

## Division One – Rankings and Analysis

### 106 pounds

1. Austin Assad, Brecksville, sophomore (Cleveland State)
2. Jose Rodriguez, Massillon Perry, sophomore (Mentor)
3. L.J. Bentley, St. Edward, sophomore (Cleveland State)
4. Luke Nace, Teays Valley, junior (Hilliard Darby)
5. Josh Heidkamp, Vandalia Butler, senior (Fairfield)
6. Peyton Gutierrez, Pickerington North, senior (Hilliard Darby)
7. Tony DeCesare, Nardon, freshman (Cleveland State)
8. Josh Heil, Brunswick, freshman (Cleveland State)
9. Noah Baughman, Wadsworth, freshman (Cleveland State)
10. Patrick Kearney, Mason, sophomore (Fairfield)
11. Garrett Lambert, Strongsville, freshman (Cleveland State)
12. Kenny Hoberney, Eastlake North, sophomore (Mentor)
13. Andre Lowery, Shaker Hts., sophomore (Mentor)
14. Anthony Jagel, Middletown, sophomore (Fairfield)
15. Jake Donahue, Massillon, freshman (Mentor)
16. Jonathan Furnas, Olentangy Liberty, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)

Cleveland State – Assad, Bentley, DeCesare, Heil; Baughman, Lambert

Fairfield – Heidkamp, Kearney, Jagel, Peter Vuyk (Loveland, junior); Ray Gatica (Fairfield, junior)

Hilliard Darby – Nace, Gutierrez, Furnas, Jackson Lasko (Grove City Central Crossing, freshman); Shakur Laney (Groveport Madison, sophomore)

Mentor – Rodriguez, Hoberney, Lowery, Donahue; Kyle Jenkins (Stow, freshman)

Right out the chute, we already have a prognosticator's nightmare. Two wrestlers at the top of the weight class are ranked in the top five nationally, both were state runners-up last year, and have already wrestled this season. That match contested seven weeks ago featured one of the competitors winning; however, the overall tenor of the match would seem to favor the other one winning a rematch.

In this scenario, this report is going to predict that the victorious wrestler, Assad, will win the state title. Despite losing that Beast of the East semifinal 5-4, Rodriguez scored takedowns in each of the first two periods before choosing down in the third with a 4-2 lead, a period in which Assad rode out Rodriguez and scored a three-point near fall for the winning points. On the season, Assad was third at the Ironman, second at the Beast, and champion at Brecksville and the Bill Dies; while Rodriguez was second at Ironman, third at Beast, and champion at Medina.

A third wrestler, returning state qualifier Bentley, who was a NHSCA Freshman national champion, is a peripheral player in the title hunt. He placed seventh at Ironman and third at Medina, suffering losses to Rodriguez in both events; in other competition, he was champion of the Dvorak in Illinois, and bumped up a weight class to beat an Illinois state champion during January dual meet competition. Bentley failed to place at state last year, despite losing an OT match in the district final to Assad, they both exit the district at Cleveland State this year.

Joining Assad and Bentley at a brutally deep Cleveland State district are four other top 11 wrestlers. Unfortunately, five of these six figures – Assad, DeCesare, Heil, Baughman, and Lambert – all exit the

same sectional, so one will be eliminated prior to district. The depth here is such that Ironman and Medina placer Mario Guillen (Perrysburg) in this weight class has moved up to 113 for the month of January, and might as well stay there, given the relative thin nature of that weight at Cleveland State. Among the four wrestlers at the Medina sectional other than Assad, DeCesare beat Heil in the North Coast Classic final, beat Lambert at Solon, and has split matches with Baughman.

Rodriguez, a state runner-up for Wantagh in New York last year at 99 pounds, should have a much more manageable path through the Mentor district. He is the strong favorite. State alternate Hoberney, who placed fourth at Solon and second at Kenston (splitting matches with Lambert along the way); Kenston champion Lowery; and the freshman Donahue, a junior high state champ, project to the other qualification spots.

Ranked fourth in this weight is Brecksville runner-up Nace, who was a state alternate last year. He heads the competition at the Hilliard Darby district, having a win over two-time state placer Gutierrez in the championship match at Pickerington North. Gutierrez also placed fifth at Solon, fifth at Medina, and was champ at Mason with a win over fellow state alternate Kearney. The lone other ranked wrestler here is the freshman Lasko, who was sixth at Medina and champion at Olentangy. The other spot is projected to a wrestler outside the top 16.

State qualifier Heidkamp leads the way at the Fairfield district. Last year at state, it was he who upended Bentley in the first round. This year, he was second at the GMVWA, losing by major decision to the projected DII state champ Eli Stickley, and has spent most other competitions up at 113. State alternate Kearney is viewed as second best here, having finished third at Olentangy Liberty, winning SWOWCA, fourth at Medina, and runner-up at Mason. The other ranked wrestler here is Jagel, who placed at Franklin, SWOWCA, and GMVWA before winning at Fairfield.

### 113 pounds

1. Aaron Assad, Brecksville, senior (Cleveland State)
2. Armando Torres, Elyria, junior (Cleveland State)
3. Dakota Riley, Mt. Vernon, senior (Hilliard Darby)
4. Conner Ziegler, Moeller, sophomore (Fairfield)
5. Anthony Milano, LaSalle, senior (Fairfield)
6. Nick Mancini, Boardman, senior (Mentor)
7. Jimmy Ferrito, St. Ignatius, senior (Mentor)
8. Jared Davis, Oregon Clay, junior (Cleveland State)
9. Jason Spencer, Massillon Perry, sophomore (Mentor)
10. Andy Fausnight, North Canton Hoover, senior (Mentor)
11. Colin Kramer, Mentor, senior (Mentor)
12. Brandon Tucker, Loveland, sophomore (Fairfield)
13. Justyn Bostic, Massillon Jackson, sophomore (Mentor)
14. Mario Guillen, Perrysburg, freshman (Cleveland State)
15. Demarco Davis, Fairfield, junior (Fairfield)
16. Alec Logsdon, Lebanon, sophomore (Fairfield)

Cleveland State – Assad, Torres, J. Davis, Guillen; Sal Corrao (St. Edward, senior)

Fairfield – Ziegler, Milano, Tucker, D. Davis; Logsdon

Hilliard Darby – Riley, Kyle Dooley (Teays Valley, sophomore), Santino DiSabato (Westerville North, junior), Michael Hines (Olentangy Orange, junior); Rob McGrath (Hilliard Bradley, junior)

Mentor – Mancini, Ferrito, Spencer, Fausnight; Kramer, Bostic

Two excellent wrestlers missing some vital bits to their overall wrestling resume top this weight class. Leading the way is three-time state placer Assad, who has finished third, second, and third at the state tournament. He is favored to this year get the elusive state title after a fifth place finish at the Ironman, runner-up at the Beast, and Outstanding Wrestler awards in winning titles at Brecksville and the Bill Dies. Second in this weight is the junior Torres, who has faced hard luck at the end of the last two seasons; enduring a knee injury that forced him to compete at much less than 100 percent his freshman year in the district tournament, and failing skin check prior to last year's district event.

This year, Torres and Assad have wrestled three times, with Assad coming on top by one point each time, 3-2 matches at both the second round of Ironman and the Brecksville semis, along with a late takedown as part of a 5-4 Bill Dies finals decision. The two could meet three more times, starting this week in the state dual meet event. They also exit the same district at Cleveland State, one that is shallow beyond those two. Returning state placer Davis is also here – having placed eighth at Brecksville, first at Clyde, and a semifinals appearance at Oregon Clay. For the fourth spot, it looks like Guillen (explained above) has as good a chance as anyone else, including Medina fifth place finisher Corrao.

Given the tendency for Assad and Torres to wrestle low-scoring bouts, someone can knock them off, and that group is led by returning state third placer Riley, a senior who has titles at Mt. Vernon, SWOWCA, and Oregon Clay this year to go with a fifth place finish at Brecksville. He headlines a Hilliard Darby district that has no other wrestler ranked in the top 16 of this weight class.

The other two members of this weight's top five come from the Fairfield district. The sophomore Ziegler, a returning state qualifier, placed second at SWOWCA, fifth at Powerade, and first at the CIT. He already has two wins over returning state eighth placer Milano, who placed third at both SWOWCA and the CIT. The Fairfield district has solid depth featuring three other ranked wrestlers. State qualifier Tucker was fourth at SWOWCA but failed to place at Brecksville, district placer Davis was fourth at Kenston and won the title at Fairfield, while Division III state qualifier Logsdon was fifth at SWOWCA, third at Fairfield, and fifth at Western Brown.

Last but not least is an extremely balanced Mentor district that features six wrestlers ranked between sixth and 13<sup>th</sup>, four of whom have state experience. State qualifier Mancini won the Kenston tournament with a major decision over D. Davis and beat Division II state placer Zemaitis 4-0 in the final, and also placed third in the Top Gun at 120. State lacer Ferrito had a disappointing fourth place finish at Solon, but has since wrestled well in a seventh place finish at Brecksville and second place finish at the CIT. Fausnight finished third at North Canton, lost 5-4 to Spencer early at Medina before pulling out due to injury, and failed to place at the Top Gun, including a 2-1 consolation loss to Bostic. Also here are excellent sophomores in Spencer and Bostic, who wrestled in the consolation final the Top Gun (Spencer winning that match 1-0); Spencer was fourth at Medina, while Bostic competed at 120 early in the season with placements at North Canton and Medina.

#### 120 pounds

1. Brandon Thompson, Solon, senior (Mentor)
2. David Bavery, Massillon Perry, junior (Mentor)
3. Artem Timchenko, Olentangy Orange, senior (Hilliard Darby)
4. Taleb Rahmani, Marysville, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
5. Richie Screptock, Oregon Clay, sophomore (Cleveland State)

6. Brenden Watson, Centerville, senior (Fairfield)
7. Josh Wimer, Grove City Central Crossing, junior (Hilliard Darby)
8. Ben Darmstadt, Elyria, freshman (Cleveland State)
9. Austin Daly, Lakota East, senior (Fairfield)
10. Dan Bartinelli, North Royalton, senior (Mentor)
11. Giuseppe Penzone, Olentangy Liberty, junior (Hilliard Darby)
12. Greysun Bearden, Fairfield, senior (Fairfield)
13. Alec Cotton, Uniontown Lake, junior (Mentor)
14. Brad Kakos, Franklin Hts., senior (Hilliard Darby)
15. Drew Dickson, North Ridgeville, senior (Cleveland State)
16. Sam Valenti, Hilliard Darby, senior (Hilliard Darby)

Cleveland State – Sreptock, Darmstadt, Dickson, Connor Gray (Wadsworth, sophomore); Austin Hiles (St. Edward, freshman)

Fairfield – Watson, Daly, Bearden, Matt Sicurella (Glen Este, sophomore); Jacoby Ward (Moeller, freshman)

Hilliard Darby – Timchenko, Rahmani, Wimer, Penzone; Kakos, Valenti

Mentor – Thompson, Bavery, Bartinelli, Cotton; Ryan Montgomery (Madison, sophomore)

Any time two state champions are together in the same weight it's a great thing for our fans. This one also has some interesting cache, as the senior Thompson is after a third state title, while the junior Bavery has made the final at state in each of his first two years – this includes a 2-0 loss in the final to Thompson at 103 pounds in 2011. The two wrestlers exit the same district at Mentor, and with no “protection principles” in effect, could end up in the same half-bracket there (boy would that suck for quarterfinal losers from the other half).

For this season, Thompson was champion at Solon and the North Coast Classic, and finished fourth at Powerade, losing to a pair of nationally ranked opponents. Bavery has yet to win a tournament (Ironman 7<sup>th</sup>, Beast 6<sup>th</sup>, Medina 2<sup>nd</sup>, and Top Gun 2<sup>nd</sup>), and has seven losses; however, six of them are to nationally ranked opposition, including three to three-time state champion Nathan Tomasello. Also at the Mentor district are state qualifier Bartinelli, state alternate Cotton, and district placer Montgomery. Bartinelli was one match from placing at Brecksville, and had an 8-2 win over Montgomery in that event; Cotton placed third at North Canton and fourth at the Top Gun; while Montgomery has spent much of the season up a weight class other than at Brecksville, so he could end up there too and is similarly a “bubble” kid in that weight.

If someone is going to derail the Thompson/Bavery collision course, it would be Timchenko, the Lehigh commit who placed at state as a freshman and sophomore but was ineligible last year due to having two transfers in his high school career. However, as he exits the Hilliard Darby district, he'll have to most likely beat both to win the state title. This season, he was a finalist at Brecksville, and has also competed at 126 during the season (would be a clear number two there to McClay). Also at this district is Rahmani, who placed fourth at 106 as a freshman, but had a regular season win over Bavery; however, he has missed most of the season, having come back just in the last two weeks.

This is probably the deepest weight in central Ohio with four other ranked wrestlers present as well – and quite frankly a couple may find it better to bump to 126, which has only two ranked wrestlers present. Wimer placed fifth last year at 106, and this season was runner-up at Olentangy and North Canton, third at Medina, and champion at Oregon Clay; Penzone was a district champ last year in this

weight, but then went 0-2 at the state tournament, and this year was runner-up at Olentangy Liberty and failed to place at Brecksville; Kakos was a state alternate in this weight last year, was champion at Franklin Hts in this weight, but has also spent time at 126; while returning state qualifier Valenti was champion at Pickerington North and sixth at Medina.

The fifth returning state placer in this weight, Screenshot, leads the way at the Cleveland State district. This season, Screenshot has a dual meet win over Watson, was third at Brecksville losing a competitive match to Timchenko, won the title at Clyde, and was third at Oregon Clay. Behind him, this is a shallow district with only two other wrestlers ranked, the freshman Darmstadt and the senior Dickson. Darmstadt placed fourth at Brecksville, second at the Bill Dies, and has two wins over Division III state champion Sammy Gross. The senior Dickson was undefeated last year against a rather invisible schedule during the regular season at 106, before losing to Bentley in the sectional final and then going 1-2 at the district. This year has been rather similar, with titles at Avon Lake, Bellevue, and Perry. It will be interesting to see if he can build this into a state qualification spot.

Last among the districts here is the one at Fairfield with three state qualifiers; however, those are the only ranked kids present. Leading the way is Watson, who was first at Olentangy, lost to Screenshot in a dual meet, failed to place at Brecksville, and won titles at Fairfield and Mason. Next is Daly, who was second at SWOWCA, sixth at Brecksville, and second at Fairfield. Finally is Bearden, who was at 126 for December, and dropped to 120 for Fairfield in January where he took third losing 4-3 to Daly in the semi. District placer Sicurella is a possible for the fourth qualification spot.

#### 126 pounds

1. Ivan McClay, Massillon, senior (Mentor)
2. Tommy Zeigler, St. Ignatius, senior (Mentor)
3. Josh Parrett, Kettering Fairmont, junior (Fairfield)
4. Tim Rooney, St. Charles, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
5. David Sparks, Marysville, junior (Hilliard Darby)
6. Chance Driscoll, St. Edward, senior (Cleveland State)
7. Austin Phillips, Massillon Perry, sophomore (Mentor)
8. Chase DuPratt, Olmsted Falls, senior (Cleveland State)
9. Alec Benedetti, North Royalton, junior (Mentor)
10. Patrick Allen, Colerain, senior (Fairfield)
11. Bryan DeRuchie, Amherst, senior (Cleveland State)
12. A.J. Donigian, Beaver Creek, senior (Fairfield)
13. Brandon Selmon, Princeton, junior (Fairfield)
14. Peter Ryan, Boardman, senior (Mentor)
15. Jake Demio, Strongsville, senior (Cleveland State)
16. Connor Borton, Moeller, sophomore (Fairfield)

Cleveland State – Driscoll, DuPratt, DeRuchie, Demio; Greg Marietta (Mansfield, junior)

Fairfield – Parrett, Allen, Donigian, Selmon; Borton

Hilliard Darby – Rooney, Sparks, Jared Ferguson (Pickerington North, junior), Austin King (Teays Valley, junior); Chris Bankes (Watkins Memorial, senior)

Mentor – McClay, Zeigler, Phillips, Benedetti; Ryan

Don't know why, might be just how the cookie crumbles, but this weight feels extremely shallow. Only six wrestlers here with state tournament experience (only 106, 152, and 182 in their present

constructions) have less. Leading the way here is two-time state placer McClay, a very talented wrestler, though one that isn't exactly going to light up a scoreboard. For the season, he has titles at Ashland, the J.C. Gorman, and Oregon Clay to go with a fourth place finish at the Ironman that included a win over 2x Super 32 finalist Michael Kemerer (Franklin Regional, Pa.). He exits the Mentor district, which is best of the four here with five ranked wrestlers.

Second in this weight, also from the Mentor district, is two-time state placer Zeigler, who was runner-up at Solon and Brecksville, both times losing to returning state finalist Anthony Tutolo. Others ranked here are state alternate Phillips, who placed fifth at Medina but failed to place at Top Gun; Benedetti, who placed eighth at Brecksville; and Ryan, who was second at Kenston and seventh at Top Gun with two wins over state placers in that tournament.

Just a junior, but already a two-time state qualifier, Parrett is ranked third in this weight class. For the season, he was runner-up at SWOWCA and champion at Mason. He is the lead figure at a Fairfield district that also features five ranked wrestlers; however, the other four all come in at tenth or below. Allen was third at SWOWCA and Mason, second at Fairfield, and a match away from placing at Brecksville; Donigian finished fifth at SWOWCA, sixth at Medina, and second at Mason; Selmon was seventh at SWOWCA and fifth at GMVWA; while Borton was a state alternate last year while competing for Olentangy Orange, and this season has fourth place finishes at both SWOWCA and the CIT.

The other two top five ranked wrestlers exit the Hilliard Darby district, which is has no ranked wrestlers beyond those two, and this is a weight class that is rife for wrestlers to move into it and take qualification spots. The junior Sparks placed fifth at Brecksville and third at Top Gun, while the sophomore Rooney was champion at Marion Harding.

Finally, it is the Cleveland State district, which is led by senior Driscoll, who is in his first year as a starter and placed third at Medina. The three other ranked wrestlers are 2011 state placer DuPratt, who has been more out than in the lineup this year navigating injury; the senior DeRuchie, who was a match away from placement at Brecksville; and the senior Demio, who was fourth at Solon and third at Kenston. However, beyond Driscoll and (if somewhat healthy) DuPratt, the district weight is a total crapshoot, and quite frankly one other districts want to see paired with them first round at state.

### 132 pounds

1. Dean Heil, St. Edward, senior (Cleveland State)
2. Matt Denlinger, Kettering Fairmont, senior (Fairfield)
3. Sonny Shump, Barberson, senior (Mentor)
4. Kendall Newell, Vandalia Butler, senior (Fairfield)
5. Brandon Egnor, Elyria, senior (Cleveland State)
6. Kasee McDougle, Gahanna Lincoln, senior (Hilliard Darby)
7. Zac Carson, Uniontown Lake, sophomore (Mentor)
8. T.J. Levistky, Parma, senior (Mentor)
9. Lee Wilson, Hilliard Davidson, senior (Hilliard Darby)
10. Andrew Mendel, Moeller, senior (Fairfield)
11. Nick Boggs, Painesville Riverside, junior (Mentor)
12. Jake Donatelli, Hilliard Darby, senior (Hilliard Darby)
13. Sean Williams, Bedford, senior (Mentor)
14. Jamie Norris, Massillon Perry, senior (Mentor)
15. Mark Heiderman, Cloverleaf, junior (Cleveland State)

16. Gavin Nelson, Oregon Clay, junior (Cleveland State)

Cleveland State – Heil, Egnor, Nelson, Heiderman; Yassir Abdel-Salem (Lakewood, junior)

Fairfield – Denlinger, Newell, Mendel, Josh Scanlon (Centerville, senior); Max Meddings (Fairfield, junior)

Hilliard Darby – McDougle, Wilson, Donatelli, Noah Messerrall (Thomas Worthington, junior); Lane Hinkle (Mt. Vernon, freshman)

Mentor – Shump, Carson, Levitsky, Boggs; Williams, Norris

The drive for 25! No, we're not talking about St. Edward state championships, the Eagles won their 27<sup>th</sup> last year. Instead, it's about the number of four-time state champions that Ohio could enjoy come the evening of March 2<sup>nd</sup>. One of those three after their fourth title this year is in this weight, and is prohibitively favored to do so – Dean Heil. The only thing stopping him would be if Ohio all of the sudden adopted a single-class state tournament and implemented it immediately.

Heil won the Super 32 Challenge before the season started, was third at the Ironman losing on a late takedown in the semi against Micah Jordan, won the Dvorak, and then lost about ten days ago lost to Jordan again on a takedown late in the match.

Best among the rest would probably be Denlinger, a three-time state qualifier, who placed eighth as a sophomore in 2011. This season he has titles at SWOWCA, Brecksville, and Mason. Also in his Fairfield district is a pair of returning state alternates that reside in the top ten of the rankings here. Newell, was up a weight class last year at 138 pounds, but this year has titles at North Canton and Fairfield to go with a third place finish at the GMVWA (losing to Jordan by fall in the semis) to his credit. Mendel, now twice an alternate to state, was a match away from placing at Ironman and Powerade, but was second at SWOWCA and a champion at the CIT. The fourth spot is relatively open for the taking.

The deepest of the four districts is the one at Mentor, led by returning state placer Shump and returning qualifiers in Carson and Levitsky. Shump was fifth last year at state in the 120 pound weight class, and a Bill Dies champion this year. The sophomore Carson made state last year as a freshman, and this year was second at North Canton and third at the Top Gun; while Levitsky has titles at Hudson and Kenston to his credit. The junior Boggs has had a positive season with a runner-up finish at Solon, championship at Medina, and sixth place finish at the Top Gun. Williams, a state alternate last year competing for Solon, finished second at Medina, losing the final 6-1 to Boggs. Last among the six ranked wrestlers here is the senior Norris, who was third at Medina and lost a pair of one point matches (to Boggs and Andy Dobben) in failing to place at the Top Gun.

Last among the top five members is Egnor, a returning state qualifier, who was a match away from placing at the Ironman and placed fourth at Brecksville. He is second-best to Heil in the Cleveland State district. This field has two other ranked wrestlers in the juniors Nelson and Heiderman. Nelson has a dual meet win over Egnor, but lost to Scanlon in dual meet competition as well; he finished seventh at Brecksville, first at Clyde, and fourth at Oregon Clay. Heiderman is finally finding his groove as a junior, winning at Midpark in mid-January, and was a match away from placing at Medina (losses to Williams and 10-8 to Donatelli).

Finally, it is the Hilliard Darby district, which is shallowest among the four districts here, with just three ranked wrestlers. That group is led by state qualifier McDougle, who has titles at Olentangy, Olentangy Liberty, and Pickerington North, and followed that up with runner-up finishes at Brecksville and Marion County. Fellow state qualifier Wilson, who like McDougle went two-and-out at state last year, was

runner-up to McDougle at Pickerington North and fifth at Brecksville. The third ranked wrestler is Donatelli, who was a state alternate last year, and this season was seventh at Medina. Underclassmen, in junior Messerall and freshman Hinkle, are primary among contenders for the last state qualification spot.

### 138 pounds

1. Colin Heffernan, St. Edward, senior (Cleveland State)
2. Noah Forrider, Marysville, senior (Hilliard Darby)
3. Isaac Bast, Massillon Perry, junior (Mentor)
4. Anthony Alexander, Columbus Northland, senior (Hilliard Darby)
5. Eli Garcia, Lorain, senior (Cleveland State)
6. Nick Montgomery, Madison, senior (Mentor)
7. Matthew Zollinger, Wadsworth, senior (Cleveland State)
8. Jordan Branham, Miamisburg, senior (Fairfield)
9. Drew McDougle, Gahanna Lincoln, senior (Hilliard Darby)
10. Mason Calvert, Sidney, senior (Fairfield)
11. Tanner Miller, Lancaster, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
12. Mike DeCesare, Nordononia, junior (Cleveland State)
13. Sonny Lucas, Brecksville, sophomore (Cleveland State)
14. Nick Steed, Glen Oak, sophomore (Mentor)
15. Emilio DeBenedetto, Upper Arlington, senior (Hilliard Darby)
16. Kevin Leonhardt, Lakota West, junior (Fairfield)

Cleveland State – Heffernan, Garcia, Zollinger, DeCesare; Lucas  
Fairfield – Branham, Calvert, Leonhardt, Taylor Bryant (Fairfield, senior); Evan Morgan (Elder, junior)  
Hilliard Darby – Forrider, Alexander, McDougle, Miller; DeBenedetto  
Mentor – Bast, Montgomery, Steed, Dejon Moss (Maple Hts, junior); David Masch (Uniontown Lake, sophomore)

With superstars in Heil below and Bright above, both ranked top 20 among all seniors as prospects nationally, this weight class is the proverbial collection pit for all those others after state titles. Based on past history and results to this point, one can reduce it down to a two-person race. Interestingly it is likely those two will see each other this coming Saturday in a dual meet.

Ranked number one, and exiting the deepest district, is the senior Heffernan who is finally in the varsity lineup AND at right weight class. This season, he placed fifth at Ironman with titles at the Dvorak and Medina, and already has two wins over third-ranked Bast. Therefore, it is essentially four wrestlers for three slots. That group is led by 2011 state qualifier Garcia, who this season has been at both 145 and 138; while in this weight he was champion at Fairfield and Oregon Clay. Returning state qualifier Zollinger was champion at Olentangy Liberty and North Canton, but failed to place at Brecksville. However, he avenged one of those two losses at Brecksville (to DeCesare) in a dual meet a week or so ago. The aforementioned DeCesare, along with Lucas seek that last spot. DeCesare was fourth at Solon, first at the North Coast Classic, and sixth at Brecksville with wins over McDougle and Zollinger (though losses to Kaminski and Forrider baffle the other way). Lucas, who placed at district last year as a freshman after beating DeCesare in the consolation quarterfinal, is off a Bill Dies title ten days ago that included a 4-2 victory over state alternate Steed in the semis.

Second in this weight, and many would argue the actual favorite is three-time state placer Forrider, who quite frankly has dominated his way through a solid schedule season to date. That includes titles at Brecksville and Top Gun, where every match was somewhere between controlling and non-competitive, and against good opposition (including an 11-5 Top Gun final victory over Bast). Though not impacted by the rest of the Hilliard Darby district, four other wrestlers are ranked here, including two with state tournament experience.

McDougle placed fourth last year in the weight below Forrider, and this season has won titles at Olentangy and Pickerington North to go with a runner-up finish at Olentangy Liberty. He sustained an injury in losing to DeCesare at Brecksville, and should be back before the season is over, though he missed the tournament at Marion County. Alexander is a returning state qualifier in this weight, is rather talented, but went 0-2 at state last year and faces a light schedule (he has also spent time at 145); however, this past weekend, he did upend Bast 14-11 in a shootout in the Delaware Hayes final. For the last spot, it looks like state alternate Miller and district placer DeBenedetto are the prime contenders; Miller was fourth at Medina, while DeBenedetto missed placement by one match.

#### 145 pounds

1. Edgar Bright, St. Edward, senior (Cleveland State)
2. Jake Ryan, Olentangy Liberty, senior (Hilliard Darby)
3. Wyatt Music, Ashland, senior (Cleveland State)
4. Ryan Roth, Perrysburg, senior (Cleveland State)
5. Lucas Marcelli, Massillon Jackson, senior (Mentor)
6. Tyrone McGuinea, Twinsburg, senior (Mentor)
7. Casey Sparkman, Massillon Perry, junior (Mentor)
8. Bobby Smith, Hilliard Davidson, junior (Hilliard Darby)
9. A.J. Kowal, Princeton, junior (Fairfield)
10. Adam Sams, Fairfield, senior (Fairfield)
11. Bo Ransom, Madison, junior (Mentor)
12. Dillon Ashton, Mentor, senior (Mentor)
13. Matt DeGross, Uniontown Lake, sophomore (Mentor)
14. Trey Grine, Fremont Ross, junior (Cleveland State)
15. Lucas Staten, Mt. Vernon, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
16. Damen Dominique, Oregon Clay, senior (Cleveland State)
- 16A. Sean Black, Hilliard Darby, junior (Hilliard Darby)

Cleveland State – Bright, Music, Roth, Grine; Dominique, Bryce Williams (Amherst, junior)

Fairfield – Kowal, Sams, Brad Huber (Sycamore, senior), Andy Cress (Lakota West, sophomore); Logan Calvert (Sidney, junior)

Hilliard Darby – Ryan, Smith, Staten, Black; Caleb Llaneza (Westerville South, junior)

Mentor – Marcelli, McGuinea, Sparkman, Ransom; Ashton, DeGross

Heil has three titles, Bright has no titles. However, some would argue that Bright has more talent than Heil; personally, I'll say they're on a similar plane. In Bright's case, it's been three close calls at the state tournament. As a freshman, he took sixth, however, he was literally inches away from the final, losing a semifinal match in overtime to Newhouse in which he had a match winning takedown waved off for being out of bounds. During his sophomore year, he lost an overtime bout in the state final against George DiCamillo (now top 20 in the country at Virginia as a true freshman). Last year, he lost a tiebreaker decision against Joey Ward (now top 20 at North Carolina as a true freshman) in the state

final, despite having beaten Ward earlier in the season. This season, Bright has titles at the Ironman and Medina; but was runner-up at the Dvorak to Bryce Brill, losing a 2-0 decision to the nation's No. 2 wrestler in the weight class.

Playing potential spoiler to Bright this year is Ryan. That last name might sound familiar to wrestling fans, especially Ohio State Buckeye fans. Yes, Jake Ryan is the son of Ohio State head coach Tom Ryan. This season, Jake has a pair of what one could say are quality losses, which set the tone for a Bright upset. In the Brecksville final, he scored the first two takedowns against two-time state champion Jacob Danishek, before Danishek answered back with counter-attack takedowns late in the second and third period to win the match 6-4. Then, the next weekend, Ryan bumped up a weight class against two-time state champion Collica, and lost a 4-3 tiebreaker decision at the Mentor Duals.

The other two top four wrestlers – returning state placers Music and Roth – exit the Cleveland State district with Bright. Music was a two-time state placer in Division III at Ashland Crestview, including a third place finish last year, before transferring to Ashland. This season, he's been at 152 for the bulk of the time, winning titles at Ashland and Kenston with a runner-up finish at Marion County and a third place finish at North Canton. Roth got to the state tournament last year keyed by an early win over Garcia, and then placed eighth keyed by a first round win over 2011 state placer Sams. This season, Roth was a match away from placing at the Ironman, with some positive results in that tournament; and has followed that up with a fourth at Medina and a title at Oregon Clay. At present, state alternate Grine is the clear pick for the fourth qualification spot, and has titles at Tiffin Columbian and Oregon Clay to his credit this year. However, fellow state alternate Dominique (last year at 152) could also be here – assuming he's healthy for the post-season.

Beyond the first four, the bulk of the rest of the key players come from the Mentor district, with six wrestlers ranked between 5<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>. Returning state placer Marcelli leads that group, and was champion at North Canton and runner-up at Medina during his time at 152. However, his first week down at 145 was a struggle in placing eighth at Top Gun. I sense, he'll find the rhythm and make a strong run during the post-season. Three others at this district bring state experience: McGuinea, Ransom, and Ashton. McGuinea, like Marcelli, was at 152 for the first half of the year, including a second place finish at Solon and title at Lorain; he dropped to this weight at the Bill Dies, and won the title. Ransom won a match at state last year as a sophomore, and this year has titles at North Coast and Perry to go with a fourth at Brecksville. Ashton, state qualifier in 2011, missed his junior season due to injury, and this year placed fifth at Brecksville and had a pair of one point losses in failing to place at Top Gun.

Also significantly in the hunt for state qualification from Mentor – and subsequent state placement – are the junior Sparkman and sophomore DeGross. Sparkman has risen from obscurity to a great season, one match away from placing at the Beast (including wins over a 2x Virginia state champ and a PA state placer) and Medina (losses were 9-3 to Bright and 3-0 to Roth), followed up by a third place finish at Top Gun (wins over Ashton, DeGross, and Marcelli). DeGross was a district placer last year as a freshman, and this season placed second at North Canton, keyed by a win over state placer Kyle Harris, but failed to place at Top Gun though the losses were to state placement caliber kids.

The Fairfield district is extremely shallow at this weight class, with only Kowal and Sams bringing state experience among the present field. The senior Sams placed at state two years ago, but went two-and-out in his other two appearances. This year, he has runner-up finishes at SWOWCA, Kenston, and Fairfield. Kowal has been at 152 until ten days ago, when he won the Holt Invitational in Michigan; at

152, he placed fifth at SWOWCA and the GMVWA in tough fields. The unranked Huber, who was third at SWOWCA and fourth at Fairfield, looks good for one of the other two remaining slots.

Back to the Hilliard Darby district headed by Ryan: three others are ranked in this weight class, two of them having state tournament experience. The junior Smith qualified for state as a freshman and sophomore while competing for Division III Bishop Ready, placing at state in 2011 but an unexpected DNP last year at the Schott. This season, he was champion at Pickerington North, with an 8-3 win over Black, and finished third at Brecksville. The sophomore Staten made state last year as a frosh at 152, and was that weight for the first half of the year, placing at both SWOWCA and Brecksville; while in this weight, he was third at Oregon Clay, losing to Grine in the semi. The junior Black is positioned for the other qualifying spot, and this year was second at Pickerington North and seventh at Medina.

### 152 pounds

1. Anthony Collica, Solon, senior (Mentor)
2. Markus Scheidel, St. Edward, senior (Cleveland State)
3. Tony Dailey, Massillon Perry, junior (Mentor)
4. Latrell Davis, Middletown, senior (Fairfield)
5. J.P. Newton, Perrysburg, junior (Cleveland State)
6. Wyatt Wilson, Moeller, senior (Fairfield)
7. Robert Kersey, Miamisburg, senior (Fairfield)
8. Aaron Yarger, Pickerington Central, junior (Hilliard Darby)
9. Dylan Lauffer, Fairfield, senior (Fairfield)
10. Andrew McNally, Uniontown Lake, freshman (Mentor)
11. Aaron Sweeney, Madison, senior (Mentor)
12. Austin Strnad, Brecksville, junior (Cleveland State)
13. Scott Deluse, Lancaster, junior (Hilliard Darby)
14. David Celinski, Garfield Hts, junior (Mentor)
15. Nick Lancia, Watkins Memorial, senior (Hilliard Darby)
16. Melvin Johnson, Maple Hts, senior (Mentor)

Cleveland State – Scheidel, Newton, Strnad, Austin Williams (Amherst, junior); Robbie Bosley (Wadsworth, junior)

Fairfield – Davis, Wilson, Kersey, Lauffer; Alex Bair (Centerville, junior)

Hilliard Darby – Yarger, Deluse, Lancia, Zane Chappalear (Grove City, senior); Anthony Trocchio (Dublin Scioto, senior)

Mentor – Collica, Dailey, McNally, Sweeney; Celinski, Johnson

Like his teammate Brandon Thompson, Collica is after a third state title. Like Thompson, Collica could also face a rematch of a past state final for his third title. Last year in the final, it was a 3-1 decision for Collica over Scheidel. In this season, Collica was the Outstanding Wrestler in winning the Solon Comet Classic, won the North Coast Classic, and was runner-up at Powerade losing in the ultimate tiebreaker to Beast and Ironman champion Russ Parsons (Blair Academy). He is the lead figure at the Mentor district, which is the deepest of the sites with five other ranked wrestlers, though none have state experience.

That group is led by the junior Dailey, who is among the state's most improved wrestlers this season. A go-to-match loser as a freshman, he went 2-2 at the district last year, while older brother Zach closed out his career with two state titles. This season, Tony placed sixth at Ironman, seventh at the Beast, third at Medina – losing only 5-4 to Scheidel in the semi, and then winning at Top Gun and Delaware Hayes

(where he beat Division III state champ Jordan Marshall 9-4). The last two slots should be between the remaining four wrestlers.

The freshman McNally was a junior high state champ last year, and this season placed fifth at North Canton and seventh at the Top Gun. The senior Sweeney was fourth at Brecksville, second at Perry, but failed to place at the Top Gun. The junior Celinski went 2-2 in this weight at the district last year, and was runner-up at the Bill Dies. Finally, the senior Johnson was second at Hudson, losing 6-3 to returning state placer Gabe Stark in the final.

Scheidel – seventh at Ironman, second at the Dvorak (losing a tight match to Brian Murphy from Illinois, who ranks No. 2 nationally), and champion at Medina – is brimming right now with confidence after his 9-7 win over Ironman runner-up Alex Marinelli ten days ago. He is the headline figure at a rather shallow Cleveland State district in this weight. The other two ranked wrestlers in this weight – Newton and Strnad – were both sixth at district last year. This season, Newton was 2-2 at the Ironman with both wins coming over Ohio state qualifiers, fifth at Medina, champion at Perrysburg, and third at Oregon Clay; while Strnad placed fifth at Brecksville after failing to make day two at either the Ironman or Beast.

Another four of the top nine ranked wrestlers all exit the Fairfield district, including the only two other than Collica and Scheidel with state tournament experience in this weight class. Davis went two-and-out last year at 138 pounds, but has performed well this year in runner-up finishes at SWOWCA and Fairfield, where he had a pair of 2-1 losses to excellent Kentucky competition (Kevin Cooper and Stephen Myers). Kersey also went two-and-out at 145 pounds, and has a pair of lower placements in major events this year – sixth at North Canton and seventh at the GMVWA. Fellow senior Wilson placed fourth at SWOWCA and second at the CIT, while another senior Lauffer was runner-up at Kenston in his lone appearance at 152 (has been at 160 for other events this year, but would be dumb not to drop for state series).

Finally, it is the shallowest of the four districts, the one at Hilliard Darby with only three ranked wrestlers, none higher than eighth. The junior Yarger placed sixth at district last year, but was third at Mt. Vernon (loss to Staten) and Olentangy Liberty (loss to Michael Snyder) before missing placement by one match at the GMVWA. Fellow junior Deluse was a match away from placement at Medina, while the senior Lancia placed third at Marion County, losing only 4-3 to Music in the semifinal round. This is the district to draw into first round at state.

#### 160 pounds

1. Jacob Globke, Middletown, senior (Fairfield)
2. Joe Heyob, St. Xavier, junior (Fairfield)
3. Chase Boyd, Marysville, senior (Hilliard Darby)
4. Dean Meyer, Moeller, junior (Fairfield)
5. Bruno Millin, Massillon Perry, senior (Mentor)
6. Detuan Smith, Colerain, junior (Fairfield)
7. Markell Wooden, Dublin Coffman, senior (Hilliard Darby)
8. James Caniglia, Loveland, junior (Fairfield)
9. Michael Coleman, Hudson, junior (Mentor)
10. Robbie Rogers, St. Edward, senior (Cleveland State)
11. Tyler Maloy, North Canton Hoover, junior (Mentor)
12. Jake Denman, Painesville Riverside, senior (Mentor)
13. Mike Wearsch, Amherst, junior (Cleveland State)

14. Nick Stencel, Oregon Clay, junior (Cleveland State)
15. Ethan Bond, Lancaster, senior (Hilliard Darby)
16. Tom Gabyak, Medina Highland, senior (Cleveland State)

Cleveland State – Rogers, Wearsch, Stencel, Gabyak; Jesse Palser (Mansfield, sophomore)

Fairfield – Globke, Heyob, Meyer, Smith; Caniglia

Hilliard Darby – Boyd, Wooden, Bond, A.J. Bondurant (Pickerington Central, senior); Jacob Hinz (Westerville North, sophomore)

Mentor – Millin, Coleman, Maloy, Denman; Deshon Johnson (Maple Hts, senior)

For Bright and Collica being anchor figures in the weight classes immediately preceding, it is surprising at how the collection nature in this weight isn't more robust. However, that dynamic could change with some late season movements. If either one of the two 170 pound contenders certified to drop down (most notably Richard Robertson from Maple Hts, which would mean the whole group of Mustang middleweights drops down a class), they become the favorites to win.

In the present construct, and even with movement, the Fairfield district dominates the proceedings with five of the top eight wrestlers. By virtue of that, we'll be seeing a projected state placer not competing at the Schott. That group is led by Globke, who placed eighth at state last year, and this year was runner-up at Fairfield and the GMVWA (to Stephen Myers and Bo Jordan respectively) and champion at SWOWCA and Fairfield (notable wins over Heyob and Smith). Fellow returning placer Heyob, who was sixth at state last year, has the big win over Robertson – a 7-0 decision at the Wheeling Park Duals (however, I still view the returning state runner-up from Maple Hts. the end-game favorite), and also was runner-up at SWOWCA and champion at Troy beating Brecksville champion Jimmy Sandlin.

Third on this list is two-time state qualifier Meyer, who placed at state as a freshman in 2011. This season, he was fourth at SWOWCA splitting matches with Caniglia and losing in overtime to Heyob, third at Powerade, and champion of the CIT. Smith is also a returning state qualifier, who was fifth at SWOWCA splitting matches with Lauffer and losing 3-2 to Meyer in consolation, fourth at Brecksville, runner-up at Fairfield, and champion at Mason. District placer Caniglia split matches with Meyer in placing third at SWOWCA, but was a match away from placing at Brecksville (including 7-0 loss to state placer Boyd).

The other returning state placer in this weight class is Boyd, who is ranked third and heads the Hilliard Darby district field. For the season, Boyd finished third at Brecksville and won the title at Top Gun. His district features only two other ranked wrestlers in state alternate Wooden and state qualifier Bond. Wooden was champion at Mt. Vernon and runner-up at Mason losing 5-4 to Smith, while Bond placed eighth at Medina.

With four ranked wrestlers between 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> is the Mentor district, led by senior Millin, who was 3-2 at the Ironman, took fourth at Medina, and is finally in the lineup and at the right weight after two years of that not being the case. The junior Coleman was champion at Riverside, second at Hudson, and fifth at Medina; fellow junior Maloy was champion at North Canton, one match away from placement at Medina, and seventh at the Top Gun; while the senior Denman was third at Solon and fourth at Top Gun. The lone wrestler, at present, with state experience is the senior Johnson, who placed fifth at Hudson; however, if Robertson drops here, he goes down to 145 or 152.

Finally it is a rather thin Cleveland State district, which does have four ranked wrestlers, but all are tenth or below. Leading the way is the senior Rogers, who was a match away from placement at Medina, but had wins over Denman and Division III placer D.J. Blair in that event. The junior Wearsch was champion at Avon Lake and Bellevue before taking fifth at Brecksville; fellow junior Stencel finished sixth at Brecksville and was runner-up at both Clyde and Oregon Clay; while the senior Gabyak placed third at North Canton and seventh at Medina, including two pins over state qualifier Bond.

#### 170 pounds

1. Rocco Caywood, Perrysburg, junior (Cleveland State)
2. Richard Robertson, Maple Hts, senior (Mentor)
3. Nick Corba, Beavercreek, senior (Fairfield)
4. Dakota Sizemore, Moeller, junior (Fairfield)
5. Quentin Hiles, Brecksville, senior (Cleveland State)
6. Tyler Hughes, Brunswick, senior (Cleveland State)
7. Michael Weber, Loveland, junior (Fairfield)
8. Kyle Schmidt, Miamisburg, junior (Fairfield)
9. Matt Walker, Hilliard Darby, senior (Hilliard Darby)
10. Logan Paul, Westlake, senior (Cleveland State)
11. Ason Sunkle, Pickerington Central, senior (Hilliard Darby)
12. Tim Knipl, Wadsworth, sophomore (Cleveland State)
13. Joe Howard, North Canton Hoover, senior (Mentor)
14. R.J. Funk, Lancaster, senior (Hilliard Darby)
15. Taylor Workman, Elyria, junior (Cleveland State)
16. Anthony McLaughlin, St. Ignatius, junior (Mentor)

Cleveland State – Caywood, Hiles, Hughes, Paul; Knipl, Workman

Fairfield – Corba, Sizemore, Weber, Schmidt; Alec Gilchrist (Centerville, senior)

Hilliard Darby – Walker, Sunkle, Funk, Alex Roberts (Marysville, senior); Nick Johnston (Reynoldsburg, senior)

Mentor – Robertson, Howard, McLaughlin, Tevin Harvey (Barberton, senior); Craig Sloan (Garfield Hts, junior)

This weight eerily feels like the Division I 160 pound weight class last year, which I abjectly butchered – the fifth ranked kid won, the first ranked kid took fourth, the third and fourth rated kids did not place, sixth was third, seventh was fifth, and tenth took sixth. At least I predicted the runner-up correctly! It has a dynamic where, depending on the weekend, at least four kids could win and I don't have a real good pulse on it. As of this reading, the evidence points in one direction, towards Caywood – a junior who went 1-2 in this weight class at state last year.

After dropping to 170 for Medina, Caywood placed third there and won titles at Perrysburg and Oregon Clay. Along the way, he has four wins against state placers (two against 2011 placer Corba at Medina, and results against Jake Cramer and Tony Reynolds at Perrysburg). He also beat 2011 qualifier Jimmy Speith at Oregon Clay, state alternate Tyler McClellan at Medina, and district placer Ryan Sill at Oregon Clay. The lone loss in that stretch is 1-0 to Michigan state champion Andrew Garcia. He heads a robust district weight class along with three seniors having state experience – Hiles, Hughes, and Paul.

Hiles placed sixth at state last year, placed sixth at the Ironman, second at the Beast, third at the Bill Dies, and was champion at Brecksville with two victories over state champions (Zach Mays and Chris

Moore). Hughes also went 1-2 at state in this weight class last year, and this season was champion at North Coast, runner-up at Hudson losing 7-2 to Robertson, and beat Hiles 6-4 in overtime during the semis at the Bill Dies before losing 6-5 to Division III favorite Travis Linton in the final. Paul went two-and-out at state last year, and was champion at Lorain; he is most susceptible to the depth present from Knipl and Workman.

Knipl, who won two district tournament matches last year as a freshman, dropped to 170 in January, and already has a dual meet victory over Division II state qualifier Nick Rumble in this weight class. While at 182, he placed first at Olentangy Liberty, second at North Canton, and fifth at Brecksville – and with a high quality body of work. The junior Workman was eighth at Brecksville and a match away from placing at the Bill Dies.

The Fairfield district has four wrestlers with state tournament experience, and those seem to be the ones likely to make the trip to the Schott. That group is led by Corba, who placed fourth at 152 as a sophomore, but failed to place last year losing 5-2 to eventual champion Roy Daniels in the quarterfinal and in the tiebreaker during that same session's consolation round. This season, he was champion at SWOWCA (beating Sizemore) and Mason, while placing fourth at Medina.

Next on the line is the junior Sizemore, a two-time state qualifier, who placed third last year at 152. This year, Sizemore was (in my opinion) imprudent in wrestling the Ironman the week after playing linebacker and special teams for the Moeller state title football team. That first week back, he was pinned by Hiles; then he took second at SWOWCA, was third at Powerade including a win over National Prep champion Patrick Coover, and won the CIT. This past weekend, he lost to Michigan state champ Garcia 5-1.

Rounding out the quartet are two more juniors, state placer Weber and state qualifier Schmidt. Weber placed seventh in this weight class last year, and this season was fourth at SWOWCA and third at Brecksville (loss to Hiles); while Schmidt went 1-2 at state last year, was champion at Edgewood, North Canton, and GMVWA.

Last among the key players is the senior Robertson, who as mentioned in the 160 discussion may end up there. In this weight class, he was champion at Hudson with a 7-2 win in the final over Hughes. He headlines a shallow weight at Mentor, only three total ranked wrestlers, and that's something common among the upper-weights at this site. The two other ranked wrestlers are Howard and McLaughlin: Howard placing sixth at North Canton, seventh at both Medina and Top Gun; while McLaughlin was champion at Solon, one match from placing at the Ironman and Brecksville, but failed to place at the CIT. Not ranked are a pair of wrestlers that won two matches at district last year – Harvey and Sloan – and they lead the group after the last qualification spot.

The Hilliard Darby also features only three ranked wrestlers in this weight class, all seniors whom qualified for state last year. Walker was champion at North Canton and fifth at Medina, with also a 10-8 dual meet loss to Division III runner-up Brendan Stanley and a 11-3 major decision in the final of the Wadsworth tournament this past weekend. Sunkle was runner-up at Olentangy Liberty and runner-up at GMVWA, losing only 5-4 to Schmidt. Funk was one match away from placement at Medina with losses to Walker and Howard. It's underwhelming and wide open for the last spot.

### 182 pounds

1. Domenic Abounader, St. Edward, senior (Cleveland State)

2. Gunner Lay, Loveland, junior (Fairfield)
3. Garrett Conner, Centerville, senior (Fairfield)
4. Quentin Rosser, Moeller, junior (Fairfield)
5. Thomas Danis, Mason, senior (Fairfield)
6. Alex Belaia, North Olmsted, senior (Cleveland State)
7. Eric Claren, Nordonia, junior (Cleveland State)
8. Andrew Shackelford, Thomas Worthington, senior (Hilliard Darby)
9. Nate Hall, Olentangy, sophomore (Hilliard Darby)
10. Ross Lonsway, Holland Springfield, junior (Cleveland State)
11. Andrew Sierawski, Delaware Hayes, junior (Hilliard Darby)
12. Hamza Kirresh, Avon, senior (Cleveland State)
13. Chris Mattress, Elder, senior (Fairfield)
14. Joe Cordova, Boardman, senior (Mentor)
15. Josh Zeck, Parma, senior (Mentor)
16. Matt Stencel, Oregon Clay, freshman (Cleveland State)

Cleveland State – Abounader, Belaia, Claren, Lonsway; Kirresh, Stencel

Fairfield – Lay, Conner, Rosser, Danis; Mattress

Hilliard Darby – Shackelford, Hall, Sierawski, Shane Coulter (Westerville North, senior); Ben Heilman (Olentangy Orange, senior)

Mentor – Cordova, Zeck, Hunter Thornton (Barberton, senior), Gage Finegan (Stow, senior); Danny Tiley (Hudson, junior)

Heil goes for his fourth title, Thompson and Collica go for their third as does Abounader. This is a superlative Class of 2013 group within the big-school division and statewide in Ohio this year. Abounader is ranked second in the nation, and after missing the Ironman, has dominated all competition this year in titles at the Dvorak and Medina. It would be an extreme shock if he did not win a third state title in what is one of the shallowest weights in all of Division I (I don't blame people for finding alternative paths either).

Abounader heads the Cleveland State district, which features five other ranked wrestlers seeking three qualification spots. That group is led by Belaia, who placed at the Super 32 this fall after going 2-2 at the district last year; and during this regular season, was runner-up at Solon with titles at Kenston and Perry to follow that. Claren, who was a district placer last year as a sophomore, has spent much of the year at 195, where was runner-up at Solon and the North Coast Classic, but dropped to 182 in January. Fellow junior Lonsway was a state alternate last year, and also made the drop in January and he finished third at Oregon Clay in this weight class. The senior Kirresh was champion at Avon Lake and runner-up at Perry losing 3-2 to Belaia; while the freshman Stencel has been hot and cold this year, failing to place at Brecksville with questionable losses, before finishing third at Clyde (only losing to Jacob Kasper) and winning at Oregon Clay.

If Abounader is to be challenged, it'll be from someone exiting the Fairfield district, where kids occupy spots two through five. Leading that group is Lay, who placed seventh at 189 as a freshman in 2011 before defaulting out of the district tournament last year. This season, he was champion at SWOWCA and Brecksville, and upset Super 32 and Ironman runner-up B.J. Toal in winning the Delaware Hayes title this past weekend. Next is returning state placer Conner, who was eighth at Ironman, third at Brecksville, and a finalist at Fairfield. State qualifier Rosser lost to Conner in overtime at the Ironman, lost 3-2 to Lay in taking second at SWOWCA, missed placement at Powerade by a match, and won a title

at the CIT. Last in this quartet is state alternate Danis, who was third at Olentangy Liberty and SWOWCA, fourth at Medina, and champion at Mason. Also ranked from the Fairfield district, but a relative afterthought is the senior Mattress, who was fifth at SWOWCA, seventh at Brecksville, and fourth at the CIT.

Three wrestlers – ranked 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> – exit the Hilliard Darby district. That trio is led by state alternate Shackelford, who was runner-up at Marion Harding. Next is another state alternate in sophomore Hall, who was fifth at North Canton, seventh at Medina, and champion at the Top Gun. Finally, it's the junior Sierawski, who was champion at Mt. Vernon and third at Marion Harding.

Last and least is the Mentor district with only two ranked wrestlers, seniors Cordova and Zeck. Cordova was fourth at Kenston, with an 8-2 win over Zeck, and runner-up at the Top Gun; while Zeck, a district placer last year, was runner-up at Aurora, champion at Hudson, and failed to place at Kenston with losses to Belaia and Cordova. Looking at the weight above, I find it hard to believe that someone doesn't drop to increase their qualification hopes.

#### 195 pounds

1. Joe Tayse, Massillon Perry, senior (Mentor)
2. Adam Kluk, Medina Highland, senior (Cleveland State)
3. Matt Lybarber, Mt. Vernon, junior (Hilliard Darby)
4. Aaron Tschantz, Barberton, senior (Mentor)
5. Tegray Scales, Colerain, junior (Fairfield)
6. Kyle Conel, Lakeside, junior (Mentor)
7. Josh Murphy, Brecksville, junior (Cleveland State)
8. Eddie Silva, Oregon Clay, senior (Cleveland State)
9. Gabe Dzuro, St. Edward, junior (Cleveland State)
10. Jarrod Hardrick, Huber Hts. Wayne, senior (Fairfield)
11. Justin Halaska, Parma, senior (Mentor)
12. Austin Pfarr, Marysville, junior (Hilliard Darby)
13. Jerry Thornberry, Moeller, junior (Fairfield)
14. Connor Kamczyc, Elyria, junior (Cleveland State)
15. Joe Repasky, Cuyahoga Falls, senior (Mentor)
16. Eduardo Chavez, Fremont Ross, senior (Cleveland State)
- 16A. Charlie Dear, Massillon Jackson, senior (Mentor)

Cleveland State – Kluk, Murphy, Silva, Dzuro; Kamczyc, Chavez

Fairfield – Scales, Hardrick, Thornberry, Stephen Ludwig (Fairfield, senior); Tinashe Bere (Sycamore, junior)

Hilliard Darby – Lybarger, Pfarr, Lenn's Kamba (Olentangy Orange, junior), Jarred Rake (Upper Arlington, junior); Jordan Reed (Reynoldsburg, senior)

Mentor – Tayse, Tschantz, Conel, Halaska; Repasky, Dear

At 189 pounds or above, the senior Tayse made the state tournament his first three years of high school. His freshman year, he was district champion but then was a shock 0-2 in Columbus, placed fifth as a sophomore, and had the 6-4 upset state finals win over James Suvak despite an 0-5 record against Suvak in a two seasons pan. This season has been a little uneven – fifth at Ironman up at 220, back down to 195 finishing sixth at the Beast, runner-up at Medina (absolutely no shame in losing to fellow state

champ Josh Lehner), and a title at Top Gun. It just hasn't felt like a defending state champion type of season; however, things seem back in order for a repeat state title.

Tayse does exit a challenging district with five other ranked wrestlers, led by returning state placer Tschantz, who was runner-up at both Brecksville and the Bill Dies. Conel was a district placer, losing 1-0 in the quarterfinal to Rosborough and losing a go-to-state match 11-9 in overtime against Tschantz. This season has been positive with titles at Ashland and Kenston, one in which he dominated state placer Halaska by 11-4 decision. The aforementioned Halaska placed eighth at state last year, and was also a champion at Hudson with a 5-2 win over state qualifier Repasky. Speaking of Repasky, he would benefit from dropping down to 182, and for the season was runner-up at Hudson and fourth at the Bill Dies. Finally here is district placer Dear, who was second at North Canton, seventh at Medina, but failed to place at the Top Gun.

Ranked second to Tayse is another senior that has placed twice at state in Kluk, who was champion at North Canton and the Bill Dies, third at Medina and fifth at the Ironman. He also had a perplexing 13-10 dual meet loss to Suglio, though that is more than superseded by his career resume and history. He leads a Cleveland State district that is nasty loaded with five other ranked wrestlers. The junior Murphy qualified for state last year, and this year was seventh at Ironman, a match away from placing at the Beast, and then third at Brecksville and the Bill Dies (both of those losses to Tschantz). The other four do not have state tournament experience, but are very good none the less.

Silva was a state alternate last year, and this year has split matches with Pfarr, was fourth at Brecksville, and runner-up at Clyde (6-2 loss to Josh Lehner) and Oregon Clay. Dzuro, a junior first-year starter at St. Edward, was runner-up at the Ironman and fourth at Medina. District placer Kamczyc was an all-state first-team linebacker this fall in football, and spent the first month of the wrestling season recovering from injury. In his major tournament since returning, he was losing a quarterfinal at the Bill Dies against Murphy when he defaulted out of the tournament. Last here is state alternate Chavez, who had a bad semifinal loss at the Tiffin Columbian tournament before defaulting there with an injury.

Two excellent wrestlers with state tournament experience are ranked out of the Hilliard Darby district, the pair of juniors Lybarger and Pfarr. Lybarger was champion at Mt. Vernon, Brecksville, Troy, and Oregon Clay – with the only loss coming in the Brecksville final to Scales. Pfarr was one match away from placing at Brecksville, losing matches to Tschantz and Scales, before a runner-up finish at Top Gun (3-2 loss to Tayse in the final).

Finally, it's a Fairfield district featuring a trio of ranked wrestlers. Scales placed fourth at state as a sophomore, and this year was champion at SWOWCA and Mason, runner-up at Fairfield, and sixth at Brecksville. District placer Hardrick has been excellent this year in winning the GMVWA and a runner-up finish at Troy, including two wins over returning Division II state fourth placer Sam Harris. Thornberry, state alternate last year after placing at state in 2011 as a freshman, finished fourth at SWOWCA, sixth at Powerade, and third at the CIT. Also here but not ranked are talented wrestlers in state alternate Ludwig and Sycamore's Bere.

#### 220 pounds

1. Chalmer Frueauf, Cincinnati Moeller, junior (Fairfield)
2. Evan Rosborough, Painesville Riverside, senior (Mentor)
3. Vernon Rowe, Barberton, senior (Mentor)
4. Devin Revels, Maple Hts, senior (Mentor)

5. Devin Nye, Springfield, junior (Fairfield)
6. Brett Mowery, Dublin Jerome, senior (Hilliard Darby)
7. Parker Knapp, St. Edward, sophomore (Cleveland State)
8. Alex Woichevich, Nordonia, junior (Cleveland State)
9. Nick Isaacs, Withrow, senior (Fairfield)
10. Conan Jennings, Centerville, junior (Fairfield)
11. Seth Brennock, Loveland, junior (Fairfield)
12. Nathan Martin, Vandalia Butler, senior (Fairfield)
13. Morgan Miller, Marysville, senior (Hilliard Darby)
14. Max Lacey, Canal Winchester, senior (Hilliard Darby)
15. Austin Linden, Brecksville, senior (Cleveland State)
16. C.J. Kinzer, Teays Valley, junior (Hilliard Darby)

Cleveland State – Knapp, Woichevich, Linden, Jared Gray (Oregon Clay, senior); Nick Grzegorzewski (Maumee, senior)

Fairfield – Frueauf, Nye, Isaacs, Jennings; Brennock, Martin

Hilliard Darby – Mowery, Miller, Lacey, Kinzer; Alex Meehan (Worthington Kilbourne, junior)

Mentor – Rosborough, Rowe, Revels, Christian Hunter (Bedford, senior); Roy Ware (Cuyahoga Falls, junior)

Only a junior, already fourth at state twice, already led his state championship football team in tackles for loss. What more can one expect? How about a state wrestling title?! Quite frankly, I think that is in the cards for Mr. Frueauf on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. Admittedly, it will not be easy with some excellent competition standing in his way, but he is the favorite. Already, Frueauf has steamrolled his way through fields at SWOWCA and the CIT for titles, was third at the Powerade with four pins and an 8-6 decision over Ironman runner-up Alex Campbell (Canon-McMillan, Pa.). The only loss this season for Frueauf was to Kyle Snyder, who arguably the best wrestler in the country regardless of grade (or darn close to it).

Even though one wouldn't expect Frueauf to be challenged at the Fairfield district, the battle for three other spots will be extremely contested. Nye won a match at state last year as a sophomore, and this year was runner-up at the GMVWA. The senior Isaacs was a state alternate last year in this same weight, which was also loaded at the district level. The junior Jennings has wrestled well this season, third at Brecksville and Fairfield, champion at Mason, and a dual meet pin over stat equalifier Gray. Fellow junior Brennock placed fourth at SWOWCA, fifth at Brecksville, and pinned Division III title contender Travis Boyd to win the title at Reading. Martin, state qualifier in 2011, was third at North Canton and GMVWA, and fourth at Fairfield.

The true chunk of title challengers comes from the Mentor district, where wrestlers ranked second through fourth will exit. Ranked second is Rosborough, who was fourth at state last year, and this season was fourth at Ironman with titles at Solon, Medina, and Top Gun. Third ranked is fellow state placer Rowe, who finished second at Brecksville and first at the Bill Dies. Ranked fourth is Revels, who made state two years ago but lost in overtime to Tschantz and 4-2 to Rosborough at district in failing to make state last year; this season he was champion at Hudson. Two very solid wrestlers lead those after the fourth spot, but neither is ranked in the top sixteen.

The Hilliard Darby district features four ranked wrestlers, led by returning state qualifier Mowery, who was champion at Marion Harding. Miller qualified for state in 2011 winning his district as a sophomore, but missed all of last year due to injury; this year has been transitional for him, and he was fourth at Top

Gun, including splitting matches against Garrett Harding. Lacey was champion at Pickerington North and Marion County, while district placer Kinzer lost 11-5 to Lacey in the final at Pickerington North before falling a match short of placement at Brecksville (though he majored the eventual fourth place finisher).

Last is the Cleveland State district, which has just three ranked wrestlers. It is led by the junior Woicehovich, who made state last year and this year won the North Coast Classic, was second at Solon, and sixth at Brecksville. The sophomore Knapp was second at the Dvorak with two wins over Illinois state placers and third at Medina splitting matches with Harding. The senior Linden qualified for state last year, but it's been an uneven year for him against a tough schedule, one match away from placing at Ironman, failing to make the second day at the Beast, seventh at Brecksville, and fourth at the Dies. None the less, he should make state for a second straight year.

### 285 pounds

1. Travis Gusan, Hilliard Davidson, senior (Hilliard Darby)
2. Truman Gutapfel, Harrison, senior (Fairfield)
3. Ameer Daniels, Cincinnati Northwest, senior (Fairfield)
4. Stefano Millin, Massillon Perry, junior (Mentor)
5. Jacob Burton, Lakota East, senior (Fairfield)
6. Chuck Morgan, Ashtabula Lakeside, senior (Mentor)
7. Andrew Alten, Loveland, junior (Fairfield)
8. Aaron Cosby, Springfield, senior (Fairfield)
9. Yoshi Akatsu, Dublin Scioto, senior (Hilliard Darby)
10. Ralph Nichols, St. Edward, junior (Cleveland State)
11. Corey Siegfried, Glen Oak, senior (Mentor)
12. Marquise Moore, Toledo Whitmer, senior (Cleveland State)
13. Robbie Parker, Hamilton, senior (Fairfield)
14. Sam Bruns, Toledo St. Francis, senior (Cleveland State)
15. Cale Bonner, Perrysburg, sophomore (Cleveland State)
16. Nate Lewis, Kenston, senior (Mentor)

Cleveland State – Nichols, Moore, Bruns, Bonner; Jalil Dolton (Fremont Ross, senior)

Fairfield – Gutapfel, Daniels, Burton, Alten; Cosby, Parker

Hilliard Darby – Gusan, Akatsu, Chandler Evanichko (Grove City, junior), Darius Walker (Marysville, junior); Brandon Sheppard (Olentangy, senior)

Mentor – Millin, Morgan, Siegfried, Lewis; Dominic Giunta (Willoughby South, senior)

Last year Gusan came out of relative obscurity at Division II Walnut Ridge to make the state tournament with an undefeated 39-0 record, and a ridiculous amount of pins (don't have an exact number, but it had to be north of 80 percent). The extreme success continued with three pins at the Schott, before losing by fall in the final to defending state champion Riley Shaw. His success continued with a NHSCA Junior National title. Having transferred to Hilliard Davidson for his senior season, Gusan has been an excellent performer; though against a more robust schedule, he has faced some close matches along the way.

In result I have seen, he won the Brecksville final 5-4 over projected Division II champion Billy Miller, was champion at Pickerington North with a 3-1 victory in the finals over Akatsu, and champion at Delaware Hayes with a 3-1 overtime win over Millin along the way. It is still state title favorite form none the less. Akatsu is the lone other ranked wrestler at his Hilliard Darby district, and the senior – who was a state

alternate last year – also won a title at Olentangy and was third at Bishop Ready. The other two spots are pretty open for the taking.

Since it's an upper-weight, many prime contenders exist in the Fairfield district. The depth here in the back one-third to one-half of weight classes is sensational, and will make it a fun (though sadistic) district to follow. Five wrestlers here are ranked inside the top eight, so yet again a projected state placer will be staying home. Leading the way is the senior Gutapfel, who was a district placer last year in that loaded 220 weight class. This year, he was champion at SWOWCA and Fairfield.

Two wrestlers that placed eighth are among that Fairfield group – Daniels and Burton. Daniels was runner-up SWOWCA, losing 3-2 to Gutapfel; while Burton was third at SWOWCA (7-1 loss to Gutapfel), third at Brecksville (6-1 loss to Miller), and second at Fairfield (3-1 loss to Gutapfel). The junior Alten had the perplexing sectional four/district one combo last year, and this year lost 2-0 to Gutapfel early at SWOWCA but then had to injury default out; he did miss a few tournaments, but has recently returned. The other with state experience, who like Alten went 1-2 at state, is the senior Cosby, who was runner-up at GMVWA. Also ranked from this district is Parker, who was seventh at SWOWCA, fourth at Fairfield, third at Perrysburg, and second at Western Brown.

The Mentor district has four ranked wrestlers, two of whom are projected state placers and have state tournament experience. The junior Millin was seventh at the Ironman, sixth at the Beast, and third at Medina; while the senior Morgan was champion at Ashland and Kenston. Also ranked here are seniors Siegfried and Lewis. Siegfried was champion at Wadsworth, third at Solon and fourth at the Dies, and also lost 6-1 to Millin in dual meet competition; while Lewis was second at Solon, third at Marion County, and (at 220) won Kenston.

The Cleveland State district also features four ranked wrestlers, but no projected placers. Leading the way is the junior Nichols, who failed to place at the Ironman but had a pair of quality wins (8-6 over a third placer at Reno, and 2-1 over two-time Illinois state qualifier Fritz), and was champion at Medina (though his semifinal win over Coe was avenged in a dual meet). Next up is the senior Moore, champion at Perrysburg. State alternate Bruns has been uneven this year, champion at Tiffin Columbian and fifth at CIT with two losses to unranked wrestlers. The sophomore Bonner was eighth at Medina, second at Perrysburg, and third at Oregon Clay.

#### Team Projection

1. St. Edward/Cleveland State district
2. Massillon Perry/Mentor district
3. Moeller/Fairfield district
4. Brecksville/Cleveland State district
5. Marysville/Hilliard Darby district
6. Barberton/Mentor district
7. Solon/Mentor district
8. Loveland/Fairfield district
9. Elyria/Cleveland State district
10. Oregon Clay/Cleveland State district