he has made the finals in both styles each of the last two summers, and went undefeated at the age commensurate National Duals each time (16U in 2021, Junior in 2022). Finally at full size for 106, he placed sixth at the Ironman before winning titles at the Beast, Medina, and Suburban League (6-4 over Seacrist there).

It would be a significant upset if anyone beat him at the state tournament this year, though a field that includes three with state tournament experience will try. Interestingly, the trio with state experience all exit the Steubenville district.

The senior Burkhart has five tournament titles on the season: Cambridge (over Dickerson in the final), North Canton, Licking Valley (over Jenkins in the final), Athens, and New Lexington; the junior Jenkins placed fourth at North Canton, second at Licking Valley and West Holmes, along with winning the Top Gun; while the sophomore Dickerson was runner-up at Cambridge and third at GMVWA, before winning titles at Logan Elm and Miami Trace. Two other ranked wrestlers exit the district as well. The freshman Martin placed fifth at Cambridge, second at Top Gun, and third at West Holmes; while the senior Vennon was runner-up at Olentangy Liberty and Miami Trace sandwiched around titles in three tournaments.

Four additional ranked wrestlers join Yarbrough at Garfield Hts, headlined by the senior Nelson, who is a returning state alternate. He started the season at 113, placing seventh at North Canton before going 1-

2 at Brecksville and 2-2 at Maumee Bay; then he dropped to this weight class at Wadsworth, where he finished sixth. The freshman Bartos was runner-up to Yarbrough at Medina before winning titles at the Gorman and West Holmes, sandwiched around a third-place finish at Maumee Bay. Fellow freshman Prosperi has titles in four tournaments on the season; while the freshman Sindelar placed third at Top Gun, losing 3-0 to Jenkins in the quarterfinal.

Krysty was a state alternate last year competing for Olentangy Liberty in Division I before moving on to Bishop Watterson. He went 0-2 at the Ironman before going on to win titles in four tournaments, including CIT and Jonathan Alder. Two additional ranked wrestlers join him at Wilmington, the freshman Landis and the sophomore Garcia. Landis went 0-2 at both Ironman and Carnahan after a dual meet pin over returning state qualifier Franz on opening weekend, while he since was fourth at GMVWA and failed to place at Wadsowrth. Garcia finished runner-up at Marion Harding and was champion at Licking Hts, before third place finishes at Jonathan Alder and New Lexington.

Finally, it is a trio of ranked wrestlers at Norwalk led by the junior Cordoba, who was a go-to-state loser last year up at 120 pounds. His season to date includes a title at Defiance and an overtime finals loss to Dodd at Perrysburg, though Cordoba did beat him 8-5 on opening weekend. The freshman Ohl was champion at Galion, Kenston (up at 113), and Marion Pleasant to go with a third-place finish at the Gorman (6-5 loss to Bartos in that event). Fellow freshman Lugabihl was at 113 for much of the season where he was round of 12 at Medina and 3-2 at Maumee Bay; the last two weeks in this weight class he had an ultimate tiebreaker loss to Cordoba and a 6-2 loss to Landis.

### **113 pounds**

1. Colyn Limbert, Medina Buckeye, junior (Garfield Hts)
2. Canaan Smith, Chillicothe, freshman (Steubenville)
3. Mason Taylor, West Holmes, senior (Steubenville)
4. Tate Hisey, St. Mary's Memorial, sophomore (Norwalk)
5. Kail Snair, Carrollton, junior (Steubenville)
6. Alex Gonzales, Napoleon, junior (Norwalk)
7. Jaden Gyan, Vandalia Butler, junior (Wilmington)
8. Mark Mueller, Minerva, junior (Steubenville)
9. Jamie Harrison, Madison, senior (Garfield Hts)
10. Connor Novosel, Louisville, senior (Garfield Hts)
11. Christian Osborne, Akron SVSM, junior (Garfield Hts)
12. Peyton Costa, Granville, junior (Wilmington)
13. Travis Bucklew, Vinton County, sophomore (Steubenville)
14. Anthony Rocco, Bay Village, junior (Garfield Hts)
15. Ryder Alberty, Galion, freshman (Norwalk)
16. Zavian LaFountain, Wauseon, sophomore (Norwalk)

GH – Limbert, Harrison, Novosel, Osborne; Rocco

NOR – Hisey, Gonzales, Alberty, LaFountain; Caden Mellott (Wapakoneta, sophomore)

STB – Smith, Taylor, Snair, Muller; Bucklew

WIL – Gyan, Costa, Kaleb Morris (St. Paris Graham, sophomore), Brandon Day (Springfield Shawnee, junior); Mythias Stuckey (Wilmington, sophomore)

Three returning state placers and an impact freshman are the lead figures in this weight class. Limbert placed third at 106 last year as a sophomore, losing 13-7 to Beric Jordan in the semifinal. In the summer,

he was round of 12 in Junior National freestyle; while during the present season he has titles in five tournaments, most notably at Maumee Bay (4-0 over McKinney in the final) and West Holmes (3-2 over Taylor in the final). The freshman Smith was an OAC junior high state runner-up last year at 108, while this year he is an overtime loss in the GMVWA semis to Eli Campbell away from being undefeated on the season. Two-time state placer Taylor was the beneficiary of favorable bracketing last year in this weight class, as the de facto state final between Brogan Tucker and Codie Cuerbo happened in the opposite semifinal; while this season he had two tournament titles up at 120 before finishing third at North Canton then second at Top Gun and West Holmes in this weight class. Finally, Hisey placed fifth last year as a freshman at 106, and this season won titles at Olentangy Liberty and Marion Harding up at 120 before dropping to this weight class during a tournament title run at Jonathan Alder.

Limbert leads the field at Garfield Hts, which includes four other ranked wrestlers, one of whom is returning state qualifier Osborne. Ranked second among those at the district is Harrison, who was a go-to-state loser in 2021 as a sophomore; he has been at three different weights this season, placing third at Kenston up at 126, losing 14-10 up at 120 to C. Smith in the final at Hebron Lakewood before placing eighth at Maumee Bay. Fellow senior Novosel went 0-2 at both Ironman and Brecksville, placed fifth at Maumee Bay, was 1-2 at Maumee Bay, and won the EOWL title; he had 4-0 dual meet wins over Osborne and LaFountain last week. Osborne went 0-2 at Ironman and 1-2 at Brecksville before placing third at the CIT; while the Rocco was state alternate last year as a sophomore, and this year has titles at both Avon Lake and up a weight at Orange.

Smith and Taylor both exit the Steubenville district, which also includes three other ranked wrestlers. Both Snair and Mueller were state alternates last year as sophomores. Snair was runner-up at North Canton, champ at Licking Valley, third at Top Gun, and a semifinalist at West Holmes; while Mueller finished third at Cambridge up a weight before winning the Marengo Highland title in this class. Finally, it's the sophomore Bucklew who has titles in three tournaments, along with a runner-up finish to Smith at Nelsonville-York and a third-place finish at West Holmes.

Hisey leads a group of four ranked wrestlers in total at Norwalk. Returning state qualifier Gonzales is next in line, and his season-to-date includes finals appearances at both Defiance (runner-up) and Perrysburg (3-2 over Denkins in the final). The freshman Alberty was champion at Galion before placing seventh at Medina, third at the Gorman, going 1-2 at Maumee Bay, and finishing fifth at West Holmes. The sophomore LaFountain was at 106 most of the season, where he placed fourth at Medina and Perrysburg before going round of 12 at Maumee Bay; while in this weight class the last two weeks he has dual meet losses to Gonzales, Gyan, and Novosel.

Finally, it is the pair of ranked wrestlers at Wilmington. The junior Gyan has runner-up finishes at Upper Arlington and Mason to sandwich fourth-place finishes at SWOWCA and GMVWA on the resume this season; while returning state qualifier Costa was second at Big Walnut, 2-2 at Brecksville, round of 12 at Top Gun, and a finalist at New Lexington this season.

### **120 pounds**

1. Jacob Ohl, Ontario, junior (Norwalk)
2. Noah Moreland, Vandalia Butler, senior (Wilmington)
3. Anthony Perez, Streetsboro, senior (Garfield Hts)
4. Jimmy Lalezas, Cleves Taylor, senior (Wilmington)
5. Joseph Curry, Bishop Watterson, freshman (Wilmington)
6. Robert Buchheit, Beaver Local, freshman (Steubenville)

7. Colt Ryan, St. Paris Graham, senior (Wilmington)
8. Larry Moreno, Wauseon, senior (Norwalk)
9. Braden Hahlen, CVCA, senior (Garfield Hts)
10. Gradey Harding, Galion, freshman (Norwalk)
11. Isaac Meese, Indian Valley, junior (Steubenville)
12. Wyatt Nemitz, Perkins, junior (Norwalk)
13. Cody Miller, Canton South, junior (Garfield Hts)
14. Michael Thomas, Mansfield Madison, junior (Norwalk)
15. Connor Norris, Minerva, junior (Steubenville)
16. Giovanni Duniec, Padua, sophomore (Garfield Hts)

GH – Perez, Hahlen, Miller, Duniec; Jayson Knapp (Medina Buckeye, junior)

NOR – Ohl, Moreno, Harding, Nemitz; Thomas

STB – Buchheit, Meese, Norris, Dominic Bates (John Glenn, freshman); Johnny Brown (Philo, sophomore)

WIL – Moreland, Lalezas, Curry, Ryan; Preston Spridgeon (Kenton Ridge, sophomore)

It has been more than two decades since Wes Turnbaugh won the 145-pound Division II state final in 1999 for Ontario, which was the last time the Warriors had a state champion. Last year, Ohl had an undefeated sophomore campaign up until losing by fall at the end of the 106-pound state final against Beric Jordan. He has three narrow wins this season against the freshman Harding on the way to titles at Galion and the Gorman, while he was runner-up at Kenston when he defaulted the final, and won a title at Marion Pleasant.

Three additional wrestlers in this weight class have state tournament medals in their career. Perez placed fifth at 120 two years ago as a sophomore, the senior Moreland placed eighth in Division I last season at this weight class, while fellow senior Lalezas was fourth at this weight class last season.

Now healthy after missing essentially all but the post-season last year due to injury, it has been a superlative season for Perez, who has lost go-to-state matches twice in his career already. It started with a title in the North Coast Classic up at 126 before titles at Portage County and the Top Gun in this weight class. Three additional ranked wrestlers feature at Garfield Hts, led by two-time state qualifier Hahlen who placed fifth at North Canton and Wadsworth, as well as sixth at Brecksville and fourth at Maumee Bay. The junior Miller has titles at Clear Fork and the Bill Dies in this weight, while finishing third up a weight class at Green; while the sophomore Duniec has a pair of tournament runner-up finishes to go with a title at Hudson and a fourth-place finish at CIT.

Moreland and Lalezas both exit district competition at Wilmington, where they are joined by two other ranked wrestlers. Moreland beat a fellow Division I state placer to win at Upper Arlington on opening weekend up a weight class before he was champion at SWOWCA then third at GMVWA; while Lalezas started his season at 126 finishing fifth at SWOWCA before runner-up finishes at Defiance and Madeira, and then dropping to this weight in winning the title at Miami Trace. The freshman Curry won the OAC junior high state title last year at 108, and has three tournament titles on the season, including a 1-0 win over state placer Lambers in the CIT final; while returning state qualifier Ryan went 1-2 at the Ironman and Carnahan up at 126 before finishing runner-up to Dillon Campbell at the GMVWA in that weight class, and then he dropped to this weight class in finishing fourth at Wadsworth along with recent dual meet wins over Meese and Moreno.

Ohl is joined by four other ranked wrestlers at the Norwalk district. Returning state qualifier Moreno placed fifth at Perrysburg and third at Maumee Bay; the freshman Harding finished runner-up at Galion and the Gorman, third at Medina, round of 12 at Maumee Bay, and was champion at West Holmes; returning state qualifier Nemitz has tournament titles at Milan Edison and Defiance; while fellow junior Thomas was runner-up at Mansfield Madison, fourth at North Canton, seventh at the Gorman, fifth at Top Gun, and third at Marion Pleasant.

Finally, there are three ranked wrestlers at Steubenville, led by the freshman Buchheit. He has titles in three tournaments, along with advancing to the finals at Cambridge, and an eight-place finish at Brecksville. Meese qualified for state two years ago as a freshman, and made his season debut for this season relatively recently; key results so far are an 8-5 loss to Ryan and 3-0 loss to Moreland. Two-time state qualifier Norris lost by fall to Buchheit at Cambridge in placing fifth, finished sixth at North Canton, and was round of 12 at Top Gun. In addition, returning state qualifier James Worthington (Fairfield Union, junior) is at this district.

### **126 pounds**

1. Bryce Skinner, Akron SVSM, senior (Garfield Hts)
2. Collin Twigg, Wauseon, senior (Norwalk)
3. Kolten Barker, Louisville, junior (Garfield Hts)
4. Aiden King, Bishop Hartley, sophomore (Wilmington)
5. Tyler Scharrer, Canfield, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
6. Levi Pidgeon, Carrollton, junior (Steubenville)
7. Liam Hatgas, Holy Name, senior (Garfield Hts)
8. Adam Heckman, Warren Howland, junior (Garfield Hts)
9. Xavier Pierce, Jonathan Alder, senior (Wilmington)
10. Andrew Strader, Minerva, senior (Steubenville)
11. Cyle Burt, Salem, junior (Garfield Hts)
12. Leroy Steagall, Indian Valley, junior (Steubenville)
13. Peyton Hoskins, Clear Fork, junior (Norwalk)
14. Tommy Conway, Akron Hoban, senior (Garfield Hts)
15. Austin McKee, Medina Buckeye, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
16. Tye Woods, Unioto, freshman (Steubenville)

GH – Skinner, Barker, Scharrer, Hatgas; Heckman, Burt, Conway, McKee

NOR – Twigg, Hoskins, Skyler Kirk (Elida, junior), Dawson Brimmer (Clyde, freshman); Austin Ware (Norwalk, junior)

STB – Pidgeon, Strader, Steagall, Woods; Gavin Hoover (Logan Elm, sophomore)

WIL – King, Pierce, Carter DeMarco (St. Paris Graham, junior), Cole Moorman (Clinton-Massie, senior); Paul Sanchez (Granville, sophomore)

Skinner won a relatively wide-open state tournament weight class, despite losing 3-2 in the district final to Te'Andre Allen. At the state tournament, he would beat three district champions on the way to the title: an overtime decision in the quarterfinal, winning in the ultimate tiebreaker in the semifinal, and then a 3-2 decision victory in the championship bout to deny Matt Ellis from becoming Waynesville's first state champion. In key tournaments this season, Skinner was fifth at the Knockout Classic in Florida then took sixth at Brecksville.

There is a similar mucky feel to this year's state tournament weight class, as just one returning medalist is present, Aiden King, eighth last year at 120; while the senior Twigg, who placed at state two years ago, is among seven others that return as state qualifiers.

King is one of just two ranked wrestlers at the Wilmington district. His sophomore season had a late start, as he did not really return from injury until mid-January, and his most notable result to date is a title at Watkins Memorial. The other ranked wrestler is the senior Pierce, a returning state alternate who spent much of the season up at 132 where he was second at Olentangy Liberty along with top six finishes at GMVWA, Top Gun, and Jonathan Alder.

Twigg is one of just two ranked wrestlers at Norwalk. He was runner-up at Medina and Maumee Bay, while placing third at Perrysburg, and had a 5-2 win over Barker in dual meet action last week. Also ranked here is the junior Hoskins, who was third at Clear Fork and the Hephner sandwiched around a title at Coshocton and fifth-place finish at the Gorman.

Skinner is one of eight ranked wrestlers at Garfield Hts, with four of those other seven wrestlers being returning state qualifiers. That challenge pack is led by two-time state qualifier Barker, who was runner-up at North Canton, round of 12 at Brecksville, third at Maumee Bay, and champion at the EOWL. Scharrer qualified for state last year in this weight class as a freshman, with this season including a title at the Top Gun. The senior Hatgas also qualified for state in this weight class, though he went two-and-out; while this season includes a title at Kenston up a weight class before fifth place finishes at Perrysburg and Wadsworth sandwich a third at the CIT in this weight class. The other returning state qualifier is the junior Burt, who was runner-up at Jackson-Milton and fourth at the EOWL.

The junior Heckman was state alternate last year in this weight class, and picked up an early season dual meet victory over Barker. He also had titles at Hudson, Eastlake North, and Howland before losing 14-3 to Barker in the EOWL final. The senior Conway was third at Hudson, second at the Bill Dies, and fourth at the Hephner; while the sophomore McKee placed second at the Mike Lewis, third at the Gorman and West Holmes, was round of 12 at Medina, and went 4-2 at Maumee Bay.

There are four ranked wrestlers at Steubenville, including a pair of returning state qualifiers in the junior Pidgeon and senior Strader. Twice a state qualifier, Pidgeon seeks that elusive state podium; his tournament resume includes a sixth-place finish at North Canton, runner-up at Licking Valley, third at Top Gun, and title at West Holmes. Strader was runner-up at Cambridge (3-1 loss to Steagall) and Top Gun (9-5 loss to Scharrer) with a title at Marengo Highland and seventh at North Canton sandwiched in between. The junior Steagall has tournament titles at Cambridge and Athens to go with a runner-up at Riverside, seventh at GMVWA, and fourth at the Gorman; while the freshman Woods placed sixth at Olentangy Liberty up a weight class before winning the title at Nelsonville-York in this weight class then placing third at Alexander and Miami Trace.

### **132 pounds**

1. Brogan Tucker, St. Paris Graham, sophomore (Wilmington)
2. Donovan Paes, Streetsboro, senior (Garfield Hts)
3. Brogan Fielding, Jefferson Area, junior (Garfield Hts)
4. Brody Saccocia, Steubenville, sophomore (Steubenville)
5. Dylan Rhoads, Louisville, senior (Garfield Hts)
6. James Lindsey, Bishop Watterson, freshman (Wilmington)
7. Parker Lee, Vandalia Butler, senior (Wilmington)

8. Mason Ducat, Defiance, sophomore (Norwalk)
9. Zaden Torres, Wauseon, senior (Norwalk)
10. Carson Hibbs, Wilmington, senior (Wilmington)
11. Tate Bein, Batavia, senior (Wilmington)
12. Elijah Parrish, Claymont, senior (Steubenville)
13. Antonio Hobbs, Benedictine, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
14. Braden Dunlap, Akron SVSM, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
15. Caleb Clary, Upper Sandusky, senior (Norwalk)
16. Caleb Wetzel, Marengo Highland, senior (Norwalk)

GH – Paes, Fielding, Rhoads, Hobbs; Dunlap, A.J. Rickenbacher (Woodridge, junior)

NOR – Ducat, Torres, Clary, Wetzel; Jaxon Swank (Clear Fork, senior)

STB – Saccocia, Parrish, Hunter Albright (Indian Valley, senior), Joey Brocklehurst (Minerva, senior); Corbin Melvin (Miami Trace, junior)

WIL – Tucker, Lindsey, Lee, Hibbs; Bein

Seven of the 32 four-time state champions won all four of their titles at St. Paris Graham, while both Schlatter brothers won two of their titles competing in the black, gray, and white of the Falcons. In addition to the eight freshmen noted here, Ty Morgan also won state as a freshman for Graham back in 1996, before a 1997 loss to Canfield's Oscar Santiago precluded him from remaining on track to win four state titles. Tucker won state last year for the Falcons at 113 pounds.

Though head-to-head and a relevant common opponent data point suggest that the senior Paes should be my pick, I am going to project Tucker as repeat state champion. If one looks at their match in the Wadsworth GIT semifinals, it was a late second period four-bagger that keyed the Paes victory. Tucker had takedowns late in the first and third period to create a 5-5 tie, when a locked hands call in the last seconds of the bout gave Paes the 6-5 win.

On the season, Tucker went 1-2 at the Ironman, including a one-point loss to nationally ranked Consiglio from Malvern Prep and a 13-4 loss to D'Alessandro; before placing fourth at the Carnahan, winning the GMVWA, and taking third at Wadsworth. Paes, who entered last year's state tournament undefeated at this weight class before taking seventh, won the Top Gun with a 3-2 victory over D'Alessandro in the final; and has a title at Portage County to go with runner-up finishes at North Coast and Wadsworth.

Four additional ranked wrestlers join Tucker at Wilmington, a group led by last year's OAC junior high state champion at 120 pounds in Lindsey. The freshman was 0-2 at the Ironman before winning his other four tournaments this season, including titles at the CIT and Jonathan Alder. The senior Lee is a returning state placer in Division I, and was champion at Upper Arlington before fifth place finishes at SWOWCA and Mason sandwich a third at GMVWA. Fellow senior Hibbs is a returning state qualifier in this weight class, and started this season up a weight class where he was fourth at Trenton Edgewood and fifth at GMVWA, before tournament titles at Bellbrook and Western Brown in this weight class along with a runner-up finish at Eaton. Lastly, another senior Bein has titles at Miami Trace and Milford to go with a runner-up finish at Fairfield.

Another four additional wrestlers join Paes at Garfield Hts, a group led by Fielding, who placed sixth in New York's Division I last year before moving to Ohio. The junior was champion at Riverside up a weight class before tournament titles in this weight class at Perry and the EOWL sandwich a third-place finish at Top Gun. Returning state qualifier Rhoads was second at both North Canton and the EOWL, while

placing eighth at Brecksville and third at Maumee Bay. The sophomore Hobbs started the season up a weight class where he was eighth at North Canton and 1-2 at Brecksville, while in this weight class he was champion at Columbia and runner-up at CIT (including a pin over Dunlap). Lastly, the sophomore Dunlap is a returning state qualifier in this weight class; his current season includes 2-2 performances at the Knockout Classic in Florida and Brecksville, along with a fourth-place finish at the CIT.

The sophomore Saccocia has a deep legacy to uphold. The grandson of Hall of Fame football coach Reno Saccocia is trying to get Steubenville their first state wrestling champion since Dunyasha Yetts won back-to-back titles in 1988 and 1989. Last season, he made it to the state final but was pinned late in the second period by Brendan McCrone at 120 pounds. This season he has runner-up finishes at North Canton (up at 138) and the OVAC meet. Only one other wrestler is ranked in his district at Steubenville, that being the senior Parrish, a returning state qualifier who was runner-up at Solon.

Wrapping up this weight class is four ranked wrestlers at Norwalk, three of whom were participants in last year's state tournament. The sophomore Ducat placed third at Defiance and fifth at Perrysburg; the senior Torres was third at Medina, eighth at Perrysburg, and round of 12 at Maumee Bay; while fellow senior Wetzel placed has two tournament titles in addition to placing third at Marengo Highland, fourth at Marion Harding, second at the Hephner, and fifth at New Lexington. The additional ranked wrestler is the senior Clary, who has titles at Bucyrus and Marion Pleasant to go with third place finishes at Marion Harding and Van Buren, as well as a fifth at the Gorman.

### **138 pounds**

1. David McClelland, Columbus DeSales, senior (Norwalk)
2. Cooper Rathburn, Bishop Hartley, junior (Wilmington)
3. Josh Carman, Carrollton, junior (Steubenville)
4. Coltyn Reedy, Sheridan, sophomore (Steubenville)
5. Gage Murphy, Reading, junior (Wilmington)
6. Thane McCoy, Wilmington, senior (Wilmington)
7. Hayden Hughes, St. Paris Graham, junior (Wilmington)
8. Mason Turnbaugh, Ontario, sophomore (Norwalk)
9. Ty Stricko, Canfield, senior (Garfield Hts)
10. Jesse Badiu, Medina Buckeye, senior (Garfield Hts)
11. Loudon Dixon, West Holmes, freshman (Steubenville)
12. Cal Beadling, Steubenville, junior (Steubenville)
13. Aydan Reyes, Galion, junior (Norwalk)
14. Cael Gilmore, Marengo Highland, freshman (Norwalk)
15. C.J. Fisher, Clyde, junior (Norwalk)
16. Santino Duniec, Padua, junior (Garfield Hts)

GH – Stricko, Badiu, Duniec, Jacob Dolan (Benedictine, senior); Kyle Vencill (Ashtabula Edgewood, junior)

NOR – McClelland, Turnbaugh, Reyes, Gilmore; Fisher

STB – Carman, Reedy, Dixon, Beadling; Aiden Johnson (Miami Trace, senior)

WIL – Rathburn, Murphy, McCoy, Hughes; Nathan Kulbe (Batavia, senior)

If Columbus DeSales is going to end the 20-plus year vise grip of Graham on the Division II state title, one of the key pieces is going to be having the Clarion signee McClelland repeat as state champion. Should that happen, it would be the first time since 2000 and 2001 that the Stallions had a wrestler win back-to-



back state titles. During this season, McClelland has finished runner-up at DeSales and Licking Hts, round of 12 at the Ironman, third at Brecksville, along with titles at Dublin Scioto and Jonathan Alder.

Though there are no other wrestlers with state tournament at the Norwalk district, there are four ranked wrestlers joining McClelland at the site, so there will be some battles to get out to state. Leading that group is the sophomore Turnbaugh, who has four tournament titles on the season. The junior Reyes was a state alternate last season, while this year he placed fourth at Medina, third at the Gorman (11-2 loss to Turnbaugh in the semi), seventh at Maumee Bay, and sixth at West Holmes. The freshman Gilmore was runner-up at Marengo Highland and Licking Valley, champion at Marion Harding, third at the Hephner, and fifth at New Lexington. Finally, the junior Fisher placed fifth at Marengo Highland and fourth at Perrysburg in this weight class.

Four returning state qualifiers are the sum of the ranked wrestlers at the Wilmington district. It is a group led by the junior Rathburn, who missed a month of the season after sustaining an injury at the Ironman; but since his return, he was third at the CIT, second at Jonathan Alder, and first at Watkins Memorial, along with picking up a dual meet victory over Murphy. This sophomore won a state tournament last year at 106 pounds in Division III, and has bumped up five weight classes this season to place second at three tournaments (Franklin, Trenton Edgewood and GMVWA) along with a third-place finish at Lima CC. The senior McCoy placed sixth in this state tournament weight class last year, while this season features titles in three tournaments at this weight class plus placing second at Trenton Edgewood and fifth at the GMVWA up one weight class. Lastly, the junior Hughes won a state tournament bout in this weight class last year; while the current season includes fifth place finishes at the Carnahan and Wadsworth sandwiching a third at GMVWA.

Two-time state placer Carman has jumped up two weight classes each of the last two high school seasons, and leads a group of four ranked wrestlers at Steubenville. His junior season features a third at North Canton followed up by titles at Licking Valley, Top Gun, and West Holmes. The sophomore Reedy won a state tournament match last season and started his season with three tournament titles, before failing to place at West Holmes then losing in overtime to Rathburn in the Watkins Memorial final. The freshman Dixon has placed third at Cambridge and Top Gun, fifth at North Canton, and fourth at West Holmes to go along with a title at Wayne Invite. Finally, returning state qualifier Beadling placed third at the OVAC meet.

Rounding out the field are three ranked wrestlers led by Stricko, who qualified for state in 2021 as a sophomore. His season to date includes a third at Beaver Local and second at Top Gun up a weight class, before dropping to this weight class in winning the EOWL title. Fellow senior Badiu was a state alternate last year, while this year has been split between 132 and 138. Down a weight he was fifth at Medina, second at the Gorman, and round of 12 at Maumee Bay; while in this weight, he was second at Milan Edison and the Mike Lewis before taking third at West Holmes. The junior Duniec placed third at Hudson and took fifth at the CIT. Also here is returning state qualifier Dolan.

#### **144 pounds**

1. Mitchell Younger, Bishop Watterson, sophomore (Wilmington)
2. Lance Overmyer, Clyde, junior (Norwalk)
3. Bryce Kohler, St. Paris Graham, sophomore (Wilmington)
4. Aidan Rush, Columbus DeSales, junior (Norwalk)
5. Andrew Huck, Bidwell River Valley, senior (Steubenville)
6. Benicio Torres, Wauseon, junior (Norwalk)

7. Carter Mock, Warren Howland, senior (Garfield Hts)
8. Eli Trbovich, Jonathan Alder, senior (Wilmington)
9. Ripley Szanati, Buckeye Valley, junior (Wilmington)
10. Nick Devol, Bellbrook, senior (Wilmington)
11. Bradley Spencer, McConnellsville Morgan, sophomore (Steubenville)
12. Luke Kaiser, Athens, sophomore (Steubenville)
13. Nick Brunst, Medina Buckeye, junior (Garfield Hts)
14. Rylan Hurley, Akron SVSM, freshman (Garfield Hts)
15. Quake Beatty, Indian Valley, junior (Steubenville)
16. Brayden Hull, Napoleon, senior (Norwalk)

GH – Mock, Brunst, Hurley, Evan McGhee (Coventry, junior); Aidan Jones (Revere, sophomore)

NOR – Overmyer, Rush, Torres, Hull; Zach Oprzadek (Perkins, senior)

STB – Huck, Spencer, Kaiser, Beatty; Ezekiel Williams (New Philadelphia, junior)

WIL – Younger, Kohler, Trbovich, Szanati; Devol

Arguably the most controversial match of last year's state tournament came in the championship bout at this weight class where four third period stall calls, including three in the last 32 seconds of the bout, yielded the necessary points for Younger to knock off returning state champion Nolan Gessler from Graham by a 4-3 decision to cap off an undefeated freshman season.

Younger's sophomore season started with a round of 12 performance at the Walsh Ironman, where he beat fellow returning Division II state champion Hoffarth 5-2 in the first round. Since then, Hoffarth has chosen to compete up in the next weight class. Younger also had titles on the season at Bishop Watterson and Olentangy Orange, and is the overwhelming favorite to repeat as state champion.

There is only one other returning state medalist in this weight class, the junior Overmyer, along with three additional returning state qualifiers. Returning state third Overmyer is joined by two of those returning state qualifiers (Rush and Torres) at the Norwalk district. This season Overmyer has titles at Marengo Highland and Clyde, along with a runner-up finish at Perrysburg; fellow junior Rush was champion at DeSales and Jonathan Alder, sixth at Brecksville, along with taking second at Dublin Scioto and Licking Hts; while another junior Torres was runner-up at Medina and sixth at Perrysburg. The other ranked wrestler in this district is the senior Hull, who placed fourth at Defiance but went 1-2 at Perrysburg.

The additional returning state qualifier from last season is fellow sophomore Kohler, who joins Younger at the Wilmington district, along with three other ranked wrestlers (all seniors). During the present season, Kohler went 0-2 at the Ironman and 2-2 at the Carnahan before winning the GMVWA and placing fourth at Wadsworth. Trbovich was third at Olentangy Liberty, seventh at GMVWA, fifth at Top Gun, then second at Jonathan Alder; Szanati has titles at Marion Elgin and Big Walnut, a finals appearance at Columbus Academy, and a third at Jonathan Alder; while Devol has titles in four tournaments on the season, including those at Western Brown and Eaton.

Four ranked wrestlers exit the Steubenville district, led by 2021 state qualifier Huck. His senior season includes an eighth-place finish at GMVWA, a title at Nelsonville-York, placing fourth at Maumee Bay, and then a runner-up at New Lexington. The sophomore Spencer has titles at Cambridge and Alexander to go with third place finishes at Coshocton and Licking Valley, before finishing outside the top four at New Lexington. Fellow sophomore Kaiser placed at district last year, while this year includes third place

finishes in four tournaments, runner-up finishes at Gallia and Nelsonville-York, along with a title at Athens. Lastly, Beatty was state alternate last year a sophomore and this season was runner-up at Riverside and Athens, sandwiching a 2-2 performance at GMVWA and fourth at the Gorman.

Lastly there are just three ranked wrestlers at Garfield Hts, none of them with state tournament experience. Returning state alternate Mock leads the group, and spent most of the season up a weight class, where he was first at Hudson before losing by one to Seesholtz in the finals at Eastlake North and the EOWL and taking third at Howland. The junior Brunst was a go-to-state loser last year, while this year includes a fourth at Milan Edison, eighth at Medina, third at the Gorman, going 2-2 at Maumee Bay, and winning the title at West Holmes. Finally, the freshman Hurley was runner-up at OAC junior high state last year and recently placed second at the CIT.

### **150 pounds**

1. Dominic Hoffarth, Louisville, senior (Garfield Hts)
2. Eli Jacks, St. Paris Graham, junior (Wilmington)
3. C.J. Spencer, Indian Creek, senior (Steubenville)
4. P.J. Murphy, Reading, junior (Wilmington)
5. Zack Lopez, Columbus DeSales, junior (Norwalk)
6. William Stanley, Clyde, sophomore (Norwalk)
7. Clayton Alley, Bellevue, senior (Norwalk)
8. Cohen Bunting, John Glenn, junior (Steubenville)
9. Jack Hoskins, Vandalia Butler, senior (Wilmington)
10. James Simms, Fostoria, junior (Norwalk)
11. Savier Faulks, Steubenville, junior (Steubenville)
12. Mason Henley, Sandusky, junior (Norwalk)
13. Tristan Craddock, Cloverleaf, junior (Garfield Hts)
14. Asher LeBeau, Miami Trace, junior (Steubenville)
15. Keagan Finley, Granville, senior (Wilmington)
16. Cohen Klimak, Streetsboro, sophomore (Garfield Hts)

GH – Hoffarth, Craddock, Klimak, Aidan Stecker (Salem, sophomore); Nolan Martin (Medina Buckeye, senior)

NOR – Lopez, Stanley, Alley, Simms; Henley

STB – Spencer, Bunting, Faulks, LeBeau; Malachi McCullough (Washington C.H., freshman)

WIL – Jacks, Murphy, Hoskins, Finley; Jack Berry (Franklin, freshman)

Last year, this state tournament weight class played out arguably the weirdest of any that I have ever covered. Six of the top eight wrestlers did not compete on the mats of the state tournament for various reasons. Projected state champion Neitenbach failed skin check before the state tournament, the projected state runner-up defaulted out from the district quarters, while the third ranked wrestler Jacks was a scratch prior to the district tournament. Hopefully for the sake of all competitors involved, let us not have this type of misfortune happen come the post-season.

None the less, returning state champion Hoffarth is the favorite to repeat as champion before matriculating on to Ohio University in the fall. His season started by going 3-2 down a weight class at the Walsh Ironman before winning the title at North Canton in this weight class, then finishing fifth at Brecksville and runner-up at Maumee Bay. Just two ranked wrestlers join Hoffarth at Garfield Hts. The

sophomore Klimak qualified for state in this weight class last season, and the current season includes a runner-up finish at Portage County and round of 12 at the Top Gun.

Ranked second in this weight is the previously mentioned Jacks, who has been most excellent with the rest of his season outside of going 1-2 at the Ironman. It includes a 1-0 dual meet win over two-time state placer Kleinberg in the opening weekend, placing third at the Carnahan and Wadsworth, sandwiching a runner-up finish at GMVWA (losing 1-0 to Kleinberg in the final). Three ranked wrestlers will join him at the Wilmington district.

The junior Murphy leads that group, as he has titles at Trenton Edgewood and Lima CC sandwiching a third-place finish at GMVWA; the senior Hoskins started his season up a weight class taking third at Upper Arlington and fifth at SWOWCA before dropping into this weight class to finish sixth at GMVWA; while fellow senior Finley finished eighth at Top Gun and fifth at New Lexington in this weight class.

Outside of Hoffarth, the lone returning state medalist in this weight class is the senior Spencer, who was sixth at 144 last year. His season started with a title at Cambridge up one weight class before going 1-2 at the Ironman in this weight class, and then winning at title at Barnesville and taking second in the OVAC. Three additional ranked wrestlers, all juniors, join Spencer in district competition at Steubenville.

Bunting has qualified for state in both of his first two high school seasons. His junior season started up one weight class placing second at Hudson at first at Licking Valley, before dropping into this weight class to take fourth at Heath and third at New Lexington. Faulks is also a returning state qualifier, who was second at Union Local, round of 12 at North Canton, and fourth in the OVAC; while LeBeau has titles in three tournaments to go with an eighth-place finish at GMVWA.

Finally, there are five ranked wrestlers coming out of Norwalk, led by Lopez, a state alternate last year as a sophomore down at 126. His current season includes titles at DeSales and Jonathan Alder, a runner-up finish at Licking Hts, along with going a combined 1-4 between the Ironman and Brecksville. The sophomore Stanley, who placed third at Milan Edison opening weekend up a weight class before dropping into this field. The senior Alley was champion at Bellevue and Galion before taking fourth at Perrysburg. The junior Simms is a returning state qualifier, who has been in-and-out of the lineup this season and mostly at 157 before dropping into this weight to win the title at Ada. Lastly it's the junior Henley, a returning state alternate, who has titles at Mansfield Madison and Clear Fork on the resume this season.

### **157 pounds**

1. Dominic Pattera, Indian Creek, senior (Steubenville)
2. Kaden King, Medina Buckeye, junior (Garfield Hts)
3. Luke James, St. Paris Graham, sophomore (Wilmington)
4. Owen Eagan, Columbus DeSales, senior (Norwalk)
5. Kale Waxler, Wauseon, sophomore (Norwalk)
6. Corbin Mitchell, Wapakoneta, senior (Norwalk)
7. Joel Hancock, Wyoming, sophomore (Wilmington)
8. Jason Patterson, Tri-Valley, senior (Steubenville)
9. Christopher Maloney, Benedictine, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
10. Wyatt Smith, Louisville, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
11. Bradyn Butcher, Galion, senior (Norwalk)
12. Montgomery Boyd, Philo, senior (Steubenville)

13. Anthony Lahoski, Woodridge, senior (Garfield Hts)
14. Devonn Nixon, Copley, junior (Garfield Hts)
15. Wyatt Eppert, Batavia, senior (Wilmington)
16. Ayden Wilson, Rossford, junior (Norwalk)

GH – King, Maloney, Smith, Lahoski; Nixon

NOR – Eagan, Waxler, Mitchell, Butcher; Wilson

STB – Paterra, Patterson, Boyd, Thad Van Arsdalen (New Philadelphia, senior), Thayne Mahaffey (Claymont, senior)

WIL – James, Hancock, Eppert, Hamde Bakeye (Whitehall, freshman); Landon Weiss (Bellbrook junior)

Among the residual beneficiaries of the weirdness that happened in the 150-pound state weight class last year was Paterra, who become the third state finalist in his school's wrestling history, as they seek an elusive state champion. The Sunday evening state finals bout ended in an 8-7 loss to Caden Stout, the same opponent he had lost against 3-2 in the tiebreaker the previous week

After placing seventh at the NHSCA Junior Nationals, his senior season started with a title at Cambridge up one weight class before going 2-2 at the Ironman. Since then, he has titles at Barnesville and Buckeye Local sandwiched around a runner-up at the OVAC meet. Just two ranked wrestlers join him at Steubenville, both seniors. Patterson qualified for state in this weight class last year, and was at 165 for the early part of the season where he was runner-up at North Coast and Coshocton before failing to place at the Hephner in this weight class; while Boyd was champion at Nelsonville-York and third at Alexander, before placing fourth at West Holmes and Watkins Memorial.

Ranked second in this weight class is the junior King, who has been most excellent this season after missing the second half of last season. He was second at Milan Edison before taking first at the Mike Lewis and Gorman, along with placing third at both Medina and Maumee Bay. This past weekend, he picked up a crucial dual meet victory over returning state placer James by a 4-3 score. Four wrestlers sit behind King, but within the rankings at Garfield Hts.

The sophomore Maloney was champion at Hawken before placing sixth at North Canton and fifth at the CIT. Fellow sophomore Smith was round of 12 at North Canton, while eighth place finishes at Brecksville and the Hephner sandwiched a 2-2 performance at Maumee Bay. The senior Lahoski was champion at Cuyahoga Hts and Green, while taking third at Hudson and second at the Bill Dies. Finally, the junior Nixon went 2-2 at Medina before placing third at the Bill Dies, fifth at the Hephner, and seventh in the Suburban League.

Returning state placer Eagan leads a group of five ranked wrestlers at Norwalk. The senior's season includes runner-up finishes at DeSales and Licking Hts, a round of 12 at Brecksville, and a title at Jonathan Alder. The sophomore Waxler placed fourth at Medina, was round of 12 at Perrysburg, and sixth at Maumee Bay. The senior Mitchell placed at the district tournament last year, while this year he was champion at Sidney and Kettering Fairmont before taking seventh at GMVWA. Fellow senior Butcher placed third at Galion, fifth at Medina and the Gorman, was round of 12 at Maumee Bay, and finished sixth at West Holmes; while the junior Wilson was second at Northwood and fourth at Marion Harding before going 1-2 at Perrysburg.

Finally, it is a trio of ranked wrestlers at Wilmington led by James, who placed fifth up a weight class last year as a freshman despite taking eventual state champion Tyler Lillard to the brink in a 3-1 overtime

loss during the quarterfinal round. His current season started by going 1-2 at the Ironman before placing second at the Carnahan, first at GMVWA, and fourth at Wadsworth. Fellow sophomore Hancock placed sixth at SWOWCA before winning titles at Valley View and Sycamore; while the senior Eppert was third at Dayton Christian, fourth at Fairfield, champion at Miami Trace, and second at Milford.

### **165 pounds**

1. Gunner Cramblett, St. Paris Graham, junior (Wilmington)
2. Oliver Byerly, Jonathan Alder, senior (Wilmington)
3. Thad Stuckey, Wilmington, senior (Wilmington)
4. Andrew Barford, Columbus DeSales, sophomore (Norwalk)
5. Zaiden Kessler, Wauseon, senior (Norwalk)
6. Steven Duffy, Woodridge, junior (Garfield Hts)
7. Remmington Myers, Indian Valley, senior (Steubenville)
8. Hunter Rose, New Lexington, senior (Steubenville)
9. Justin Stump, Bidwell River Valley, senior (Steubenville)
10. Manny Aller, Tiffin Columbian, junior (Norwalk)
11. Brandon Hayner, Medina Buckeye, senior (Garfield Hts)
12. Luke Schlosser, Clear Fork, junior (Norwalk)
13. Devin Shaw-Mason, Padua, sophomore (Garfield Hts)
14. Niko Poullas, Canfield, senior (Garfield Hts)
15. Jason Williams, Vincent Warren, junior (Steubenville)
16. Josh Taylor, Hebron Lakewood, senior (Norwalk)

GH – Duffy, Hayner, Shaw-Mason, Poullas; Ethan Bartlett (West Geauga, junior)

NOR – Barford, Kessler, Aller, Schlosser; Taylor

STB – Myers, Rose, Stump, Williams; Ethan Summar (Unioto, junior)

WIL – Cramblett, Byerly, Stuckey, Landon Froelich (Buckeye Valley, junior); Vincent Hummel (Bellbrook, senior)

The top three wrestlers in this weight class all exit district competition at Wilmington, each coming out of a different sectional. They also happen to be the only ranked wrestlers at the district. A combination of winning the remaining sectional and/or a favorable path based on bracketing will most likely influence the fourth state qualification spot.

Cramblett has already placed twice at state, including a runner-up finish last year at state when his district final victory over Antwaun Burns was reversed in an 8-4 state finals loss. His season started with a fifth-place finish at the Ironman and runner-up at the Carnahan before pinning Byerly to the win the GMVWA as well as winning the title at Wadsworth.

Byerly placed third in that broken 150-pound state bracket last year as a junior, while this season has been most excellent as he has three tournament titles (Olentangy Liberty, Top Gun, and Jonathan Alder) to go with that GMVWA runner-up finish. Earlier this month, Byerly closed the gap against Cramblett in a 4-3 dual meet loss. Fellow senior Stuckey placed fourth in this weight class last year, while this season features a title at Trenton Edgewood and an eighth-place finish at GMVWA.

The only other returning state medalist is Duffy, who placed eighth in this weight last year as a sophomore. This season started with a fourth-place finish at Hudson up a weight class, with a third at the Bill Dies and runner-up at Green since dropping to this weight. Three additional ranked wrestlers

feature at Garfield Hts along with Duffy, with each losing go-to-state bouts last year. The senior Hayner has placed second at Milan Edison and the Gorman, while taking seventh at Medina, going 2-2 at Maumee Bay, and taking third at West Holmes; the sophomore Shaw-Mason was third at Beachwood and the CIT, while taking fifth at North Coast and second at Hudson; while the senior Poullas placed fourth at Beaver Local and EOWL sandwiched around a fifth at Top Gun.

Two returning state qualifiers in Barford and Kessler are among five ranked wrestlers at Norwalk. The sophomore Barford was second at DeSales and Jonathan Alder, eighth at Brecksville, along with winning titles at Dublin Scioto and Licking Hts; while the senior Kessler was champion at Medina, second at Perrysburg, and round of 12 at Maumee Bay. The junior Aller made the drop to this weight class late after spending time at both 215 (round of 12 at Brecksville) and 175 (round of 12 at Maumee Bay) working around two-time state placer Ray; fellow junior Schlosser has titles at Clear Fork and Coshocton to go with third-place finishes at the Gorman and Hephner; while the senior Taylor has titles in three tournaments this season.

Four ranked wrestlers at Steubenville wrap up the composition of this weight class. Returning state qualifier Myers started his season finishing third at Cambridge up a weight class before winning titles in this weight class at Riverside, the Gorman, and Athens along with taking sixth at GMVWA. Fellow senior Rose was runner-up at Cambridge and Athens, third at North Canton, fourth at Medina, and then champion at both Licking Valley and New Lexington. The senior Stump is a two-time state qualifier in Division III, whose season includes placing fifth at both GMVWA and Maumee Bay before taking third at Athens and second at New Lexington; while Williams was a district placer last year as a sophomore and this year was third at Licking Valley and fourth at the OVAC.

### **175 pounds**

1. Dylan Newsome, Bishop Hartley, senior (Wilmington)
2. Eddie Neitenbach, Medina Buckeye, junior (Garfield Hts)
3. Lincoln Shulaw, Columbus DeSales, sophomore (Norwalk)
4. Eric Williams, East Liverpool, senior (Steubenville)
5. Landon Cook, Tiffin Columbian, senior (Norwalk)
6. Dickie Engel, Reading, sophomore (Wilmington)
7. Anthony Kroninger, Jonathan Alder, sophomore (Wilmington)
8. Leo Hess, Mansfield, senior (Norwalk)
9. Hunter Dietrich, Minerva, sophomore (Steubenville)
10. Gabe Morgan, Beaver Local, junior (Steubenville)
11. Ryan Price, Akron SVSM, senior (Garfield Hts)
12. Caden Kohout, Canfield, senior (Garfield Hts)
13. Zeke Lucas, Ashtabula Edgewood, junior (Garfield Hts)
14. Jayden Potok, Tallmadge, senior (Garfield Hts)
15. Quintin Hancox, Marlinton, junior (Garfield Hts)
16. Aden Strahler, Vincent Warren, sophomore (Steubenville)
17. Ethan Llewelyn, Indian Creek, sophomore (Steubenville)

GH – Neitenbach, Price, Kohout, Lucas; Potok, Hancox

NOR – Shulaw, Cook, Hess, Tyler Carlin (Celina, senior); Ryan Fox (Norwalk, junior), Chance Snow (Wauseon, senior)

STB – Williams, Dietrich, Morgan, Strahler; Llewelyn

WIL – Newsome, Engel, Kroninger, Alex Shellhammer (Tippecanoe, sophomore); Joey Mockbee (St. Paris Graham, junior)

As the lone returning state placer in that 150-pound state tournament weight class last year, after taking fifth as a freshman in 2021 at 138, it was expected that Neitenbach would have smooth sailing to a state title. However, it was not to be due to not passing skin check on Friday morning at state. He now enters the post-season in his junior season ranked second behind Oklahoma signee Newsome, who has finished second and third the last two years at state.

Newsome entered state the last two seasons as undefeated wrestler. As a sophomore, he lost 7-4 to Brody Conley in the 175-pound final, while last year he was upset 3-2 by Max Kirby in the 165-pound semifinal round. It has been a most excellent senior season with titles coming at Olentangy Liberty, CIT, Jonathan Alder, and Watkins Memorial along with taking fifth at Ironman and second at Brecksville with all three losses coming to nationally ranked opposition. Along the way, Newsome has split matches with projected Division I state champion Takats, losing 4-2 at the Ironman and then winning 6-3 in the Brecksville semi.

Two sophomores join Newsome in the rankings at Wilmington. Engel placed seventh at state in Division III last year, while this season includes runner-up finishes in four tournaments (Franklin, Trenton Edgewood, GMVWA, and Lima CC) along with a dual meet loss by fall to Newsome. Kroninger placed fifth at Olentangy Liberty, sixth at GMVWA, along with third-place finishes at Top Gun and Jonathan Alder.

Looking at the junior season for Neitenbach, it includes titles at Milan Edison, Medina, and West Holmes in this weight class. In addition, there is a title at the Gorman up in weight class where he beat returning state placer Hutcheson 12-5 and then upended two-time state medalist Ray in overtime. At the Ironman, he went 1-2 including a 13-2 loss to J.R. Miller, and then lost 6-2 to Takats on the way to finishing third at Maumee Bay. Five additional ranked wrestlers are in the field at Garfield Hts behind Neitenbach.

Two-time state qualifier Price was 3-2 at the Knockout Classic in Florida before going 2-2 at Brecksville and finishing runner-up at the CIT. Fellow senior Kohout was a state alternate last year, going round of 12 at Top Gun and winning the EOWL this season. Lucas lost 9-5 to Price in a go-to-state bout last season as a sophomore, while this season he was 1-2 at Brecksville before placing third at Perry Pin City, eighth at Top Gun, and winning the CVC. The senior Potok is a returning state qualifier, and has placed third at North Coast, fifth at Hudson, fourth at Perry Pin City and the Hephner, then sixth in the Suburban League. Finally, the junior Hancox was eighth at Beaver Local, fifth at Top Gun, sixth at the Hephner, and third at EOWL.

Five ranked wrestlers feature in the field at Steubenville, led by 2021 state qualifier Williams, who was up at 190 for much of the season where was runner-up at North Canton and OVAC along with placing third at the Gorman; in third weight class he was champion at Buckeye Local. Next up is the sophomore Dietrich, who opened his season with a title at Cambridge before placing third at Marengo Highland and North Canton then finishing round of 12 at Top Gun. Returning state qualifier Morgan placed fourth at Cambridge, won Beaver Local, went 1-2 at Brecksville, took third at the OVAC, and was second at EOWL.

Rounding things out are returning state alternates Strahler and Llewellyn, both sophomores. Strahler's season started at 190 where he was most notably fifth at Cambridge, while in this weight class he has



titles at Licking Valley and New Lexington to go with a fifth at the OVAC. Llewellyn placed second to Dietrich at Cambridge, was fifth at Barnesville, sixth at the OVAC, and second at Beaver Local. Otherwise not mentioned in this report is returning Division III state qualifier Michael Conkle (Bidwell River Valley, senior).

Lastly there are three ranked wrestlers at Norwalk, led by Shulaw who placed seventh at state as a freshman last year. His season includes titles at DeSales, Dublin Scioto, and Licking Hts; beating Division III state champ Havill in his only win at Ironman; along with placing seventh at Brecksville. The senior Cook was round of 12 at Brecksville before winning the Gorman. Fellow senior Hess was a state alternate last year and has all of captured results coming at 190 or higher, including a pair of tournament titles, placing fourth at Medina, seventh at the Gorman, and second at Mapleton.

### **190 pounds**

1. Max Ray, Tiffin Columbian, senior (Norwalk)
2. Kyle Snider, CVCA, senior (Garfield Hts)
3. Kaiden Haines, Minerva, senior (Steubenville)
4. Hunter Hutcheson, Mansfield Madison, senior (Norwalk)
5. Trent Thomas, Bedford, senior (Garfield Hts)
6. Drew Lincicome, Philo, senior (Steubenville)
7. Bryce Wheatley, NDCL, junior (Garfield Hts)
8. Dillon Badiu, Medina Buckeye, junior (Garfield Hts)
9. Jackson Daugherty, Tallmadge, senior (Garfield Hts)
10. Chett Mannier, St. Paris Graham, sophomore (Wilmington)
11. Ben DiMarco, Kenston, senior (Garfield Hts)
12. Jaxon Burcher, Indian Valley, sophomore (Steubenville)
13. Austin Kovar, Wauseon, senior (Norwalk)
14. Henry Eggers, Napoleon, junior (Norwalk)
15. Ben Zinda, Carrollton, senior (Steubenville)
16. Collin Willett, Bloom-Carroll, senior (Wilmington)

GH – Snider, Thomas, Wheatley, Badiu; Daugherty, DiMarco

NOR – Ray, Hutcheson, Kovar, Eggers; Marshall Froelich (Columbus DeSales, senior)

STB – Haines, Lincicome, Burcher, Zinda; Logan Niceswanger (McConnellsville Morgan, junior)

WIL – Mannier, Willett, Eyan Jackson (Bishop Hartley, senior), Josh Snell (Wilmington, senior); Tyler Pennington (Vandalia Butler, senior)

Entering high school after winning an OAC junior high state title at 146 pounds in 2019 over Dylan Newsome, one might have expected the future Ohio University wrestler Ray to have a slightly better first three high school seasons. While three district finals, winning at that level in 2022, and two state sixth place finishes are positive resume points – they do not make one say “wow”. However, Ray is having a senior season that could end most memorably with a state title.

To date he went 2-2 at the Ironman, placed third at Brecksville, and was runner-up at the Gorman before his true breakthrough at Maumee Bay. In that event, he beat 2021 state champion Snider 3-1 in the semifinal before beating Davidson signee Ferguson 7-0 to win the title. He is joined by three other ranked wrestlers in district competition at Norwalk.

Hutcheson placed fourth in this state tournament weight class last year as a junior. This season includes three tournament titles, a third at North Canton, fourth at the Gorman, and a runner-up at Top Gun. Fellow senior Kovar made state two years ago, while he went 0-2 at Medina this season but bounced back to place seventh at Perrysburg then go round of 12 at Maumee Bay. The junior Eggers was sixth at Defiance and fourth at Perrysburg, but lost by fall to Kovar earlier this month. Froelich is also a returning state qualifier.

Kent State signee Snider was an undefeated state champion at 220 pounds in 2021, but lost in overtime last year in the state semifinals to Max Shulaw before coming back to place third. This season started for him at 220 pounds, where he was seventh at the Ironman, first at Hoover, and fourth at Brecksville (Shulaw won titles in both those tournaments). Since dropping to this weight class, he placed third at both Maumee Bay and Wadsworth.

There are five wrestlers in the rankings at Garfield Hts seeking the three spots accompanying Snider to the state tournament. Leading that group is the senior Thomas, who has titles in four tournaments (including Medina) to go with a third at Top Gun (4-0 loss to Haines in the semifinal). Next up is the junior Wheatley, also a returning state qualifier who was second at the CIT and first at Berkshire in this weight class during the present season. The senior Badiu was a go-to-state loser two years ago, and has spent time at both 175 and this weight class. Down at 175 he was first at the Mike Lewis and second at the Gorman; while in this weight class he was third at Medina, round of 12 at Maumee Bay, and second at West Holmes.

Fellow senior Daugherty is a returning state qualifier who has three tournament runner-up finishes to go with a third at the Hephner and fifth in the Suburban League; while another senior DiMarco was first at Cuyahoga Hts and sixth at Kenston this season after winning a pair of district matches in Division I last year.

The lone remaining returning state placer in this field is the senior Haines, who was sixth up at 215 last year. His season started in that weight, where he won titles at Cambridge and Marengo Highland, before dropping into this weight class to win titles at North Canton and Top Gun. Three others join him in the rankings at Steubenville. Fellow senior Lincicome is a returning state qualifier, who has six tournament titles on the season along with a third place at Watkins Memorial after losing 4-1 to Johnson in the semifinal. The sophomore Burcher was champion at Cambridge in this weight and at Riverside up a weight class, while he placed fifth at both GMVWA and the Gorman in this weight class. Lastly, the senior Zinda was fifth at North Canton, third at Licking Valley and West Holmes, along with taking seventh at the Top Gun.

Rounding out the district compositions are a pair of ranked wrestlers at Wilmington. The sophomore Mannier placed sixth at the Carnahan and Wadsworth, while finishing fourth at GMVWA; while the senior Willett has placed second at Jonathan Alder and fourth at Marion Pleasant in this weight class.

### **215 pounds**

1. Max Shulaw, Columbus DeSales, junior (Norwalk)
2. Bryson Getz, Akron SVSM, senior (Garfield Hts)
3. Aiden Mozden, Alliance, junior (Garfield Hts)
4. Mekhi Bradley, Mansfield, senior (Norwalk)
5. Landon Campbell, Galion, junior (Norwalk)
6. Cruz Mobley, Warsaw River View, senior (Steubenville)

7. Jimmy Bechter, Dayton Carroll, sophomore (Wilmington)
8. Wyatt Shaw, Claymont, senior (Steubenville)
9. Jace Schaefer, St. Mary's Memorial, senior (Norwalk)
10. Jimmy Scharrer, Canfield, senior (Garfield Hts)
11. Jonathon Bailey, East Liverpool, sophomore (Steubenville)
12. Terrance Davis, Orange, senior (Garfield Hts)
13. Lakota Hagenbaugh, Cloverleaf, senior (Garfield Hts)
14. Spencer Ostovich, Steubenville, senior (Steubenville)
15. Justin Duncan, Wauseon, senior (Norwalk)
16. Carter Stack, Dayton Oakwood, junior (Wilmington)

GH – Getz, Mozden, Scharrer, Davis; Hagenbaugh

NOR – Shulaw, Bradley, Campbell, Schaefer; Duncan

STB – Mobley, Shaw, Bailey, Ostovich; Jesse Wood (New Lexington, sophomore)

WIL – Bechter, Stack, Zac Shaffer (Eaton, senior), Paul McKnight (Wilmington, junior); Damon Hay (Jonathan Alder, senior)

Along with McClelland, Max Shulaw is probably the flagship figure in Collin Palmer's resurgence of the DeSales wrestling program. Entering high school with a star-laden youth career, in almost three full seasons of high school, Shulaw has lived up to the hype. He placed fourth in the state as a freshman at 195 before finishing runner-up last year at 215, including the previously mentioned win over Snider in the state semi at 215. He also placed fourth at the 2021 Ironman and second in the 2021 Beast of the East. During this 2022-23 junior season, Shulaw is without a loss, including titles at the Ironman and Brecksville with wins over two-time Division I state champ Russo in both of those events.

Four additional ranked wrestlers seek the other three state tournament spots with Shulaw at Norwalk, including returning state placers Bradley and Campbell. The senior Bradley has titles at Galion and Mapleton to go with third place finishes at Medina and Top Gun, as well as a runner-up finish at the Gorman. The junior Campbell missed the first half-plus of the season before returning to place third at West Holmes. Schaefer was state alternate last year, while this year he was second at Lima Senior and third at Jonathan Alder. Fellow senior Duncan placed sixth at Perrysburg and went 1-2 at Maumee Bay.

The two wrestlers directly behind Shulaw in the rankings, the senior Getz and the junior Mozden, both exit district competition at Garfield Hts. Getz finished to Snider at state two years ago, but went two-and-out last year at state; this year he was second at the Knockout Classic in Florida before placing sixth at Brecksville. Mozden was state alternate last year in this weight class, while this season started with a runner-up finish at Solon before titles at Top Gun, Green, and the EOWL.

Three additional wrestlers, all seniors, join them in the rankings from Garfield Hts. Returning state qualifier Scharrer was a quarterfinalist at the Top Gun and a semifinalist at EOWL; Davis was runner-up at Riverside and CVC, while placing first at Orange; and returning state qualifier Hagenbaugh has been in-and-out of the lineup this season.

There are four ranked wrestlers at Steubenville, led by returning state qualifier Mobley, who was runner-up at Cambridge and New Lexington to go with four tournament titles. Fellow senior Shaw placed third at Solon and Barnesville before taking fifth at Top Gun; the sophomore Bailey placed sixth at the Gorman and OVAC; while the senior Ostovich has missed his team's notable competitions this season.

Closing the loop in this weight class is a pair of ranked wrestlers at Wilmington. The sophomore Bechter has titles in three tournaments to go with a third at GMVWA and second at CIT, while the junior Stack was third at Coldwater and Easton, went 4-2 at GMVWA and was champion at Madeira.

### **285 pounds**

1. Elisha Baldridge, West Holmes, senior (Steubenville)
2. Todd Allen, Medina Buckeye, senior (Garfield Hts)
3. Trevor Banks, Chillicothe, senior (Steubenville)
4. Keegan Jacks, Hebron Lakewood, junior (Norwalk)
5. Alex Griffith, Galion, junior (Norwalk)
6. Jeffrey Blair, Dayton C-J, sophomore (Wilmington)
7. Elijah Llewellyn, Indian Creek, senior (Steubenville)
8. Ryan Kamperman, Salem, senior (Garfield Hts)
9. Zane Pletcher, New Lexington, senior (Steubenville)
10. Dominic Burch, Bowling Green, senior (Norwalk)
11. Davian Greenlee, Akron Buchtel, senior (Garfield Hts)
12. Nick Bowser, Hubbard, junior (Garfield Hts)
13. Trent Fulgham, Circleville, senior (Steubenville)
14. Sean Doyle, Kenston, junior (Garfield Hts)
15. Zane McCoy, Beaver Local, senior (Steubenville)
16. Zain Bell, Bryan, senior (Norwalk)
17. Michael Cannings, Toledo Central Catholic, junior (Norwalk)

GH – Allen, Kamperman, Greenlee, Bowser; Doyle

NOR – Jacks, Griffith, Burch, Bell; Cannings, Isaac Lehman (Napoleon, junior)

STB – Baldridge, Banks, Llewellyn, Pletcher; Fulgham, McCoy

WIL – Blair, Isaac Asiedu (Bishop Hartley, senior), Zach Black (Vandalia Butler, senior), Dominic Kroninger (Jonathan Alder, junior); Darrick Perdue (Wilmington, senior)

The senior Allen, who is every bit of the 285-pound weight class, won state two years ago when his division was held at Marengo Highland. However, last season he placed seventh after winning a district tournament title with 3-2 and 3-1 losses to wrestlers who placed third in their respective district tournaments. During the current season, he has three tournament titles with championship final victories at Medina and the Gorman coming over Griffith. Allen's two in-state losses this season are both in the tiebreaker, to Ries in the Maumee Bay final and Baldridge in the West Holmes semifinal; he also lost 3-1 to Compton from Notre Dame-Green Pond (Pa.) at the Ironman before defaulting out of the tournament.

The aforementioned result involving Baldridge puts the West Holmes senior in the catbird seat at this weight class, after going 1-2 in last year's state tournament at 215 pounds. Baldridge has additional titles this season at Wayne Invite and Top Gun, while his lone recorded loss came in the North Canton final 3-2 to Ries, an opponent that has split matches with Allen this season.

There is beaucoup depth behind Baldridge in district competition at Steubenville with five additional ranked wrestlers present in the field, all seniors. Said group is led by Banks, who was second at Mount Vernon opening weekend before winning titles in five tournaments, most notably at the GMVWA. Llewellyn placed at state two years ago, and started his season down at 215 where he went 0-2 at the

Ironman and took second at Barnesville; in this weight class, he was first at the OVAC then second at Buckeye Local. Pletcher won titles at Cambridge and Athens while taking fourth at North Canton and second at Lexington; returning state alternate Fulgham placed second at Union Local and Marion Pleasant, with titles at three other tournaments; while McCoy was a go-to-state loser last year and started his season taking second at Cambridge and first at Beaver Local, but has missed all subsequent major competitions.

Four wrestlers join Allen in district competition at Garfield Hts, including state experienced Greenlee and Bowser. The senior Greenlee went 1-2 last year at state down a weight class, while this season he has a title at Hudson to go with a fourth at the Bill Dies. The junior Bowser qualifying for state two years ago before being relegated to alternate status last year; this year he was champion at Eastlake North and runner-up at the Hephner, before losing in the semifinals at the EOWL then defaulting down to sixth. Ranked second in this district quintet is the senior Kamperman, who has runner-up finishes at Jackson-Milton and EOWL on the resume this season; while the group is wrapped up by the junior Doyle, who placed fourth at Solon, second at Kenston and Eastlake North, along with titles at Cuyahoga Hts and Orange on the season.

Five ranked wrestlers also feature in district competition at Norwalk, a group that is led by the junior Jacks, who was runner-up to Banks at Hebron Lakewood and champion at Galion with an overtime win over Griffith. Griffith has won state tournament matches in each of his first two high school seasons, and has runner-up finishes in four tournaments to go with a fourth-place finish at Maumee Bay that included an overtime loss to Ries in the semifinal.

The senior Burch is a returning state alternate, who this season has a pair of tournament titles to go with placing third at Defiance and seventh at Perrysburg. Fellow senior Bell placed fifth at Coshocton and Perrysburg, along with taking fourth at Defiance; while the junior Cannings placed sixth at Defiance then went 2-2 at Perrysburg.

The lone ranked wrestler at Wilmington is the sophomore Blair, a returning state alternate, who placed third at the GMVWA along with winning four tournament titles – most notable among those coming at Perrysburg and the CIT.

### **Team**

1. St. Paris Graham (Wilmington)
2. Columbus DeSales (Norwalk)
3. Medina Buckeye (Garfield Hts)
4. Wauseon (Norwalk)
5. Louisville (Garfield Hts)
6. Bishop Watterson (Wilmington)
7. Bishop Hartley (Wilmington)
8. Akron SVSM (Garfield Hts)
9. Indian Creek (Steubenville)
10. Carrollton (Steubenville)
11. West Holmes (Steubenville)
12. CVCA (Garfield Hts)

## DIVISION THREE

### **106 pounds**

1. Adam Mattin, Delta, sophomore (Rossford)
2. Kyle Schroer, Troy Christian, senior (Troy)
3. Parker Pikor, Lake Catholic, junior (Perry)
4. Scott Fuller, Genoa, freshman (Rossford)
5. Hunter Newell, South Range, senior (Perry)
6. Carson Taylor, Covington, junior (Troy)
7. Kaden Lawson, Tuslaw, freshman (Perry)
8. Ethan Cantrell, West Union, sophomore (Harrison Central)
9. Quintin Burns, Youngstown Liberty, senior (Perry)
10. Colin Hering, Berkshire, junior (Perry)
11. Jonathan Huntsman, Barnesville, junior (Harrison Central)
12. Mason Simms, Wellsville, senior (Perry)
13. Hayden Jones, Brookville, sophomore (Troy)
14. Stephen Patterson, Waynedale, freshman (Perry)
15. Ben Pierce, Chippewa, freshman (Perry)
16. Joe Slatzer, Fairless, junior (Perry)

HC – Cantrell, Huntsman, Reese Marshall (Amanda-Clearcreek, sophomore), Henry Booth (Newcomerstown, senior); Carter Yorde (Johnstown Northridge, sophomore)

PER – Pikor, Newell, Lawson, Burns; Hering, Simms, Patterson, Pierce, Slatzer

ROS – Mattin, Fuller, Mason Miller (Archbold, junior), Xander Gfell-King (Milan Edison, freshman); Braedyn Tammarine (Liberty Center, freshman)

TROY – Schroer, Taylor, Jones, Rocco Mauro (Kettering Alter, freshman); Trey Huber (Versailles, sophomore)

The last in the line of four brothers, Adam Mattin has a big legacy to uphold. All three of his older siblings won state titles and compete(d) in college for the University of Michigan. The oldest brother Drew was a three-time state champion, while Cole and Zack each split a pair of state finals bouts. Cole was involved in one of the most notable state semifinals in recent memory, when he denied Tommy Hoskins the chance at a fourth state title via a 4-2 overtime victory in 2018. Furthermore, their father Mike was a state champion at 103 pounds in 1989 when Delta won their first of six team titles in the individual state tournament.

Last season as a very undersized freshman at the state tournament, Adam made it to the state final despite finishing fourth at the district tournament. He knocked off district tournament champion Schroer 8-4 in the opening round, before taking out his district tournament champion – the previously undefeated Hutner Lacy – 4-3 in the semifinal round. Mattin’s Cinderella run would end with an 8-1 loss to Caizzo in the championship bout. After winning the Preseason Nationals in Iowa in late October, Mattin has missed basically all this season due to injury, but will be back for the post-season if not sooner.

There is only one ranked wrestler joining Mattin in district competition at Rossford, the freshman Fuller, who placed third at Medina and second at Perrysburg. Also, at this tournament site is returning state alternate Miller and returning district placer Ian Reynolds (Eastwood, junior).

Ranked second in this weight is the previously mentioned Schroer, who started his season at 113. At that weight class, he was second at Barnesville, went 1-2 at Brecksville, and then took sixth at Perrysburg; while in this weight class, he was champion at Lima CC. Two additional ranked wrestlers join Schroer at Troy for district competition. The junior Taylor is a returning state qualifier, who has finished second at both GMVWA and Lima CC this season; while the sophomore Jones was second at Trenton Edgewood and first at Brookville, along with a round of 12 performance at GMVWA.

It is a very congested field in the northeast district tournament at Perry with nine ranked wrestlers. Said group is led by Pikor, who was a go-to-state loser last year in Division II as a sophomore. His current season includes titles at Solon and Riverside before taking fifth at North Canton, seventh at Brecksville, and second in the CIT. The senior Newell placed seventh at state in this weight class last year, and this season includes runner-up finishes at Riverside and Eastlake North, a fourth at the Hephner, along with titles at Waterloo and EOWL. The freshman Lawson was round of 12 at North Canton before taking fourth at Top Gun, and has a 5-1 dual meet loss to Newell; while the senior Burns has titles in three tournaments to go with runner-up finishes at Clear Fork and EOWL, along with an eighth at the Hephner.

The junior Hering has two tournament titles to go with fifth-place finishes at North Coast and Top Gun, as well as a third at Defiance and second at Berkshire. The senior Simms is a returning go-to-state loser, and was runner-up at Malvern (to Burns) and Waterloo (to Newell) to start the season, before winning at Jackson-Milton then taking third at OVAC. The freshman Patterson was champion at Cuyahoga Hts and third at Lima CC; fellow freshman Pierce was third at Wayne Invite in this weight class, and has three tournament finals appearances up a weight class; while the junior Slatzer was fourth at Wayne Invite and West Holmes, round of 12 at North Canton, and eighth at Maumee Bay.

Finally, the district at Harrison Central has two ranked wrestlers. The junior Huntsman has titles at Barnesville and OVAC to go with second- place finishes at Union Local and New Lexington, along with a third at Licking Hts and a 3-2 mark at Brecksville. Returning state alternate Cantrell has titles at Washington C.H. and Milford on the resume.

### **113 pounds**

1. Eli Campbell, Legacy Christian, junior (Troy)
2. Cole Schulke, Columbia, senior (Perry)
3. Logan Dean, Bethel-Tate, junior (Troy)
4. Abe Hermes, Milan Edison, sophomore (Rossford)
5. Tyler Barnes, Delta, freshman (Rossford)
6. Xavier Pearson, Cleveland Central Catholic, sophomore (Perry)
7. Branden Boggs, Sandy Valley, senior (Harrison Central)
8. Khadyn Jacobs, Brookville, senior (Troy)
9. Tristen Rossiter, Shenandoah, junior (Harrison Central)
10. Sulaiman Muhammed, Dayton Northridge, freshman (Troy)
11. C.J. Graham, Fairland, sophomore (Harrison Central)
12. Kaylor Reynolds, Tiffin Calvert, senior (Rossford)
13. Bodee Miller, Oak Harbor, freshman (Rossford)
14. Anthony Hoty, Westfall, senior (Harrison Central)
15. Cameron Wagers, Plymouth, junior (Rossford)
16. Tanner Allen, Alexander, junior (Harrison Central)

HC – Boggs, Rossiter, Graham, Hoty; Allen

PER – Schulke, Pearson, Kayden Welker (South Range, sophomore), Will McEwuen (Rootstown, sophomore); Ben Pierce (Chippewa, freshman)

ROS – Hermes, Barnes, Reynolds, Miller; Wagers

TROY – Campbell, Dean, Jacobs, Muhammed; Nyah Hodge-Miller (Spencerville, senior)

Legacy Christian is well-positioned to win a third consecutive individual state tournament team title on the strength of some exemplary individuals, even though their lineup coverage in a dual team context does not match their top-end individual strength. The Knights' individual star power starts with Campbell in this weight class, where he placed fourth last year after finishing runner-up at 106 as a freshman in 2021. During the current season, he was 2-2 at the Ironman with both losses coming to the projected top two wrestlers in Division I at the weight class and then placed fifth at the Carnahan, before winning titles at GMVWA and Lima CC.

Three others join Campbell in the rankings at the Troy district. Dean placed eighth at 106 last year in the Division II state tournament as a sophomore, while this season he has titles at Fairfield and Washington C.H. that came after an 8-7 finals loss at SWOWCA to Lambers. The senior Jacobs is a returning state qualifier, who was second at Trenton Edgewood, fifth at GMVWA, and first at Brookville; while the freshman Muhammed has three tournament titles to go with the runner-up at Brookville, along with third place finishes at Gallia and Lima CC.

Two-time state placer Schulke (4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, both at 106) is the most direct challenger to Campbell. The senior has titles at North Coast and Columbia, while placing second at Medina then third at Berkshire. He is joined by only one other ranked wrestler at Perry, the sophomore Pearson, who has three tournament titles to go with a fourth at North Canton and second in the CIT.

The remaining returning state medalist in this weight is Hermes, who was fourth at state last year as a freshman, twice losing to Schulke. He sustained an injury in the finals opening weekend at Milan Edison while up at 120, and just returned to competition in late January including a very recent 6-5 loss to Sarabia in the final at Rossford. However, expect to see him down here for post-season. Four additional ranked wrestlers will join him in competition as the Rossford district.

The freshman Barnes has runner-up finishes at Olentangy Liberty and Lima CC to go with a third at Medina and fourth at Perrysburg; the senior Reynolds is a returning state alternate, placing third at Mansfield Madison up a weight before winning the title at Van Buren in this weight class during the present season; the freshman Miller placed eighth at Medina, fifth at Perrysburg, and seventh at Maumee Bay; while the junior Wagers has titles at Clear Fork and Mapleton sandwiching a third at Marion Harding.

Finally, it is a group of five ranked wrestlers at Harrison Central, four of whom are returning state qualifiers, and the fifth was a state alternate last year. The senior Boggs is twice a state qualifier, and won the title at Athens in this weight class; the junior Rossiter is also twice a state qualifier with this season featuring a title at Vincent Warren, a third at Barnesville, and a runner-up at the OVAC; the sophomore Graham is a returning state qualifier, who was fourth at Gallia before taking first at Alexander and second at Washington C.H.; the senior Hoty was state alternate last year in this weight class, and started his season with two titles at 120 before placing fourth at Barnesville, second at Miami Trace, and first at Marion Pleasant in this weight; while the junior Allen is also a returning state qualifier, and has placed second at Alexander then third at New Lexington in this weight class.



### 120 pounds

1. Max Hermes, Milan Edison, senior (Rossford)
2. Cooper Shore, Miami East, senior (Troy)
3. Nathan Attisano, Legacy Christian, freshman (Troy)
4. Joey Romano, Lake Catholic, junior (Perry)
5. Trevor Wilcox, Otsego, junior (Rossford)
6. Michael Hagan, Covington, junior (Troy)
7. Riley Rowan, Perry, junior (Perry)
8. Bryce Edwards, Rootstown, senior (Perry)
9. Corbin Kimmel, Wayne Trace, sophomore (Troy)
10. Trace Williams, North Union, senior (Harrison Central)
11. Drew Matthews, Liberty Center, junior (Rossford)
12. Dylan Ward, Martins Ferry, senior (Harrison Central)
13. Drew Spreng, Loudonville, junior (Perry)
14. Brodie Setmire, Evergreen, junior (Rossford)
15. Evan Natale, Sandy Valley, junior (Harrison Central)
16. Corbyn Browning, Crooksville, senior (Harrison Central)

HC – Williams, Ward, Natale, Browning; Haedyn Parman (Johnstown Northridge, senior)

PER – Romano, Rowan, Edwards, Spring; Joe Dennis (Black River, senior)

ROS – Hermes, Wilcox, Matthews, Setmire; Nicholas Parks (Seneca East, freshman)

TROY – Shore, Attisano, Hagan, Kimmel; Nolan Earles (Preble Shawnee, sophomore)

Much of the focus on the state tournament is on things that happen on the mat. However, sometimes there are circumstance that occur where things that do not happen during the event become topics of notable interest. Hermes and Shore were on a collision course for last year's state championship bout at 113 pounds after Hermes won the 2021 state title at 106, while Shore finished runner-up at 113. However, that was derailed in the semifinal on Saturday night when Shore was called for an illegal move, and his opponent was not cleared to continue the bout; Hermes won win his second state title, while Shore came back to finish third.

This season, the pair remain on the same collision course. Hermes placed fourth at Brecksville and second at Maumee Bay in this weight class, while up a weight class he has yet to lose a match; that includes titles at Milan Edison (1-0 over two-time state placer Pina-Lorenzana), North Canton (3-2 over Barker in the final), and Rossford (over projected Division I state champ Contos). Shore is undefeated on the season with titles of note coming at Medina, Mason (needing overtime to beat Moreland), and Lima CC; he also won by fall over Attisano in a recent dual meet.

The freshman Attisano, last year's OAC junior high state champ at 114, and two other ranked wrestlers join Shore at the Troy district. Attisano went 2-2 at the Ironman, was sixth at the Carnahan, finished second at GMVWA, was round of 12 at Escape the Rock, and lost 19-10 to Shore in the Lima CC final. Two-time state qualifier (2021 state placer) Hagan was runner-up at Dayton Christian, and has fifth place finishes at GMVWA and Lima CC sandwiching a title at Troy. Kimmel placed eighth at 106 last year as a freshman, while this season includes three tournament titles to go with runner-up finishes at Defiance and Troy as well as a fourth at Lima CC.

Hermes is joined by three ranked wrestlers at the Rossford district, including two-time state placer Wilcox, who was runner-up at Medina and Perrysburg before taking third at Lima CC (3-1 front side loss

to Attisano). Fellow juniors Matthews and Setmire were both district placers last season, losing to-to-state bouts. Matthews was round of 12 at Marion Harding before placing eighth at Perrysburg and second at Marion Pleasant, while Setmire placed fourth at Northwood and has a best in-season win coming by pin over returning state qualifier Natale.

Returning Division II state medalist Romano leads a group of four ranked wrestlers at Perry. The junior was second at Solon before winning titles at Riverside and North Canton, then placing fifth at Brecksville and third at CIT. Next in line is Rowan, who was state alternate two years ago in Division II as a freshman, while this season includes a title at the CVC after missing the first half-plus of the season due to injury. The senior Edwards qualified for state in 2021, but spent most of the season up a weight class where he was champion at the Bill Dies and seventh at the Hephner; while Spring qualified for state last year as a sophomore, and has a title at Mansfield Madison this season before placing fourth at the Gorman and second at West Salem Northwestern.

Wrapping things up is a group of four ranked wrestlers at Harrison Central that includes three returning state qualifiers. The senior Williams has three tournament titles plus a third-place finish at Marion Harding; fellow senior Ward has titles at Union Local and Waterloo, along with a third at OVAC and second at Buckeye Local, plus a 3-1 dual meet loss to Matthews last weekend; while the sophomore Natale was runner-up at Athens up a weight class before dropping into this field. The remaining ranked wrestler is the senior Browning, who has been runner-up in five tournament events this season along with a third-place finish at New Lexington.

### **126 pounds**

1. Dillon Campbell, Legacy Christian, junior (Troy)
2. Jason Shaffer, Troy Christian, senior (Troy)
3. Brock Durbin, Mapleton, junior (Perry)
4. Casper Caizzo, Norwalk St. Paul, junior (Rossford)
5. Drake Kanyuch, Shenandoah, senior (Harrison Central)
6. J.P. Wrobel, Crestwood, junior (Perry)
7. Cowin Becker, Galion Northmor, sophomore (Harrison Central)
8. Nathan Parks, Seneca East, junior (Rossford)
9. Zane Pickerell, Zane Trace, junior (Harrison Central)
10. Jericho Quinter, Covington, junior (Troy)
11. Robby Bennett, Sherwood Fairview, senior (Rossford)
12. Trent Sigler, West Salem Northwestern, senior (Perry)
13. Evan Hanefeld, Delta, senior (Rossford)
14. Owen McDevitt, Jackson-Milton, senior (Perry)
15. Andrew Miller, Plymouth, senior (Rossford)
16. Evan Kusmits, Manchester, sophomore (Perry)

HC – Kanyuch, Becker, Pickerell, Christopher Marshall (Centerburg, sophomore); Christian Browning (Crooksville, sophomore)

PER – Durbin, Wrobel, Sigler, McDevitt; Kusmits

ROS – Caizzo, Parks, Bennett, Hanefeld; Miller

TROY – Campbell, Shaffer, Quinter, Kyan Hendricks (Greeneview, sophomore); Payton Mayfield (Milton-Union, sophomore)

There is little doubt that Dillon Campbell is among the Buckeye State's best overall wrestlers regardless in division, and there is even less doubt that he is THE best wrestler in this division. Pick a data point, it is there in flying colors. In two career state finals matches, the Class of 2024 prospect has a win by technical fall and a pin inside of 70 seconds. Campbell is a two-time Super 32 Challenge placer, a two-time Junior National freestyle All-American, and has finished top four at the Walsh Ironman each of the last two years.

Other resume points this season include a title at the Carnahan, where he pinned Illinois state champion Jameson Garcia in the final; titles in three other tournaments, including a win by technical fall over Shaffer in the Lima CC final; along with a third-place finish at Escape the Rock. This past weekend, he beat projected 132-pound state champ Dakota King 3-2 in a dual meet. Given all this, it is somewhat surprising that the present weight class composition does include six other returning state medalists.

Ranked second here is Shaffer, who was seventh last year up at 132 as a junior. His season started in that weight class, where he was first at Franklin, fifth at Barnesville, round of 12 at Brecksville, and third at Perrysburg. Shaffer then pinned Quinter in the semi at Lima CC before losing to Campbell in the final. Quinter placed sixth last year at state as a sophomore, and is the other ranked wrestler joining Campbell and Shaffer from the Troy district. This season Quinter placed sixth at GMVWA and third at Lima CC.

Durbin placed at state as both a freshman and sophomore, and is the leader of five ranked wrestlers coming from the Perry district. This season he has five tournament titles between the 126 and 132-pound weight classes. Fellow junior Wrobel has twice made the state tournament, while this season he was third at Solon and North Coast before winning titles at Kenston, Portage County, and the CVC. Sigler qualified for state in 2021 as a sophomore, and this season lost 16-7 to Durbin in the West Salem Northwestern along with winning a pair of tournament titles. Fellow senior McDevitt is a returning state qualifier, and this season has titles in three tournaments before placing fifth at the Hephner and third at EOWL; while Kusmits was state alternate last year as a freshman, who this season was champion at Waterloo before finishing round of 12 at the Gorman, third at the Bill Dies, and second at Green.

Last year's 106-pound state champion Caizzo leads a group of five ranked wrestlers in this weight class at Rossford. During the current season, he was champion at CIT, lost to Hermes 5-3 in a late January dual meet, and was third at Rossford this past weekend. Fellow junior Parks placed at state two years ago, and was a finalist in three tournaments up at 132 before dropping into this weight class; he placed fourth at Rossford this past weekend with losses to Hermes and Caizzo. The senior Bennett was runner-up at Defiance up a weight class before winning the title at Green in this weight class; 2021 state qualifier Hanefeld placed fourth at Olentangy Liberty down at 120 before moving up to this weight class, where he placed eighth at Medina then fourth at Lima CC; while fellow senior Miller is also a returning state alternate, who this season was third at Marion Harding and second at Mapleton.

Finally, it's a group of three ranked wrestlers competing at Harrison Central, led by a pair of returning state placers. The senior Kanyuch was sixth at Barnesville up one weight class before finishing second at OVAC in this one, while the sophomore Becker has titles at Big Walnut and Marion Pleasant sandwiching a fourth at Medina and second at the Gorman. The junior Pickerell is a returning state alternate, who has three tournament titles and an eighth at GMVWA as his in-season resume. Otherwise not in the report is returning state qualifier Reece Butler (South Gallia, senior).

### **132 pounds**

1. Dakota King, Barnesville, junior (Harrison Central)

2. Hunter Vogus, Monroeville, senior (Rossford)
3. Brock Christian, Perry, senior (Perry)
4. Landen Duncan, Chalker, senior (Perry)
5. Chase Vanderhorst, Covington, junior (Troy)
6. Wyatt Hinton, Norwood, junior (Troy)
7. Caden Schmeltzer, Waynedale, sophomore (Perry)
8. Anden Ankeny, Defiance Tinora, junior (Rossford)
9. Jesse Maple, Ridgewood, senior (Harrison Central)
10. Gabe Chapa, Archbold, senior (Rossford)
11. Tyler Angus, Johnstown Northridge, sophomore (Harrison Central)
12. Brian Luft, Newark Catholic, junior (Harrison Central)
13. Evan Wilcox, Valley View, senior (Troy)
14. Edward Kessen, Delphos St. John's, freshman (Troy)
15. Carder Miller, Spencerville, senior (Troy)
16. Nick Malek, Rootstown, sophomore (Perry)

HC – King, Angus, Maple, Luft; Jaden Griffith (Marion Pleasant, freshman)

PER – Christian, Duncan, Schmeltzer, Malek; Lincoln Guthrie (Norwayne, junior)

ROS – Vogus, Ankeny, Chapa, Nate Tipton (Genoa, junior); Ayden Gleckler (Evergreen, senior)

TROY – Vanderhorst, Hinton, Wilcox, Kessen; Miller

Looking back at the conversation in the previous weight class about why there are so many returning state medalists despite the presence of Dillon Campbell, one can look here and see a field that features six returning state medalists as presently constituted. This includes three wrestlers that finished within the top three at last year's state tournament.

Projected state champion King has won district titles in both of his high school seasons, before finishing sixth and third in the state tournament. This past year, he lost 8-0 to Campbell in the state semifinal, which is tied for the narrowest margin of victory in Campbell's eight state tournament bouts. King's season started off with a 2-2 performance at the Ironman before third-place finishes at Barnesville and Brecksville, which were followed up by three tournament titles, most notably beating Saccoccia 6-4 to win the OVAC title.

Three additional ranked wrestlers, including a pair of returning state qualifiers, join King in district competition at Harrison Central. Angus was state alternate last year as a freshman, and this season was fifth at Marion Harding before finishing second at Licking Valley, going 2-2 at Maumee Bay, and placing third at New Lexington. The senior Maple qualified for state last year in this weight class, and was runner-up at Coshocton before winning titles at West Muskingum and Health; while Luft won a state tournament bout last year at 120 as a sophomore, and this season finished fourth at Marengo Highland.

Four ranked wrestlers, including three returning state medalists feature at the Perry district. Christian is a two-time Division II state placer, including taking third in this weight class last year; he was champion at North Coast this season before taking sixth at Brecksville and seventh at Maumee Bay. Fellow senior Duncan has twice placed at state, including runner-up to Campbell last year. This season started down a weight class with a title at Solon before going 2-2 at the Ironman; up in this weight class, he was round of 12 at Brecksville, second at Perrysburg, and fourth at Wadsworth along with titles at Bill Dies and Lima CC. Schmeltzer placed seventh at state last year as a freshman; while fellow sophomore Malek was

round of 12 at Barnesville, third at Kenston and the Hephner, along with placing second at Portage County.

The senior Vogus placed seventh up two weight classes at 144 as the Homan brothers occupied the immediately two preceding weight classes for Monroeville. He started this season up at 144 with a runner-up finish at Milan Edison then going two-and-out at the Ironman, and then dropped to 138 in finishing sixth at Brecksville, while finishing runner-up at Maumee Bay in this weight class. Two additional ranked wrestlers join Vogus at Rossford. Ankney was state alternate last year in this weight class, and was champion at Defiance up at 138 before dropping into this weight class to place fourth at Perrysburg, go 3-2 at Maumee Bay, and then win the title at Van Buren. The senior Chapa was a go-to-state loser up at 138 last season, while he has spent most of this season up in weight as he placed third at Defiance then went 1-2 at Maumee Bay in the 138-pound class.

Rounding things out are five ranked wrestlers from the Troy district, led by returning state placer Vanderhorst, whose season includes a runner-up finish at GMVWA and a semifinal appearance at Lima CC. Fellow junior Hinton has five tournament wins, most notably those coming at SWOWCA and Washington C.H., where he picked up four wins along the way over wrestlers that have previously qualified for state in either Division I or Division II. The senior Wilcox has four tournament titles, including a 4-2 win over Hibbs in the Eaton final; along with runner-up finishes at Trenton Edgewood and Valley View. The freshman Kessen placed fifth at Dayton Christian and Troy, was runner-up at Allen County, sixth at the CIT, and third at Lima CC; while the senior Miller has three tournament titles, including a 6-4 decision over Kessen at Allen County, and then placed fourth at Lima CC.

### **138 pounds**

1. Ashton Homan, Monroeville, junior (Rossford)
2. Brayden Brown, Legacy Christian, junior (Troy)
3. Skyler King, Barnesville, junior (Harrison Central)
4. Owen Miller, Oak Harbor, senior (Rossford)
5. Ashtan Hendricks, Greeneview, senior (Troy)
6. Carson Campbell, Galion Northmor, freshman (Harrison Central)
7. Jeff Camp, Patrick Henry, senior (Rossford)
8. Michael Fister, Johnstown Northridge, senior (Harrison Central)
9. Joseph Manley, Otsego, senior (Rossford)
10. Amari Bowers, Conneaut, senior (Perry)
11. Landon L'Hullier, Amanda-Clearcreek, senior (Harrison Central)
12. Leon Harrison, Cleveland Central Catholic, junior (Perry)
13. Mark Ellis, Waynesville, junior (Troy)
14. Jeremy Cox, Norwood, junior (Troy)
15. Drake Rennecker, Crestwood, junior (Perry)
16. Johnny Heiden, Berkshire, senior (Perry)

HC – King, Campbell, Fister, L'Hullier; Skyler Wolf (Marion Pleasant, junior)

PER –Bowers, Harrison, Rennecker, Heiden; Jenson Baker (Hanoverton United, senior)

ROS – Homan, Miller, Camp, Manley; Jack Stubleski (Evergreen, junior)

TROY – Brown, Hendricks, Ellis, Cox; Connar Mitchell (S.C. Southeastern, senior)

The present composition of this weight class has ten wrestlers with state tournament experience, including a pair of juniors that were both state semifinalists in this weight class last year. Homan lost 6-1

to eventual state champ Cameron Lacure, and then bounced back to place third; while King lost 6-3 to Gavin Owens, and did the slide back to sixth.

Homan, who has twice placed third at state, is the projected state champion. His season includes participation at both 132 and 138 pounds. Down at 132, he finished fourth at Brecksville; while in this weight class he was champion at Milan Edison, went 2-2 at the Ironman, and was runner-up at Maumee Bay; he also picked up a 3-1 dual meet victory over Miller. The Oak Harbor senior has three tournament titles, most notably knocking off returning state champ Evans 2-1 at Perrysburg, while also placing fourth at Maumee Bay.

Two other ranked wrestlers join this pair at Rossford, returning state qualifiers Camp and Manley, both seniors. Camp placed sixth at Defiance up at 150 before coming into this weight to place sixth at Maumee Bay then first at Van Buren, while Manley joined Camp in going two-and-out at last year's state tournament. Otherwise absent from the discussion, but projected to compete in this district weight class is returning state qualifier Jackson Bartels (Liberty Center, junior).

Like Dakota King, Skyler is a two-time district champion. His season started by going 2-2 at the Ironman, the second loss being by one to nationally ranked Bennett. He then placed fifth at Brecksville before reversing a consolation semifinal loss from that tournament to upset McClelland 11-5 in the Licking Hts final. King would add titles at OVAC and New Lexington, but lost 10-5 to Brown this past weekend at the state duals invitational. Three other ranked wrestlers join King at Harrison Central.

Campbell was an OAC junior high state champion last year at 126. This season he was third at Big Walnut before finishing second at Medina, the Gorman, and Marion Pleasant. The senior Fister won a state tournament bout last year, and this year has been runner-up in four tournaments along with a round of 12 at Maumee Bay. Fellow senior L'Hullier was a state alternate last year in this weight class.

In addition to that dual meet win over King, Brown went 1-2 at both the Ironman and Carnahan up a weight class before coming down to this weight class to win titles at GMVWA and Lima CC that sandwiched a 2-2 performance at Escape the Rock. He was a state quarterfinalist last year at 132 before losing 3-1 and 4-1 in the early Saturday session. Three additional ranked wrestlers join Brown at Troy for district competition.

Hendricks qualified for state in 2020 before losing go-to-state bouts each of the last two years. This season, he has titles in three tournaments along with placing fourth at GMVWA and second at Lima CC. The other two ranked wrestlers at the site are the junior Ellis and the senior Cox. Otherwise not in this report is returning state qualifier Layton Hughes (Miami East, junior).

### **144 pounds**

1. Brodie Dominique, Archbold, junior (Rossford)
2. Marcus Medina, Milan Edison, junior (Rossford)
3. Hayden Kuhn, Ashland Crestview, senior (Rossford)
4. Daxton Chase, Marion Pleasant, junior (Harrison Central)
5. Clayton Smith, Utica, senior (Harrison Central)
6. Luke Dolan, Brookville, junior (Troy)
7. Payton Platfoot, Versailles, senior (Troy)
8. Logan Tague, Barnesville, senior (Harrison Central)
9. Boede Campbell, Legacy Christian, senior (Troy)

10. Braeden Stallworth, Columbiana Crestview, senior (Perry)
11. Reginald Banes, Cleveland Central Catholic, junior (Perry)
12. Dominic Duvall/Dylan Wise, Rootstown, senior (Perry)
13. Cody Biddle, Lakota, senior (Rossford)
14. Jacob Richardson, South Range, senior (Perry)
15. Maxwell Cooper, Tuslaw, senior (Perry)
16. T.J. Wilson, Tuscarawas Valley, junior (Harrison Central)

HC – Chase, Smith, Tague, Wilson; Bodie Martin (Amanda-Clearcreek, freshman)

PER – Stallworth, Banes, Duvall/Wise, Richardson; Cooper

ROS – Dominique, Medina, Kuhn, Biddle; Grant Dowell (Bucyrus, senior)

TROY –Dolan, Platfoot, Campbell, Colby Johnson (Clermont Northeastern, senior); Clayton McClain (Ada, junior)

Through this around decade of excellence for Milan Edison, which includes five top three finishes in the last eight years at the state tournament, there has been a little bit of that snakebit feeling. Most obvious for that narrative was in 2020 when the Chargers won the state championship on the dual team side, and qualified ten wrestlers to the state tournament. However, the situation around the COVID pandemic led to the event being canceled. Then last season, Milan Edison finished runner-up for the second straight year, despite a pair of state placers from 2021 missing the back two-thirds of the season due to injury.

Marcus Medina placed seventh at 120 in the 2021 state tournament, and is ranked second in this weight class; while Kohen Horvath placed sixth at 132 that year, and is the projected state champion in the next weight class.

Ranked ahead of Medina is two-time state placer Dominique, who was runner-up in this weight class last year as a sophomore. The Archbold junior was the anchor wrestler for a Blue Streaks team that won the OHSWCA state dual meet invitational this past weekend. This past summer, Dominique placed third in the 16U freestyle nationals, and his scholastic season started with an eighth-place finish at the Ironman. Dominique went up a weight class to beat returning state placer Harney in overtime for the title at Defiance, before winning the title at Maumee Bay back in this weight class.

Medina opened his season with a title at Milan Edison, before placing fourth at North Canton, and losing to Dominique 7-1 in the Maumee Bay final. In late January, Medina did secure a win by fall in overtime against Dominique at the SMCC Duals.

The Rossford district also features a third returning state medalist in Kuhn, who has placed third and fourth in the last two state tournaments. This past year, Kuhn was turned in the state semifinal during the ultimate tiebreaker against eventual state champion Hunter Long. The senior went 2-2 at the Ironman, with his second loss coming in overtime to Dominique, before winning tournament titles at Kenston, the Gorman (5-1 over Chase), and Lima CC (9-3 over Campbell). The additional ranked wrestlers at this district site is the junior Biddle, who was started the season taking third at Milan Edison and Galion, before fifth place finishes at Defiance and Lima CC sandwich an eighth at Perrysburg and a second at Van Buren.

Two of the three other returning state medalists in this weight class exit the Harrison Central district, junior two-time state placer Chase and the senior Smith. Chase opened the season with a title at Mount

Vernon, then finished fifth at Brecksville, before finishing second at the Gorman and first at Marion Pleasant; while Smith lost early at Mount Vernon and defaulted out of that bracket, and has followed that up with titles at four tournaments.

Another pair of wrestlers join them at this district: the senior Tague went two-and-out at 150 despite winning his district, while the junior Wilson was a returning state alternate. Tague started this season at 150, where he was first at Union Local and fifth at Barnesville. Down in this weight class he was round of 12 at Brecksville, third at Licking Hts and the OVAC, and champion at New Lexington; at the state duals invitational, Tague lost by fall to Platfoot before beating Campbell 5-2. Wilson started his season up a weight class with a title at Malvern and runner-up at Wayne Invite before taking fourth at Waterloo in this weight class.

Campbell placed eighth in this state tournament weight last year as a junior. This season he has a third at GMVWA and second at Lima CC to sandwich a 1-2 performance at Escape the Rock. Two additional ranked wrestlers, both seniors, join Campbell at the Troy district. Returning state qualifier Dolan was champion at Trenton Edgewood at this weight class, before going up in weight to place fourth at GMVWA and win the Brookville title; back at this weight, Dolan beat Platfoot 8-3 in the beginning of February. Platfoot was a go-to-state match loser last year, and this season placed second at the GMVWA.

Rounding out the district compositions are five ranked wrestlers at Perry. Returning state alternate Stallworth leads the contingent with titles in five tournaments, including those at Cardinal (5-4 over Wise) and Waterloo (3-1 over Richardson), to go with a third at the EOWL. The junior Banes placed fourth up a weight at Hawken before winning his home tournament in this weight class, and then picking up an 11-5 dual meet victory over Wise earlier this month. Duvall qualified for state at Rootstown last year as a freshman, but the senior Wise has occupied this weight class for most of the season; Wise was a match away from placing at Barnesville before taking third at Kenston, finishing runner-up at Portage County and the Bill Dies, and then seventh at the Hephner.

The senior Richardson qualified for state last year in this weight class. This season includes runner-up finishes at Waterloo and the EOWL, along with a 5-4 dual meet victory over Cooper earlier this month. Fellow senior Cooper won a state tournament bout last year in this weight class, while this season features a sixth-place finish at Top Gun.

### **150 pounds**

1. Kohen Horvath, Milan Edison, junior (Rossford)
2. Reese Stephen, Barnesville, junior (Harrison Central)
3. Jace Margraf, Mohawk, senior (Rossford)
4. Jacob Lyons, Tuslaw, junior (Perry)
5. Josh Brown, Berkshire, senior (Perry)
6. Tyson Seesholtz, South Range, freshman (Perry)
7. Joshua Greenwood, Beachwood, senior (Perry)
8. Lee Borders, Otsego, senior (Rossford)
9. Montana Pierce, McComb, senior (Rossford)
10. Parker Knapp, Columbus Academy, junior (Harrison Central)
11. Kaden Russell, Dalton, sophomore (Perry)
12. Brian Youngblood, Rootstown, sophomore (Perry)
13. Konner Samson, West Muskingum, senior (Harrison Central)



14. Lane Cline, Waterford, senior (Harrison Central)
15. Austyn Adams, Cleveland Central Catholic, senior (Perry)
16. Kaden Luikart, Marion Elgin, junior (Harrison Central)

HC – Stephen, Knapp, Samson, Cline; Luikart

PER – Lyons, Brown, Seesholtz, Greenwood; Russell, Youngblood, Adams

ROS – Horvath, Margraf, Borders, Pierce; Ian Grime (Archbold, junior)

TROY – Zeran Brady (Valley View, junior), Daniel Martin (Miami East, junior), Levi Collins (Waynesville), Trenton Grigsby (Bethel-Tate, senior); Luke Snyder (Kettering Alter, freshman)

A pair of 2021 state medalists that did not participate in the 2022 post-season lead the way in this weight class. Horvath missing the last two-thirds of the past season due to injury, while fellow junior Stephen failed to make 126 for the post-season after placing fifth at 106 in the 2021 state tournament. The performance of these two wrestlers could play a key role in determining which team takes second to Legacy Christian in the team race at state.

Horvath was champion at Milan Edison opening weekend before losing finals matches at North Canton (Hoffarth) and Brecksville (Denkins) in overtime, and then defaulting from Maumee Bay after losing in the quarterfinal round; he added a 6-3 win over returning state qualifier Margraf at the SMCC Duals. Stephen's season started at 144 where he went 3-2 at the Ironman before beating Petite in the Barnesville final; then at 150, he has titles at Licking Hts, OVAC, and New Lexington.

Three additional ranked wrestlers join Horvath in the field at Rossford, all are seniors. Margraf placed third at Defiance before winning titles at the Gorman and Van Buren; Borders was runner-up at Defiance up one weight class before placing fifth at Perrysburg and third at Lima CC in this weight; while Pierce has runner-up finishes at three tournaments this season (Dayton Christian up a weight, Van Buren and Lima CC in this weight class).

Four ranked wrestlers are basically in the hunt for the three state spots that join Stephen from Harrison Central. Fellow junior Knapp was runner-up at Dayton Christian and Marion Franklin, fourth at Olentangy Liberty, and has three tournament titles on the season/ Samson was a district placer last year as a junior, while this season has split tournament finals matches against Cline before winning a title at Green and then failing to place at New Lexington. Fellow senior Cline placed sixth in this state tournament weight class last year, with additional in-season resume items including a round of 12 at Barnesville, along with a runner-up finish at Heath and fourth at New Lexington; while the junior Luikart has three tournament titles to go with third-place finishes at Mount Vernon, Marengo Highland, and North Union.

There are zero ranked wrestlers at Troy, though Brady and Martin are returning district placers, while seven ranked wrestlers exit district competition at Perry led by returning state qualifier Lyons and 2021 state qualifier Brown. The junior Lyons was round of 12 at North Canton and runner-up at Top Gun, along with beating Seesholtz 13-5 in a dual meet earlier this month; while the senior Brown has wins in two tournament finals over Greenwood, and also has tournament titles at Defiance and Berkshire up one weight class.

The freshman Seesholtz, last year an OAC junior high state champion at 146, is next on the ladder; his season includes five tournament titles, most notably beating Mock on the way to titles at Eastlake North and the EOWL. Greenwood was a state alternate last year in Division II as a junior, and was round of 12

at Medina and seventh at Perrysburg, both up a weight class, in addition to the championship match losses to Brown (Beachwood/165 and CVC/150). The sophomore Russell placed fourth at Mount Vernon, first at Wayne Invite, seventh at North Canton, second at the Bill Dies, and third at Jonathan Alder; fellow sophomore Youngblood was a match from placing at Barnesville before taking second at Kenston, winning Portage County, and finishing third at the Bill Dies; while the senior Adams was eighth at North Canton and lost 3-2 to Youngblood in a dual meet earlier this month.

### **157 pounds**

1. Tristin Greene, Keystone, junior (Perry)
2. Ethan Cooper, Legacy Christian, senior (Troy)
3. Ayden King, Barnesville, sophomore (Harrison Central)
4. Brayden Doran, Preble Shawnee, senior (Troy)
5. Kade Wireman, Allen East, senior (Troy)
6. A.J. Coppersmith, Columbiana Crestview, senior (Perry)
7. Justin Fox, Waterloo, senior (Perry)
8. Jacob Starkey, South Range, senior (Perry)
9. Aiden Helmke, Defiance Tinora, sophomore (Rossford)
10. Kasen Wellman, Defiance Ayersville, junior (Rossford)
11. Eli Reinhart, Antwerp, senior (Rossford)
12. Tyson Clear, Malvern, sophomore (Harrison Central)
13. Brencyn Evans, Monroeville, sophomore (Rossford)
14. Preston Tirey, Bishop Ready, sophomore (Harrison Central)
15. Caylan LeMaster, Centerburg, junior (Harrison Central)
16. Dawson Lamb, Paulding, senior (Rossford)

HC – King, Clear, Tirey, LeMaster; Brandon Mulvaine (Marion Pleasant, senior)

PER – Greene, Coppersmith, Fox, Starkey; Tristen McKibben (Rootstown, sophomore)

ROS – Helmke, Wellman, Reinhart, Evans; Lamb

TROY – Cooper, Doran, Wireman, Landen Schroeder (Columbus Grove, senior); Nathan Barker (Milton-Union, senior)

Five Ohio males won national titles in Fargo last summer. While the other four might come as no surprise (Marcus Blaze, J.R. Miller, and Aaron Ries in 16U freestyle, plus Javaan Yarbrough in Junior Greco), the fifth would probably take a large amount of guessing. Here to tell you that it is the projected state champion in this weight class. After placing fourth in Division II at 138 pounds as a sophomore, Greene went on to run a seven-match gauntlet on the way to a 16U national title in Greco-Roman at 152 pounds this past July in Fargo. It should be noted that Greene did knock off eventual state champion Hoffarth in the quarterfinal round at district last season.

Greene went 2-2 in the Ironman down at 150 pounds, but has been in this weight class for the rest of the season, where he has won titles at four tournaments. The three wrestlers that join him in the rankings at Perry are all returning state qualifiers and seniors. Two-time state qualifier Coppersmith has titles at four tournaments this season, including a 6-5 victory over Fox at the EOWL, to go with a runner-up finish at Waterloo; Fox started the season up two weight classes at 175, where he won titles at Malvern and Waterloo, before moving into this weight class with a title at Portage County and finishing second at the EOWL; while two-time state qualifier Starkey has split time between this weight (first at Eastlake North and DNP at the Hephner) and one weight class above (second at Waterloo and third at EOWL with an overtime loss to Lintner in the semis).

Three of the four wrestlers – all seniors – directly behind Greene in the rankings are the three ranked wrestlers that exit the Troy district. Cooper made his state tournament debut last season after being state alternate the previous two years. His season features titles at Dayton Christian and Lima CC, finishing third at the Carnahan, fourth at GMVWA, along with going 2-2 at Ironman and Escape the Rock. Wireman is the highest returning placer, having finished third at 150 last season. He placed fourth at Defiance in that weight class, but has been here for the rest of the season with titles coming in three tournaments (including Van Buren) and a runner-up finish to Cooper at Lima CC. Doran has yet to win more than two matches at district, but this season has been excellent with titles in two tournaments, along with finishing third at GMVWA and Lima CC.

The third returning state medalist in this weight class is Helmke, who placed seventh at state as a freshman last year. He finished second at Perrysburg and Van Buren, sandwiched around a 2-2 performance at Maumee Bay. Four other ranked wrestlers join him at Rossford, a group led by the junior Wellman, who was runner-up at Defiance up a weight class before going 2-2 at Maumee Bay. The senior Reinhart won titles at Lincolnview and Galion before finishing third at Defiance. Evans was state alternate in this weight class last year as a freshman, and started his season up at 165 where he was third at Milan Edison and champion at Bucyrus before going 3-2 at Brecksville; while in this weight class, he was round of 12 at Maumee Bay along with narrow losses at the SMCC Duals to Wellman and Helmke. Finally, the senior Lamb placed fifth at Defiance and second at Lima Senior. Otherwise not mentioned in this report is returning state participant Case Paul (Lakota, junior).

Last of the four districts is the one at Harrison Central, which is led by returning state qualifier King. The sophomore placed second at Union Local and Barnesville, fifth at Brecksville, first at Licking Hts and New Lexington, along with third at OVAC. He lost by major decision to Cooper in the state dual meet invitational this past weekend when both wrestlers competed up a weight class.

Three others join him in the rankings at this district tournament. Fellow sophomore Clear was champion at Malvern, Coshocton, and West Muskingum before finishing fourth at Top Gun; Tirey was state alternate last year as a freshman, and this season has placed second at Hamilton Township, eighth at CIT, then third at Marion Pleasant; while the junior Lemaster is a returning district placer and has titles in two tournaments to go with runner-up finishes at Hebron Lakewood, Marion Harding, and West Muskingum along with a sixth at Jonathan Alder.

### **165 pounds**

1. Hunter Andel, Garrettsville Garfield, senior (Perry)
2. Connor Smith, Gibsonburg, senior (Rossford)
3. Greyson Siders, Dalton, junior (Perry)
4. Dalton Wolfrum, Defiance Tinora, senior (Rossford)
5. Braxton Quaintance, Lakota, sophomore (Rossford)
6. Brendan Sheehan, Newark Catholic, senior (Harrison Central)
7. Sam Moore, Wayne Trace, senior (Troy)
8. Trenton Gatchell, Allen East, junior (Troy)
9. Kael Margraf, Mohawk, senior (Rossford)
10. Gus Kyser, Madeira, senior (Troy)
11. Gage Bolt, Westfall, junior (Harrison Central)
12. Gaetano Savelli, Kirtland, senior (Perry)
13. Ryan Brubaker, Perry, senior (Perry)

14. Cole Karilak, Fairview, senior (Perry)
15. Gabe Bissenbach, Southern Local, junior (Perry)
16. Ethan Waggoner, Richmond Edison, senior (Harrison Central)
17. Syllas Reiheld, Rootstown, senior (Perry)

HC – Sheehan, Bolt, Waggoner, Sam Mentzer (Marion Pleasant, sophomore); Johnny McFarland (Martins Ferry, senior)

PER – Andel, Siders, Savelli, Brubaker; Karilak, Bissenbach, Reiheld

ROS – Smith, Wolfrum, Quaintance, Margraf; Jack Caldwell (Woodmore, junior), Grant Richardson (Evergreen, junior)

TROY – Moore, Gatchell, Kyser, Michael Osborne (Versailles, junior); Hunter Randall (Miami East, senior)

Seeking a first individual state champ in program history, the G-Men put two into the state semis last year, with neither able to join two previous athletes that made it to the state finals bout. Andel lost 6-3 to eventual state champion Carter Chase in the semifinal at this weight class, before sliding with two more losses to finish sixth place for his second state tournament podium. This season he has won titles in three tournaments, while finishing second in three more (Solon, Brecksville, and Wadsworth).

Six wrestlers other than Andel at Garfield Hts are also ranked in this weight class, which will make it for a very intriguing district tournament at this weight class. The junior Siders is a returning state qualifier and won tournaments the first two weeks of the season, before finishing runner-up at North Canton and the Bill Dies then taking third at Jonathan Alder; the senior Savelli placed at district last season, while this season includes a title at Kenston and three other tournaments, along with a sixth-place finish at Perry Pin City; while fellow senior Brubaker is a returning Division II state qualifier that started his season by placing fifth up a weight class at North Coast, before going 3-2 at Brecksville then placing eighth at Maumee Bay and third in the CVC.

The senior Karilak placed fourth at Riverside and sixth at Hudson up a weight class before finishing second at Kenston in this weight class, and then winning titles at Columbia and Orange; Bissenbach was a district placer last year as a sophomore, while this season includes two tournament titles to go with a third at Beaver Local and fifth at OVAC; while the senior Reiheld qualified for state in this weight class last year with the present season including a runner-up at Portage County, placing fourth at the Hephner as well as fifth at Kenston and the Bill Dies.

Returning state champion Smith ended a 41-year drought for Gibsonburg with his individual state title last year at 157 pounds. However, I don't think the state Offensive Player of the Year in Division VII football has been on the mat much – if at all – this season. None the less, there are three other ranked wrestlers joining him at the Rossford district. The senior Wolfrum qualified for state last year and finished third at Defiance, Perrysburg, and Maumee Bay before taking home gold at Van Buren; the sophomore Quaintance was runner-up at Milan Edison and eighth at Perrysburg up a weight class before finishing second at Van Buren and first at Lima CC in this weight class; while the senior Margraf placed at district last year, and this season placed fourth at Defiance and the Gorman before taking fifth at Van Buren.

The remaining returning state qualifier in this weight is Sheehan, who went two-and-out at state as a junior. His senior season includes titles in three tournaments, along with runner-up finishes at Licking Valley and Lima CC. Just two ranked wrestlers join him in the field at Newark Catholic. The junior Bolt has five tournament titles on the season, most notably winning at Marion Pleasant; while the senior

Waggoner finished runner-up at Union Local and Beaver Local up at 175 before placing sixth in this weight class at the OVAC.

Rounding out the four districts is a group of three ranked wrestlers at Troy led by the senior Moore, whose spent December up a weight class winning two tournaments and finishing third at Defiance before winning at Troy and finishing fourth at Van Buren in this weight class. Gatchell was state alternate last year as a sophomore, and placed fourth at Defiance down a weight class, but has otherwise been at this weight – winning at Allen County before placing third at Lima Senior, Van Buren, and Lima CC; while the senior Kyser placed at district last year, and this year has two tournament titles to go with a fourth at Lima CC.

### **175 pounds**

1. Connor Havill, Troy Christian, senior (Troy)
2. Cannon Endicott, Elmwood, senior (Rossford)
3. Cody Coontz, Rootstown, senior (Perry)
4. Xander Myers, Liberty Center, junior (Rossford)
5. Owen Berner, Defiance Ayersville, senior (Rossford)
6. Hayden Dickman, Archbold, senior (Rossford)
7. Kane Epperly, Versailles, senior (Troy)
8. Hayden Buhro, Oak Harbor, senior (Rossford)
9. George Hulsey, Martins Ferry, senior (Harrison Central)
10. Awesom Mitchell, Triad, sophomore (Troy)
11. Riley Stevenson, Preble Shawnee, junior (Troy)
12. Xavier Watson, Malvern, senior (Harrison Central)
13. Parker Cook, Mechanicsburg, senior (Troy)
14. Louka Babic, Kirtland, senior (Perry)
15. Rylan Ernest, Arcadia, senior (Rossford)
16. Lance Rickle, Carey, senior (Rossford)
17. Jack Waldron, Orrville, junior (Perry)

HC – Hulsey, Watson, Bryce Wickline (Westfall, junior), Cage Miller (Newcomerstown, sophomore); Nels VanGundy (Marion Elgin, junior)

PER – Coontz, Babic, Waldron, Wyatt Morris (Southern Local, senior); Neil Miller (Chippewa, junior)

ROS – Endicott, Myers, Berner, Dickman; Buhro, Ernest, Rickle

TROY – Havill, Epperly, Mitchell, Stevenson; Cook

Fifteen years ago this season, Troy Christian won the second of three consecutive state titles with an at-the-time Division III record 162 points. That year the Eagles won four state tournament weight classes, with Zach Toal winning his second of three titles and Ben Sergent also repeating as state champion. In this weight class, the senior Havill seeks to join five Troy Christian alumni as multi-time state champions. His season to date includes titles in three tournaments, along with a sixth at Brecksville.

There are just two other wrestlers in this projected field that are returning state placers, both Myers and Berner are among seven ranked wrestlers at the Rossford district. The junior Myers has titles at Marion Harding and Marion Pleasant to go with a fourth at Perrysburg, and has a 5-4 dual meet win over Epperly, while the senior Berner placed second at Defiance up a weight class before finishing sixth at Maumee Bay in this weight. However, it is fellow senior Endicott, who is the highest ranked wrestler in

the Rossford field; the senior was runner-up at Olentangy Liberty, champion at Defiance and Van Buren, as well as third at Perrysburg with a 3-2 win over Myers in the medal bout.

Another pair of wrestlers also made the state tournament last year, Dickman and Buhro, both of whom are seniors. Dickman placed third at Defiance up a weight class before finishing round of 12 in this weight class at Maumee Bay, and he also had a dual meet pin over Buhro; while Buhro was champion at Bellevue, third at Medina, fifth at Perrysburg, and fourth at Maumee Bay. The senior Ernest was state alternate last year up a weight class at 190, while fellow senior Rickle was second at Bellevue and Van Buren.

Four additional ranked wrestlers join Havill at Troy to make that district tournament a congested field as well. Epperly qualified for state in 2021 as a sophomore before finishing as state alternate last year, while this year he was champion at Sidney before taking fourth at GMVWA; the sophomore Mitchell was champion at Triade, runner-up at London and West Jefferson, while finishing third at the OHC and Lima CC; the junior Stevenson started his season at 190 with two tournament titles and a runner-up finish at GMVWA, before finishing second at Brookville and fourth at GMVWA in this weight class; while the senior Cook went 2-2 at Brecksville, before winning titles at Lima Senior and the OAC then finishing second at Marion Pleasant.

Closing out the group of returning state qualifiers is the senior Coontz, who has made state each of the last two years. He was third at Barnesville before winning titles at Kenston, Portage County, and the Bill Dies then taking second at the Hephner; at the state duals invitational this past weekend, he did weigh-in at 165 along with his teammate Reiheld. Just two additional ranked wrestlers feature at Perry, a pair of seniors in Babic and Morris. Babic returning as a district placer whose season started with a title at Cuyahoga Hts before runner-up finishes at Willoughby South, Kenston, and Perry Pin City; while returning state alternate Morris was fifth at Beaver Local, runner-up at Shadyside, then eighth at the OVAC.

Last among the four districts is the one at Harrison Central, which features just a pair of ranked wrestlers in Hulsey and Watson, who both placed at district last year as juniors. Husley placed third at Union Local, Waterloo, and Buckeye Local; beat Morris in overtime to win at Shadyside; and then finished fourth at OVAC. Watson was runner-up at Malvern, champion at Coshocton and West Muskingum, while going 2-2 at the Top Gun.

### **190 pounds**

1. Abe Delano, Defiance Ayersville, junior (Rossford)
2. Keegan Sell, Garrettsville Garfield, junior (Perry)
3. Owen Pummel, Indian Lake, sophomore (Troy)
4. Colton Sparks, Plymouth, senior (Rossford)
5. Wyatt Ripke, Archbold, junior (Rossford)
6. Ronnie Thomas, Mechanicsburg, sophomore (Troy)
7. Lee Burkett, Troy Christian, senior (Troy)
8. Mason Oliver, Elmwood, senior (Rossford)
9. Hayden Garrow, Columbia, senior (Perry)
10. Colton Hultgren, Milton-Union, senior (Troy)
11. Lane McKenzie, Rootstown, senior (Perry)
12. Gavin Bowers, Defiance Tinora, senior (Rossford)
13. Blake Elliott, East Knox, sophomore (Harrison Central)

14. Eli Wolph, Woodmore, senior (Rossford)
15. Shane Ontrop, Coldwater, senior (Troy)
16. Drake Bennett, Miami East, junior (Troy)
17. Bladen Garland, Newcomerstown, senior (Harrison Central)

HC – Elliott, Garland, Alexander Finsley (Martins Ferry, senior), Marshall Sayre (Caldwell, senior); Troy Myers (Liberty Union, senior)

PER – Sell, Garrow, McKenzie, Landen Sword (Mapleton, senior); Tucker Kiko (Hanoverton United, senior)

ROS – Delano, Sparks, Ripke, Oliver; Bowers, Wolph

TROY – Pummel, Thomas, Burkett, Hultgren; Ontrop, Bennett

Two juniors who made the state semis last season before losing to eventual state champions lead the field in this weight class. Delano is from Defiance Ayersville, which has just one state champion in program history; while Sell competes for Garrettsville Garfield, who never has had a state champion.

Delano's season started up a weight class where he was champion at Defiance, before coming into this weight to place fifth at Maumee Bay with a medal bout win over Grimm in the tiebreaker. Sell has titles in three tournaments, along with placing seventh at Brecksville then fourth at Wadsworth with a 5-2 loss to Grimm in the semifinal round.

Five additional ranked wrestlers join projected state champion Delano in the field at Rossford, with four of those wrestlers having made it to a go-to-state match or deeper in the district tournament during their careers. The senior Sparks qualified for state last year and has titles at Clear Fork, Marion Harding, and Mapleton on his season; Ripke was state alternate last year as a sophomore and has been at 215 for much of the season, where he was second at Defiance and third at Maumee Bay, before hitting this weight class in the second half of January; Oliver placed at district in 2021 as a sophomore; fellow senior Bowers placed at district last year, and his tournament title at Van Buren followed a seventh at Defiance, eighth at Perrysburg, and going 1-2 at Maumee Bay; while another senior Wolph has runner-up finishes at Coldwater and Lima CC sandwiching a third at Van Buren.

It's just a pair of ranked wrestlers joining Sell in district competition at Perry. The senior Garrow failed to place at North Coast before runner-up finishes at Medina and Berkshire sandwiched a title at Columbia. Fellow senior McKenzie is a returning district placer, and this season includes a title at Portage County (pinning Sell in the semis), runner-up finishes in three events (Cardinal, Kenston, and Bill Dies), along with placing fourth at Barnesville and the Hephner.

A third returning state placer is Pummel, who finished eighth in this state tournament bracket as a freshman last season. The current season includes titles in three tournaments, a fifth at Defiance, and runner-up at Marion Pleasant. There are five other ranked wrestlers also present in the field at Troy, a group led Thomas, who won a first round match last year at state as a freshman; his current season includes a trip to the quarters at Brecksville, titles at Lima Senior and the OHC, before finishing third at Marion Pleasant.

The senior Burkett was state alternate in this weight class last year, and has titles at Barnesville and Lima CC to go with a round of 12 at Brecksville, a sixth at Perrysburg, and a 4-2 dual meet loss to Pummel. Fellow senior Hultgren placed eighth at 215 in the GMVWA before winning titles at Brookville and Eaton in this weight class; another senior Ontrop was first at Coldwater before placing third at Lima CC; while

Bennett placed in this district weight class last year as a sophomore, and this year was runner-up to Pummel at Tippecanoe, sixth at Medina along with a quarterfinals appearance at Lima CC.

Only two ranked wrestlers feature at Harrison Central, returning state qualifier Elliot and the senior Garland. The sophomore Elliott finished first at Mount Vernon and eighth at North Canton, while Garland was champion at Marengo Highland and Beaver Local before placing eighth at Top Gun.

### **215 pounds**

1. Julien Griffith, Marion Pleasant, junior (Harrison Central)
2. Uzonna Nzekwe, Beachwood, senior (Perry)
3. Lucas Thomas, Harrison Central, junior (Harrison Central)
4. Zane Hitchcock, Mechanicsburg, senior (Troy)
5. Bronson Stacy, Brookville, senior (Troy)
6. Tyler Shellenbarger, Mogadore, senior (Perry)
7. Zane Adams, Preble Shawnee, senior (Troy)
8. Caleb Cunningham, Ashland Crestview, junior (Rossford)
9. Will Fox, Coldwater, senior (Troy)
10. Gavin Gillig, Liberty-Benton, senior (Rossford)
11. A.J. Schafer, Columbus Grove, senior (Troy)
12. Christopher Colucci, South Range, senior (Perry)
13. Aidan Gross, Springfield Northwestern, senior (Troy)
14. Charlie Wells, Black River, senior (Perry)
15. Logan Johnson, Spencerville, senior (Troy)
16. Dylan Aeschilman, Archbold, senior (Rossford)

HC – Griffith, Thomas, Judson Cooper (Waterford, junior), Zach Babiczuk (Malvern, junior); Braden Strawn (Hannibal River, senior)

PER – Nzekwe, Shellenbarger, Colucci, Wells; Luke Raines (Smithville, senior)

ROS – Cunningham, Gillig, Aeschilman, Ethan Crawford (Genoa, junior); Luke Schlatter (Delta, senior)

TROY – Hitchcock, Stacy, Adams, Fox; Schafer, Gross, Johnson

When on the mat during his three-year high school career, the junior Griffith has been one of the state's more exciting competitors, as he brings lots of big moves to the table. However, over the last two seasons that has not always been the case. He did not compete during the last two-thirds of the 2021-22 season after placing fourth in this state tournament weight class as a freshman, while this season he missed a month of competition after defaulting out at Brecksville. On mat highlights this season are a title at Mount Vernon up in weight, along with a 15-4 dual meet victory from December against projected 190-pound state champion Delano (before he dropped down to that weight).

The only other ranked wrestler joining Griffith at Harrison Central is fellow junior Thomas, who placed sixth in this weight class last season. This season his title at West Jefferson is sandwiched by runner-up finishes at Wayne Invite and the OVAC.

Ranked second is the senior Nzekwe, who was a state alternate last year in Division II. He has titles in three tournaments, along with finishing second at Medina and third at Perrysburg, and has three wins over returning/previous state qualifiers this season. Three returning state qualifiers, all seniors, join Nzekwe in the rankings at Perry. Shellenberger won a state bout last year at 285; this season, he was champion at Waterloo in that weight class before winning titles at Portage County and Alexander in this



weight class then taking second at the Hephner. Colucci has titles at Waterloo, Jackson-Milton, and Eastlake North this season along with advancing to the quarters at the Hephner; while Wells was champion at the Mike Lewis, runner-up at Marion Harding and West Holmes, along with taking fourth at the Gorman.

It is a group of seven ranked wrestlers at Troy, all seniors, including four with state tournament credentials. Returning state medalist Hitchcock was round of 12 at Brecksville before winning titles at Lima Senior, the OHC, and Marion Pleasant; fellow state medalist Tracy placed fourth up a weight class at Trenton Edgewood before winning titles at Milton-Union and Brookville in this weight class; Adams has titles at Middletown Madison and Lima CC to go with a sixth at GMVWA and runner-up at Brookville; while returning state qualifier Fox was champion at Coldwater and third at Lima CC.

Returning state qualifier Schafer placed fifth at Defiance; last year a Division II district placer, Gross this season was runner-up at Xenia and Lima CC to go with three tournament titles; while Johnson has titles at Lincolnview and Allen County, to go with a fourth at Lima Senior then a round of 12 at Lima CC.

Lastly, it is a trio of ranked wrestlers in district competition at Rossford, the junior Cunningham and a pair of seniors who placed last year at district in Gillig and Aeschilman. Cunningham was champion at Kenston before taking fifth at the Gorman; Gillig was champion at Van Buren, runner-up at Lincolnview, along with taking third at Defiance and Lima Senior; while Aeschilman has fluctuated between 190 and 215 on the season.

### **285 pounds**

1. Eli Criblez, Allen East, senior (Troy)
2. Owen Box, Liberty Center, senior (Rossford)
3. Javen Gaines, Defiance Tinora, senior (Rossford)
4. Daren Christine, Conneaut, senior (Perry)
5. Cohen Hickman, Greeneview, senior (Troy)
6. Dallas McCracken, Hanoverton United, junior (Perry)
7. Brock Bushong, Carey, senior (Rossford)
8. Marshal Bier, Hannibal River, senior (Harrison Central)
9. Dustin Winner, Miami East, senior (Troy)
10. Noah Rutherford, Carlisle, senior (Troy)
11. Griffin Halenar, Newark Catholic, senior (Harrison Central)
12. Landen Thomas, Harrison Central, sophomore (Harrison Central)
13. Cameron Carreras, Clearview, senior (Perry)
14. Seth Stanley, Margaretta, senior (Rossford)
15. Jacob Wetzel, Fremont SJCC, junior (Rossford)
16. Kip Stewart, Columbiana, senior (Perry)

HC – Bier, Halenar, Thomas, Jase Norman (Caldwell, junior); Lucas Herbst (Fredericktown, senior)

PER – Christine, McCracken, Carreras, Stewart; Kenny Walker (Perry, senior)

ROS – Box, Gaines, Bushong, Stanley; Wetzel

TROY – Criblez, Hickman, Winner, Rutherford; Dylan Valerio (Indian Lake, junior)

During the 2021 state tournament, Criblez became the highest finishing state placer in program history when he lost 3-1 in the final at this weight class to Jeff Meyer from Columbus Grove. Last year, he finished fourth after losing by fall in the semifinal round to eventual state champion Austin Kohlhofer

from Delta. The lone loss for Criblez this season came via disqualification in the semis at Lima Senior, as he has notable tournament titles at Defiance, Van Buren, and Lima CC.

Three additional ranked wrestlers, all seniors, join Criblez in district competition at Troy. Hickman lost in overtime against Criblez in the Lima CC final, placed third at Xenia, and has titles at London and the OHC; Winner has placed third at Tippecanoe, Mason, and Lima CC along with finishing fifth at Medina and first at Troy; while returning state alternate Rutherford finished second at Dayton Christian and Trenton Edgewood before winning titles at Valley View and Brookville, then taking fourth at Lima CC.

Returning state placer Box, a senior and two-time state qualifier, lost 5-2 to Criblez in the consolation semifinal at state last year on the way to a fifth-place finish. This season includes titles at Marion Harding and Marion Pleasant as well as a third at Perrysburg. Four additional ranked wrestlers feature at the Rossford district. Returning state qualifier Gaines was runner-up at Defiance, fourth at Perrysburg, a semifinalist at Maumee Bay, and third at Van Buren; returning state alternate Bushong was champion at Bellevue then second at Van Buren; Stanley was runner-up at Milan Edison, fifth at Defiance, and champion at Clyde; while the junior Wetzell finished second at Northwood and fourth at Van Buren.

McCracken placed eighth in this state tournament weight class as a sophomore, and has three tournament titles on the season to go with a second at Waterloo then a fourth at the EOWL. Three other ranked wrestlers feature at Perry, including the senior Christine who leads the pack with a title at the EOWL coming after a second at Riverside as well as third-place finishes at Jackson-Milton and the Bill Dies. The senior Carreras has performed very well this season after missing the last two seasons due to injury; while fellow senior Stewart was champion at Cardinal, third at Waterloo, fifth at Wadsworth, and seventh at EOWL.

Finally, it is a group of three ranked wrestlers at Harrison Central, led by the senior Bier who was champion at two tournaments before finishing second at OVAC and third at Buckeye Local, losing by fall to Llewellyn on both occasions. Halenar went 1-2 at state last year at the state tournament in the 190-pound weight class for Bishop Hartley, while this season he has titles in three tournaments before finishing second at CIT then eighth at Lima CC. Thomas placed at district last year as a freshman, and this season was runner-up at the Wayne Invite, champion at Western Brown, and a semifinalist at the OVAC.

### **Team**

1. Legacy Christian (Troy)
2. Barnesville (Harrison Central)
3. Milan Edison (Rossford)
4. Troy Christian (Troy)
5. Archbold (Rossford)
6. Monroeville (Rossford)
7. Defiance Tinora (Rossford)
8. Garrettsville Garfield (Perry)
9. Allen East (Troy)
10. Defiance Ayersville (Rossford)
11. Delta (Rossford)
12. Marion Pleasant (Harrison Central)