

Division I

106 pounds

1. Zack Donathan, Mason, sophomore (K. Fairmont)
2. Devione Edwards, Lorain, junior (Cleveland State)
3. Jarrod Bronstrup, Brecksville, junior (Mentor)
4. Anthony Jagel, Middletown, senior (K. Fairmont)
5. Brandon Randolph, Wadsworth, sophomore (Cleveland State)
6. Josh Breeding, Elyria, freshman (Cleveland State)
7. Matt Kazimir, St. Edward, freshman (Cleveland State)
8. Chad Craft, Northmont, sophomore (K. Fairmont)
9. Zac McCauley, Massillon Perry, senior (Mentor)
10. Brakan Mead, Olentangy Liberty, sophomore (H. Darby)
11. Seth Transue, Dublin Jerome, junior (H. Darby)
12. Coleton Chase, Lancaster, junior (H. Darby)
13. Matt Fields, Brunswick, freshman (Cleveland State)
14. Zachary Shupp, Fairfield, freshman (K. Fairmont)
15. Corbin Post, Madison, senior (Mentor)
16. Gio DiSabato, Hilliard Davidson, freshman (H. Darby)
17. Jordin James, Bedford, sophomore (Mentor)

CSU – Edwards, Randolph, Breeding, Kazimir; Fields, Lamonte Chapman (Fremont Ross, freshman)

HD – Mead, Transue, Chase, DiSabato; Devin Johnson (Pickerington Central, senior)

KF – Donathan, Jagel, Craft, Shupp; Cory Baird (Harrison, sophomore)

MEN – Bronstrup, McCauley, Post, James; Quade Rasmussen (St. Ignatius, sophomore)

Even though many view the opening weight as a bastion for freshmen, just one has won the big-school state title in this weight class (be it 103 or 106) in the nine years prior to this one. Dean Heil of St. Edward won in 2010 on the way to becoming a four-time state champion. If a freshman was to buck the trend, and ascend to the top of the podium, it would be somewhat of a surprise.

The three lead figures in this weight class all placed here last year at the state tournament. Though the sophomore Donathan was the lowest placer of them, finishing sixth, he enters the state series as the favorite. His lone loss this year was 5-0 to Division III favorite Mattin during the opening weekend, and his signature win was 8-2 over projected Illinois big-school state champion Kirk Johansen in the Dvorak final right before Christmas. His other competitions this year have come at 113 to accommodate a teammate, titles at Olentangy Liberty, Mason, Groveport Madison, and the GMC meet; notable in that are three decisive wins against projected state placers.

Four of the next six in the rankings will all exit the district at Cleveland State, along with a fifth ranked wrestler, which makes this the toughest district in the weight class. Leading that ladder is the highest returning state placer, the junior Edwards from Lorain. Placing third last year at state, he started the season at 113, where he failed to place at the Ironman before taking third at Medina. Edwards went 0-3 in matches against the top two ranked Division I 113 pound wrestlers before dropping. After his drop, he was upset 4-2 by the freshman Breeding in early February.

Breeding is one of the others in this Cleveland State district, and will also be at the Westlake sectional along with Edwards and Kazimir. This season, Breeding went 3-2 at the Ironman before taking third at

Brecksville, fifth at the Bill Dies, and winning the NOC title. Kazimir has results that suggest he could be in the hunt for the title, while others lean more towards mid-to-low placement; such is the nature of being a highly talented, but undersized wrestler. He beat Breeding 2-0 in the state dual semifinals, beat projected Division II champ Stickley in a January dual meet; but went 2-2 at the Ironman and placed fifth at Medina (including a 4-3 semifinal loss to McCauley).

Also ranked here is fellow freshman Fields, who won titles at Solon and the North Classic before going just 2-2 at Medina and finishing third at the NOC meet. The real wild card in this district is Randolph, last year a state alternate at 113, who still needs to make scratch in this weight class; though he competed here in the pre-season Super 32 Challenge, where he was one match from making the second day.

The other returning state placer is the junior Bronstrup, who took fifth at the state tournament last year. He spent the bulk of the season at 113 pounds, where he was a combined 4-4 at the Ironman and Beast of the East, fifth at Brecksville, and champion at the Bill Dies. He dropped to 106 during the state duals series, and had a pair of wins over ranked contenders in the state semifinal and final; 4-2 over McCauley, and 5-2 over Kazimir. Three other wrestlers join him as ranked at Mentor, led by the senior McCauley, who was fifth at the Beast, runner-up at Medina and Delaware Hayes, and third at Top Gun; he also has a win over projected Division III 113 champ Hoskins at the Ironman (when up at 113). Fellow senior Post is a returning state qualifier, who placed at Brecksville and the Bill Dies in this weight class; while the sophomore James was champion at Aurora.

Circling back to Kettering Fairmont where Donathan is the anchor, there are three other ranked wrestlers, including a pair with state experience. The senior Jagel qualified for state in 2013 before missing last year's state series with an injury; this year he was champion at SWOWCA and Eaton at 113, while winning Fairfield and taking second at Top Gun in this weight class. The sophomore Craft went two-and-out at state last year, and has titles in three tournaments this year along with a runner-up finish at GMVWA; while the freshman Shupp was champion at SWOWCA and Kenston before taking second to Jagel at Fairfield.

Rounding it out is the Hilliard Darby district, which features four ranked wrestlers led by the sophomore Mead, who was champion at Olentangy, fourth at Brecksville, and runner-up at Wadsworth. Next on the ladder is returning state alternate Transue, runner-up at North Canton and New Lexington, with titles at Mt. Vernon and Marion Harding. The junior Chase split matches with Brooks in finishing fourth at Medina, was second at Olentangy Liberty and the Hephner, and beat DiSabato to win at Olentangy. Lastly here is the freshman DiSabato, who was second at Olentangy, but pinned McCauley in the final at Delaware Hayes.

113 pounds

1. Noah Baughman, Wadsworth, junior (Cleveland State)
2. Jaden Mattox, Central Crossing, freshman (H. Darby)
3. Allan Hart, St. Edward, sophomore (Cleveland State)
4. Patrick Kearney, Mason, senior (K. Fairmont)
5. Harry Feuer, Mayfield, junior (Mentor)
6. C.J. Campbell, Hilliard Bradley, senior (H. Darby)
7. Austin Murphy, Elder, freshman (K. Fairmont)
8. Nick Henneman, Oregon Clay, sophomore (Cleveland State)
9. Brandon Fenton, Elyria, freshman (Cleveland State)
10. Andre Lowery, Shaker Hts, senior (Mentor)

11. Zack Klima, Lorain, junior (Cleveland State)
12. D.J. Skiba, Brunswick, junior (Cleveland State)
13. Sam Krieder, St. Xavier, junior (K. Fairmont)
14. Kenny Hoberney, Eastlake North, senior (Mentor)
15. Kyle Jenkins, Stow, junior (Mentor)
16. Chase Craft, Northmont, sophomore (K. Fairmont)

CSU – Baughman, Hart, Henneman, Fenton; Klima, Skiba

HD – Mattox, Campbell, Alex Lieb (Watkins Memorial, sophomore), Austin Smith (Zanesville, senior); Vu Nguyen (Pickerington Central, junior)

KF – Kearney, Murphy, Krieder, Craft; A.J. Warner (Fairborn, sophomore)

MEN – Feuer, Lowery, Hoberney, Jenkins; Noah Wakser (Hoover, junior)

After a couple of early season blips – and that’s a relative term – defending state champion Baughman has shown the excellent form that won him a state title last year, and propelled him to a runner-up finish in the pre-season Super 32 Challenge. He missed placement at the Ironman, despite majoring returning state placer Edwards in an early round; and was third at North Canton (at 120), losing an overtime bout to a Junior National double All-American from Michigan. Subsequently, he has used strong third periods to beat the pair of freshman phenoms at this weight statewide – Mattox in the Medina final and Moore in the Wadsworth final.

Baughman will exit the strongest district in this weight class, the one at Cleveland State, which has six ranked wrestlers in all. Returning state placer Hart is the biggest threat to Baughman at the district level, and this pair are among the four top contenders for a state title in the weight class. Hart placed fifth at the Ironman, including high quality wins over the two wrestlers that beat Baughman in that tournament (Hoskins and Rosen from Oklahoma). Since then, he was third at the Cheesehead, and lost tight matches in dual meets to Moore and Blair Academy’s Sherman.

Four others compete for the last two state spots. The sophomore Henneman was a state alternate last year, placed at four tournaments (including a 14-5 win over Fenton in the 7th place match at Brecksville), this year plus winning the TRAC title. The freshman Fenton is next on the ladder, placing eighth at Brecksville, finishing third at the Bill Dies, and beating returning state place Feuer 5-3 to win the NOC. The junior Klima placed seventh at Oregon Clay, while the sophomore Skiba won the North Coast Classic and placed fifth in three other tournaments.

The freshman phenon Mattox, a three-time junior high state champion, is ranked second to Baughman. He fell victim to a third period surge from Baughman in an 8-6 loss during the Medina final, placed third at the Ironman, and won four other tournament titles (including four victories over wrestlers projected to finish top four in their respective state tournaments). Mattox anchors a district at Hilliard Darby that is rather weak in this weight class, as there is only one other ranked wrestler, returning state qualifier Campbell. On this season, Campbell was champion at Olentangy Liberty and third at the GMVWA.

The other top four wrestler in this weight class is the senior Kearney, a returning state placer in this weight class. In his lone competition at this weight class, he was runner-up at the Dvorak, losing 9-4 to a top five wrestler nationally from Illinois. Up at 120 pounds, he was champion at Olentangy Liberty and Groveport Madison, while losing 3-0 to Branson in the Mason final. Three other wrestlers join Kearney in the rankings at Kettering Fairmont; led by the freshman Murphy, who was fifth at SWOWCA, runner-up at Brecksville, and fourth in the CIT. The junior Kreider was champion at Troy (3-1 over Craft in the

semis) and fifth at the CIT, while the sophomore Craft was fifth at the GMVWA, third at Troy, along with a runner-up finish at Valley View and Eaton.

Closing it out here is a Mentor district with four ranked wrestlers, led by returning state placer Feuer, who was champion at Aurora and Kenston, with a pair of runner-up and third place finishes in other tournaments this year. Next on the ladder is the senior Lowery, who was champion at the Hephner, runner-up in three tournaments, and fourth at the NOC despite two wins over ranked wrestlers. 2013 state qualifiers Hoberney and Jenkins round out the ranked group, each having a head-on loss to Lowery this season.

120 pounds

1. Alex Mackall, Walsh Jesuit, junior (Mentor)
2. Jake Newhouse, Massillon Perry, senior (Mentor)
3. Mario Guillen, Perysburg, junior (Cleveland State)
4. Conner Ziegler, Moeller, senior (K. Fairmont)
5. Gage Branson, Glen Este, senior (K. Fairmont)
6. Cameron Latham, Teays Valley, junior (H. Darby)
7. Jake Donahue, Massillon, junior (Mentor)
8. Garrett Lambert, Brunswick, junior (Cleveland State)
9. Jackson Lasko, Central Crossing, junior (H. Darby)
10. Jarrod Brezovec, Aurora, sophomore (Mentor)
11. Colin Schuster, Mason, sophomore (K. Fairmont)
12. Nick Mayer, Elyria, senior (Cleveland State)
13. Connor Gray, Wadsworth, senior (Cleveland State)
14. Daniel Roth, Lakota East, senior (K. Fairmont)
15. Austin Victor, Mentor, junior (Mentor)
16. Andrew Fairbanks, Austintown Fitch, sophomore (Mentor)
17. Derek Sharp, Marysville, sophomore (H. Darby)

CSU – Guillen, Lambert, Mayer, Gray; Ray Porter (Strongsville, junior), Brandon Bartlome (Lorain, junior)
HD – Latham, Lasko, Sharp, Tyler Davis (Mt. Vernon, junior); TBD
KF – Ziegler, Branson, Schuster, Roth; Blake Biteman (Tecumseh, junior)
MEN – Mackall, Newhouse, Donahue, Brezovec; Victor, Fairbanks

Having lost head-on matches to two members of the Division I field at 120 pounds last year prior to the state tournament, slotting Mackall as the state tournament favorite was not realistic. However, the run through the last three matches that he had in Columbus is one of the most impressive things that I've seen in my approximately fifteen years of attending the state tournament. It started in the quarterfinals with a 17-1 technical fall over Josh Heil in a battle of returning placers, before avenging his loss in the Top Gun final with a 17-9 major decision over Shie, and then beating Newhouse 7-4 in a district finals rematch. This year, he won Solon, was seventh at Ironman, and runner-up at Top Gun (losing to Division II favorite Warner in the ultimate tiebreaker).

Last year's state runner-up to Mackall, the senior Newhouse, will again exit the same Mentor district. In order to hit last year's state final, Newhouse upset Assad 8-7 in a quarterfinal where he dominated the end of each period, and then beat Furnas 6-4 in the semifinal. This season, he was eighth at the Ironman (losses were 13-3 to arguably the best wrestler in America, then 3-2 to Warner, and 4-3 to Mackall in the medal match). Subsequent, he was runner-up at the Beast of the East, and then missed some time due

to injury, before returning with a title at Delaware Hayes. This is the deepest of all the districts in the weight class, with four other ranked wrestlers present to contest for two state spots.

Donahue has twice made the state tournament, winning an opening round match on each occasion, but missing out on a top eight placement. This season, he was runner-up at the Gorman and third at Oregon Clay. Returning state placer Brezovec is up two weight classes, and still spent the first chunk of the season up another weight at 126 (won at Aurora, third at Hudson, DNP at Brecksville) and then dropped to earn a title at the CVC. Victor and Fairbanks both lost go-to-state matches last year; Victor was third at Brecksville and NOC but failed to place at Top Gun, while state alternate Fairbanks failed to place at Medina before taking fourth at Top Gun and winning the Hephner.

Ranked third in this weight class is the junior Guillen, who has placed fifth and third at state despite losing in the opening round on both occasions. On this season, he has titles at Brecksville, Oregon Clay, and (at 126) Perrysburg; while advancing to the Ironman quarterfinals at 126, but missing out on placement despite taking the eventual champion to the tiebreakers. He anchors a Cleveland State district that features three other ranked wrestlers. That group is led by returning state placer Lambert, who missed much of the season due to transfer ineligibility and an injury; though it should be noted he wrestled at 126 in his return match.

Seniors Mayer and Gray round out the ranked list here. Mayer was seventh at Brecksville, fourth at the Bill Dies, and beat Victor 1-0 on the way to winning the NOC title; while Gray placed eighth at Medina and second at Wadsworth. With questions about Lambert's status, this all of the sudden becomes a pretty open weight in terms of qualification; note that Porter does have the option to drop to 113, doing so at the Top Gun.

The fourth and fifth wrestlers on the rankings ladder exit the Kettering Fairmont district. Three-time state qualifier, and 2013 state placer, Ziegler was champion at SWOWCA (5-2 over Branson) and a Powerade placer; while returning state placer Branson was runner-up at SWOWCA, with championships at GMVWA (8-6 upset over Stickley in the semis) and Mason. Two other ranked wrestlers are present here, the sophomore Schuster and returning state qualifier Roth. Schuster was champion up at 126 at Olentangy Liberty, while Roth took third at SWOWCA and second at Mason (failing to place at Brecksville).

Rounding it out is a district at Hilliard Darby that features just three state ranked wrestlers, anchored by returning state placer Latham, who was fifth at Brecksville, runner-up at Groveport Madison (at 126), and champion at Central Crossing (3-2 over Lasko). Next on the ladder is returning state qualifier Lasko, who was fifth at Noth Canton, third at Medina, fifth at Oregon Clay, along with runner-up finishes at Delaware Hayes and Central Crossing. The sophomore Sharp is a returning state alternate, who placed sixth at the Top Gun.

126 pounds

1. Austin Assad, Brecksville, senior (Mentor)
2. Jose Rodriguez, Massillon Perry, senior (Mentor)
3. L.J. Bentley, St. Edward, senior (Cleveland State)
4. Shakur Laney, Pickerington North, senior (H. Darby)
5. John Shirkey, LaSalle, senior (K. Fairmont)
6. Xavier Edwards, Lorain, senior (Cleveland State)
7. Jake Marsh, Marysville, freshman (H. Darby)

8. Jeremy Rezabek, Strongsville, junior (Cleveland State)
9. Justin Jolliff, Findlay, senior (Cleveland State)
10. Quinn May, Lebanon, senior (K. Fairmont)
11. Mitch Hannan, Cuyahoga Falls, senior (Cleveland State)
12. Mark Molder, Mentor, senior (Mentor)
13. Elijah Perkins, Miamisburg, sophomore (K. Fairmont)
14. Noah Schaub, Green, senior (Mentor)
15. Isaac Hendershot, Willoughby South, junior (Mentor)
16. Kristopher Volpe, Olentangy Liberty, junior (H. Darby)

CSU – Bentley, Edwards, Rezabek, Jolliff; Hannan

HD – Laney, Marsh, Volpe, Ben Tate (Mt. Vernon, sophomore); Ryan McElwee (Pickerington Central, senior)

KF – Shirkey, May, Perkins, Jake Meredieth (Elder, sophomore); Brandon Hertel (Glen Este, junior)

MEN – Assad, Rodriguez, Molder, Schaub; Hendershot

As it presently stands, Austin Assad has one of the better resumes of a wrestler not to win a state title; placing second/second/third at state, being a two-time Cadet National freestyle All-American, and a Junior National freestyle champion. From a major regular season tournament standpoint, he has the three titles at Brecksville to his credit, and has finished top three each of the last three years at the Ironman (three-times third) and Beast (2nd-3rd-2nd). In terms of cementing the status as a favorite, however narrow that margin actually is, results at the state duals went a long way in that regard; overtime wins over his two direct challengers, 3-1 over Rodriguez and 7-5 over Bentley.

Assad and Rodriguez will meet in either semifinal or final at the Mentor district, depending on how the formula sets it up (separation criteria does not apply at the district level). Rodriguez was state champion in the opening weight two years ago, the third wrestler for Massillon Perry – each was a sophomore – to win that weight class in the 21st century (joining Sammy White and David Bavery). All three of them would fail to win state titles the next year, while White and Bavery went on to win state the next year. This season, Rodriguez won titles at Medina (pinning Bentley in the final), Top Gun, and Delaware Hayes; while finishing fifth at Ironman and fourth at Beast.

Three other ranked wrestlers compete at the Mentor district, seeking the other two state spots. The senior Molder placed seventh at Solon, along with sixth place finishes at Brecksville and Top Gun; Schaub is a returning state qualifier, placing eighth at Medina and fifth at the Bill Dies; while Hendershot is a returning state alternate, placing third at Solon and Olentangy Liberty before finishing runner-up at the Hephner.

Ranked third in this weight class is returning state placer Bentley, who was fourth at 113 pounds last year, which means there is no separation criteria between him and the Mentor district champion. During this season, he missed out on placement at the Ironman (losing to Assad in overtime of an absolutely bizarre quarterfinal match) before taking second at Medina and the Cheesehead. His signature win of the season was the 6-5 dual meet victory over Seipel, the Ironman champion; though in some ways that is countered by one-point losses to Ian Parker (from Michigan) and Bray during dual meets.

He'll exit a deep district at Cleveland State, with four other ranked wrestlers, though none poses a threat for the title. Further, that group could increase in number with weight class shifts. Leading that list is the

senior Edwards, who lost a highly controversial go-to-state match last year; he spent much of the season at 132 including a runner-up finish at North Canton and seventh at Medina, before dropping to 126 with a runner-up finish at Oregon Clay. The junior Rezahek is next, and this season placed second at Solon before winning titles at Kenston and the NOC (but failed to place at the Top Gun). Returning state qualifier Jolliff was at 132 until late January; in that weight class, he was champion at Marion Harding, fourth at Oregon Clay, and runner-up at Wadsworth. Finally, it's the senior Hannan, who was a district placer last year, and has runner-up finishes at Hudson and the NOC to his credit this year.

Two-time state placer Laney, fifth last year, anchors a Hilliard Darby district that features just two other ranked wrestlers. Those would be the freshman Marsh, who won the title at SWOWCA and was runner-up at Top Gun; while the junior Volpe was seventh at Brecksville and fifth at Wadsworth. After returning from transfer suspension, Laney was third at the Top Gun, losing by fall to Rodriguez in the semifinal before winning titles at Mason and Groveport Madison.

Closing it out is the district at Kettering Fairmont, also with just three ranked wrestlers, and anchored by returning state qualifier Shirkey – down a weight from last year. This year, Shirkey was a quarterfinalist at Brecksville and fourth at the Top Gun (losing 8-2 and 4-3 to Laney). The senior May is a returning state qualifier, placing second at SWOWCA with titles at Edgewood and Fairfield; while the sophomore Perkins lost twice in tournament finals to May, and was fourth at North Canton.

132 pounds

1. Hunter Ladnier, St. Edward, junior (Cleveland State)
2. Jonathan Furnas, Olentangy Liberty, senior (H. Darby)
3. Corey Shie, LaSalle, sophomore (K. Fairmont)
4. Josh Heil, Brunswick, junior (Cleveland State)
5. Jason Spencer, Massillon Perry, senior (Mentor)
6. James Wimer, Central Crossing, junior (H. Darby)
7. Chandler Minnard, Pickerington North, senior (H. Darby)
8. Moises Guillen, Perrysburg, junior (Cleveland State)
9. Andrew Lieb, Watkins Memorial, senior (H. Darby)
10. Nico O'Dor, Elyria, junior (Cleveland State)
11. Darrin Gilkerson, Wadsworth, junior (Cleveland State)
12. Kyle Dooley, Teays Valley, senior (H. Darby)
13. Brady Chrisman, Medina, freshman (Cleveland State)
14. Dylan Buis, Oak Hills, junior (K. Fairmont)
15. Antonio Mitchell, Willoughby South, senior (Mentor)
16. Brandon Smith, Glen Este, junior (K. Fairmont)

CSU – Ladnier, Heil, Guillen, O'Dor; Gilkerson, Chrisman

HD – Furnas, Wimer, Minnard, Lieb; Dooley

KF – Shie, Buis, Smith, Deante Evans (Lakota East, senior); Jake Thompson (Moeller, freshman)

MEN – Spencer, Mitchell, Nathan Langston (Solon, senior), Noah McCumbers (Massillon, junior); Danny Novak (Aurora, junior)

A pair of nationally ranked wrestlers has separated themselves from the field during the course of this season. The junior Ladnier was a state alternate in this weight class last year; but entered the state tournament due to another wrestler having to pull out of the event, and then went an unexpected 0-2. During the present season, he was fourth at the Ironman, first at Medina, and third at the Cheesehead.

In addition, Ladnier beat Tucker from Blair Academy and (by major decision) Rocky Jordan in January. In his January loss by fall to Lincoln Olson, a three-time Michigan state champion, he held a 7-3 lead during the second period before getting caught.

The senior Furnas, a Cornell commit and Super 32 placer, is a two-time state placer. This season, he was runner-up at Brecksville, losing 3-1 to Olson after beating Shie 6-5 in the semifinal. He also was champion at Wadsworth, with a 15-8 win over Rocky Jordan in the quarterfinal. Furnas will anchor a rather deep Hilliard Darby district at this weight class with four other ranked wrestlers, all with state tournament experience, in the hunt for the remaining three state tournament spots.

That ladder is led by the junior Wimer, who was third at North Canton and fifth at Medina before runner-up finishes at Oregon Clay and Delaware Hayes; three-time state placer (though in lower divisions at Bloom-Carroll) Minnard was runner-up at Top Gun and first at Mason, along with a head-on win over Dooley, since his return from transfer suspension; returning state placer Lieb was fourth at North Canton and fifth at the GMVWA; while 2013 state qualifier Dooley fell short of placement at Brecksville, and won the title at Groveport Madison.

Circling back to Ladnier, he anchors the district at Cleveland State district, which at present features five other state ranked wrestlers. That group is led by two-time state placer Heil, who has titles at Solon, the Bill Dies, and NOC to his credit this season. Returning state placer Guillen is next on the ladder, with three wins at the Ironman and a sixth at Brecksville on the resume before winning titles at Perrysburg and Oregon Clay (9-7 over Wimer in that final). Right behind is the junior O'Dor, who also won three matches at the Ironman and was fifth at Brecksville (beating Guillen 2-1 in the medal match), before runner-up finishes to Heil at the Bill Dies and NOC.

Outside the projected state spots are returning state qualifier Gilkerson, who was fifth at Wadsworth and placed fifth up a weight class at North Canton, as well as the freshman Chrisman. Chrisman had the Hephner title, where he upset Carter 3-2 along the way; also placing fifth at Oregon Clay and third at the NOC, after falling a match short of placement at Medina.

A third wrestler is likely to have say in the state title landscape, and that is the sophomore Shie. He was fourth at state last year, and is a multi-time Fargo All-American. During this season, he was champion at SWOWCA and Top Gun, with a fourth place finish at Brecksville (wins over Guillen and O'Dor, but 6-5 losses to Furnas and Poullas). He'll exit a Kettering Fairmont district that has just two other ranked wrestlers, but both are in the lower ends of the standings. Buis was third at SWOWCA; while Smith was fourth at SWOWCA and sixth at the GMVWA.

138 pounds

1. Richie Screptock, Oregon Clay, senior (Cleveland State)
2. Dominick Demas, Dublin Coffman, sophomore (H. Darby)
3. Nick Kiussis, Brunswick, sophomore (Cleveland State)
4. Jacoby Ward, Moeller, junior (K. Fairmont)
5. Justin Demicco, Brecksville, junior (Mentor)
6. Greg Brusco, Delaware Hayes, junior (H. Darby)
7. Jared Lasko, Madison, senior (Mentor)
8. Mateo Lybarger, Mt. Vernon, senior (H. Darby)
9. Tyler Workman, Parma, senior (Mentor)
10. Brandon Tucker, Loveland, senior (K. Fairmont)

11. Antwon Pugh, Copley, sophomore (Cleveland State)
12. Michael Nagy, Uniontown Lake, senior (Mentor)
13. Isaac Collier, St. Edward, junior (Cleveland State)
14. Emil Soehnlén, Massillon Perry, freshman (Mentor)
15. Caleb Walden, Mason, senior (K. Fairmont)
16. Ryley Regan, Miamisburg, junior (K. Fairmont)

CSU – Sreptock, Kiussis, Pugh, Collier; Darrion Overall (Elyria, senior)

HD – Demas, Brusco, Lybarger, Joseph Terry (Pickerington Central, junior); Ty Yeager (Licking Hts, senior)

KF – Ward, Tucker, Walden, Regan; Eric Beck (LaSalle, sophomore)

MEN – Demicco, Lasko, Workman, Nagy; Soehnlén

Last year it was the Central Michigan signee Sreptock who removed Oregon Clay from an inglorious distinction of having the most state medalists without a champion. This year he'll enter the state series as the favorite, even if it's a tenuous distinction. On the season Sreptock was runner-up at Solon and Brecksville (losing tiebreaker decisions to the other two projected state champions in this weight), fourth at the Ironman, and champion at Oregon Clay and Wadsworth.

Sreptock exits a Cleveland State district that features three other ranked wrestlers, including his state finals opponent from last year in the sophomore Kiussis, who has been out of the lineup for many competitions. His notable competitions season to date came at 145, where he beat two-time state placer Kaminski and won the NOC title, but he made this weight class in a dual meet. The two other ranked wrestlers are the sophomore Pugh, who was champion at Perry and third at the Bill Dies; while returning state alternate Collier was runner-up at Medina and a top eight placer at the Cheesehead.

Ranked second in this weight class is the sophomore Demas, who was lost an overtime decision in the state semifinals last year in this weight before "triple dipping" to sixth. This season, he failed to place at the Ironman, going 3-2, before finishing second at the GMVWA (7-3 loss to Ryan Thomas, whom Sreptock beat 5-0 at Wadsworth) and winning the title at Mason.

Based on the composition used to rank this weight class, Demas is joined by just two other ranked wrestlers in this weight class at Hilliard Darby; 2013 state placer Brusco and returning state qualifier Lybarger. On the season, Brusco has titles at Mt. Vernon, Top Gun, and Delaware Hayes; while he placed fifth at the GMVWA. The senior Lybarger spent much of the year up at 145 before making the drop, and winning a title at Central Crossing; up a weight class, he was one match short of placing at Brecksville, fourth at SWOWCA, and runner-up at Oregon Clay.

The district tournament at Mentor features five ranked wrestlers, including three with state tournament experience. Leading that list is returning state placer Demicco, who missed Ironman placement by a match and finished eighth at the Beast before missing time due to injury; since returning, he picked up a pair of wins over ranked wrestlers in the state dual semifinal and final. Next is the senior Lasko, a 2013 state placer, who lost his go-to-state match in overtime last year; this year, he was champion at North Coast and the Bill Dies (where he avenged that loss in the final), and placed fifth at Brecksville. Returning state qualifier Workman won titles at Aurora, Hudson, and the NOC; while losing to Lasko by fall in the Bill Dies final. The senior Nagy was a district placer last year, and has runner-up finishes at North Canton and the Hephner to go with placements at Brecksville and the Top Gun; while the freshman Soehnlén placed third at Medina, seventh at Top Gun, and second at Delaware Hayes.

Two-time state placer Ward leads four ranked wrestlers in the Kettering Fairmont district. On the season, Ward lost 2-1 to Tucker to finish second at SWOWCA and fell to defending state champion Hagan in overtime at the CIT final. Two-time former state qualifier Tucker is next on the ladder, having won a title at SWOWCA to go with a sixth at Brecksville and third place finishes at Troy and Delaware Hayes (pinned by Soehnlén). The senior Walden is a returning district placer, and has been a finalist in four events this season; while the junior Regan was third at North Canton, with titles at Edgewood and Fairfield.

145 pounds

1. Kade Kowalski, Tri-Valley, senior (H. Darby)
2. Zac Carson, Uniontown Lake, senior (Mentor)
3. Nick Steed, Massillon Perry, senior (Mentor)
4. Tanner Miller, Lancaster, senior (H. Darby)
5. Andrew Sams, LaSalle, sophomore (K. Fairmont)
6. Nick Montgomery, Madison, senior (Mentor)
7. Justyn Bostic, Massillon Jackson, senior (Mentor)
8. Sonny Lucas, Brecksville, senior (Mentor)
9. Hunter Bryant, Piqua, junior (K. Fairmont)
10. Cody Notestine, Pickerington North, senior (H. Darby)
11. Trey Grenier, Olentangy Liberty, sophomore (H. Darby)
12. Joey Baughman, Wadsworth, freshman (Cleveland State)
13. Christian Camacho, Brunswick, senior (Cleveland State)
14. Jack Conway, St. Edward, junior (Cleveland State)
15. Mike Connick, Chardon, senior (Mentor)
16. Jimmy Staschiak, Findlay, senior (Cleveland State)

CSU – Baughman, Camacho, Conway, Staschiak; Brendan Price (Elyria, sophomore)

HD – Kowalski, Miller, Notestine, Grenier; Max Wright (Delaware Hayes, sophomore), Tanner Harding (Gahanna Lincoln, junior)

KF – Sams, Bryant, Dylan Roth (Oak Hills, junior), Connor Craig (Elder, sophomore); Steven Lewis (Vandalia Butler, senior)

MEN – Carson, Steed, Montgomery, Bostic; Lucas, Connick

First and foremost, let's start by saying there are a lot of moving parts in this weight class; most notably returning state champion Kowalski, who is the projected state champion here. He competed at 152 earlier this season; failing to place at Ironman, after losing to nationally ranked wrestlers in Kraisser and Harrell from Maryland, but beating state runner-up Mossing and state champion Romero. Kowalski then missed a bunch of time due to injury, and somewhere along the way has a certification in this weight class.

Regardless of if Kowalski goes 145 or 152, he is the favorite. There has been some reaction within the Hilliard Darby district that he exits to his projected move to 145 – Lybarger and Terry dropped to 138, while Rooney shifted up to 152. There was some deliberation about returning state qualifier Grenier dropping to 138, but the other movements have him most likely staying here. In addition, my opinion becomes that returning state placer Miller could move to 152 for a more open finalist path.

Back to wrestling, Miller was champion at Olentangy and (at 152) Olentangy Liberty, while finishing runner-up at Medina (3-1 loss to Steed) and the Hephner. Returning state alternate Notestine was

runner-up at Solon, third at Medina (2-0 loss to Steed), sixth at Top Gun, with titles at Groveport Madison and Mason. Fourth and final among the ranked wrestlers at Darby is Grenier, who has missed large chunks of the season, but is back now.

The second and third ranked wrestlers, as well as three others within the top eight exit the district at Mentor. That means a state placement caliber wrestler will not make it to state, and given the sectional situation, there is no likely “cheap path” (i.e. making it without beating one of the others). Two-time state placer Carson, a 2013 state runner-up, is the projected state runner-up. This season, he was champion at North Canton and the Hephner, while finishing second at Top Gun and third at Brecksville (both losses to Dobben). Ranked third is returning state runner-up Steed, who went 3-2 at both the Ironman and Beast of the East; before winning titles at Medina and Delaware Hayes, along with a third at Top Gun (losing to Dobben in the semifinal).

Returning state alternate Bostic, returning state placer Montgomery, and 2013 state placer Lucas are most likely battling for two spots behind Carson and Steed. Bostic lost an overtime match to Carson in the opening weekend, missed out of North Canton due to illness, lost an 8-7 match in the quarters at Medina before injury defaulting, and then returned to finish third at Hephner (losing to Miller). Montgomery was champion at North Coast and (at 152) Perry, along with a seventh at Brecksville and runner-up at Bill Dies. Lucas went a combined 3-4 at Ironman and the Beast of the East, made the quarters at Brecksville before injury defaulting, and then didn’t return until early February; since the return, he lost 8-1 to Steed in the state duals semi, and beat Conway 6-4 in the state duals final.

While the Cleveland State district does feature four ranked wrestlers, it is relatively soft, as there is no projected state placer among the lot. It represents an opportunity for some of the power programs (i.e. St. Edward, Wadsworth, Elyria, and Brunswick) to peck an extra state qualifier. In fact, those programs all have wrestlers ranked in the top five at this district. The freshman Baughman is the highest rated wrestler here, having spent much of the season at 152 (including two wins over returning D2 state placers and one over a returning D1 state qualifier). His primary tournament at 145 was at Wadsworth, where he lost 6-4 to Staschiak in the pool stage.

The senior Staschiak is the wrestler not from the four programs listed above on the ladder here, and he finished third at Wadsworth and Oregon Clay to go with a runner-up finish at Groveport Madison. Fellow senior Camacho is a returning state qualifier, who was third at Solon and fifth at the Bill Dies to go with his (at 152) NOC runner-up finish. Rounding out the ranked four is the junior Conway, who was seventh at Medina, though he did lose 6-5 to Price at state duals.

Closing it out is the district at Kettering Fairmont, which has just two ranked wrestlers – returning state placer Sams and returning state qualifier Bryant. Sams was champion at SWOWCA, fifth at Brecksville (5-3 over Montgomery notably), and fourth at Top Gun (4-3 over Notestine notably); while Bryant spent much of the year at 152, including a fifth at Top Gun, before making the drop.

152 pounds

1. Taleb Rahmani, Marysville, senior (H. Darby)
2. Mario Graziani, Boardman, junior (Mentor)
3. Austin Hiles, Brecksville, junior (Mentor)
4. Tim Rooney, Columbus St. Charles, senior (H. Darby)
5. Dillon Leneave, Fairfield, senior (K. Fairmont)
6. Brice Locklear, Olmsted Falls, junior (Cleveland State)

7. Mikah Price, Elyria, junior (Cleveland State)
8. Ben Hooff, Thomas Worthington, senior (H. Darby)
9. Ryan Kaminski, Green, senior (Mentor)
10. Nick Notestine, Pickerington North, senior (H. Darby)
11. Victor Marcelli, Massillon Jackson, freshman (Mentor)
12. Brandon Goldsmith, Westerville North, junior (H. Darby)
13. Mike Carpenter, St. Edward, sophomore (Cleveland State)
14. Zach Defraime, Medina, junior (Cleveland State)
15. Brad Carroll, Kettering Fairmont, senior (K. Fairmont)
16. Nick D'Agostino, Mason, junior (K. Fairmont)
17. Nick Collica, Nardon, senior (Cleveland State)
18. Logan Calvert, Sidney, senior (K. Fairmont)

CSU – Locklear, Price, Carpenter, Defraime; Collica

HD – Rahmani, Rooney, Hooff, Notestine; Goldsmith, Connor Thomas (Olentangy Liberty, junior)

KF – Leneave, Carroll, D'Agostino, Calvert; Avery Jones (Glen Este, junior)

MEN – Graziani, Hiles, Kaminski, Marcelli; David Masch (Uniontown Lake, senior), Billy Buehl (Hudson, senior)

With Kowalski projected to be down at 145, the group at 152 has to feel a degree of relief. That group is anchored by three-time state placer Rahmani, who was a state semifinalist as a freshman before losing in the quarterfinal round each of the last two years. This season, he has lost twice to Lawson (1-0 dual meet, 6-2 Ironman) and a wrestler from California, while winning three major tournament titles – SWOWCA, Brecksville, and Top Gun. Rahmani beat three of the four wrestlers ranked directly below him during those finals (pinning Leneave, 7-5 over Hiles, and 4-2 over Graziani).

The Hilliard Darby district that Rahmani exits features four other state ranked wrestlers, led by two-time state placer Rooney, who was champion at Marion Harding and CIT runner-up in this weight class. Returning state qualifier Hooff lost 3-2 to Rooney in the Marion Harding final and finished third at Olentangy. State alternate Notestine placed fourth at Solon, second at Medina and Mason, seventh at Top Gun, and first at Groveport Madison; while district placer Goldsmith was fourth at Medina.

The other deep district in this weight class, though without a top five ranked wrestler, is the one at Cleveland State that also features five ranked wrestlers. Leading the way is returning state alternate Locklear, who was champion at Medina and third at the Bill Dies (12-5 loss to Hiles in the semifinal). Next in line is district placer Price, who was champion at the NOC, which was preceded by fourth place finishes at Brecksville and the Bill Dies. The sophomore Carpenter placed seventh at Medina, including wins over Kaminski and Steiner; the junior Defraime is a returning state qualifier who was third at Medina and the Hephner, runner-up at Oregon Clay, and fifth at the NOC; while the senior Collica was a district placer last year, finishing third at Solon before missing out on placements at Brecksville and Top Gun.

The wrestlers ranked second and third in this weight class, Graziani and Hiles, both are juniors and exit the Mentor district. Graziani placed eighth at 145 last year, and on this season was champion at Kenston and runner-up at Top Gun. Hiles qualified for state at 132 last year, including a win eventual state champion Screptock in the district semifinal, but had to scratch due to skin condition; this year, he was sixth at the Beast of the East, along with runner-up finishes at Brecksville and the Bill Dies. Returning state qualifier Kaminski was runner-up at Solon, but had to injury default after a 3-2 loss to Carpenter

early at Medina, and his status is unknown. The fourth – and possibly third – qualifying spots at this district are a total crap shoot, as a slew of wrestlers have asymmetrical outcomes against each other. The one ranked is the freshman Marcelli, who was champion at the Hephner and fifth at Top Gun, though he was 1-2 at Top Gun with a pair of one-point losses to wrestlers not ranked but in this district.

Rounding it out is the Kettering Fairmont district, which features four ranked wrestlers, including returning state qualifier Leneave who was runner-up at SWOWCA. The three other ranked wrestlers are between 15th and 18th; Carroll was third at SWOWCA, eighth at Brecksville, and champion at Mason with a 7-2 victory over Notestine.

160 pounds

1. Shane Mast, Wadsworth, senior (Cleveland State)
2. Austin Phillips, Massillon Perry, senior (Mentor)
3. Alex Sepeda, Marysville, senior (H. Darby)
4. Jimmy Thompson, Lancaster, sophomore (H. Darby)
5. Tyler McCafferty, Pickerington North, senior (H. Darby)
6. Lane Hinkle, Mt. Vernon, junior (H. Darby)
7. Travis Leopold, Avon, senior (Cleveland State)
8. Brett Bryant, Moeller, sophomore (K. Fairmont)
9. Andrew Hoinous, Springboro, senior (K. Fairmont)
10. Dan Waltermeyer, Perrysburg, senior (Cleveland State)
11. Jacob Bria, Fairfield, junior (K. Fairmont)
12. Noah Edwards, Twinsburg, senior (Mentor)
13. Anthony Mancini, Boardman, senior (Mentor)
14. Matt DeGroff, Uniontown Lake, senior (Mentor)
15. D.J. Williamson, St. Edward, senior (Cleveland State)
16. Nick Hammond, Canal Winchester, senior (H. Darby)

CSU – Mast, Leopold, Waltermeyer, Williamson; Colin Keil (Anthony Wayne, junior)

HD – Sepeda, Thompson, McCafferty, Hinkle; Hammond

KF – Bryant, Hoinous, Bria, Steven Serbinski (Lebanon, senior); Jeremiah Slagle (Sidney, senior)

MEN – Phillips, Edwards, Mancini, DeGroff; Garrett Poling (Massillon Jackson, senior)

While it has been said that every weight class counts the same, and a state title is a state title, some are “better” than others. This would qualify as one of those “others”. Using a random number generator would more likely effectively rank this weight class than any cogent analysis (some of course would rather trust the random number generator than me based on merit across the board regardless).

The present composition of this weight class is seven returning state qualifiers, four of whom each went 1-2 at state last year. Projected state champ Mast was one of those to win a match at the Schott. He missed the first two-thirds of the season due to injury, and upon his return was runner-up at Wadsworth. He’s one of four ranked wrestlers at the Cleveland State district. Next on the list is fellow senior Leopold, who has titles at Avon Lake, Perry, and the Bill Dies to his credit this season. Returning state qualifier Waltermeyer won a match in Columbus last year, finished fourth at Brecksville, won Perrysburg, and was third at Oregon Clay; while Williamson was a state alternate last year, coming back in mid-January (since the return, he beat his opponent from Blair Academy and lost to DeGroff).

At present, the projected runner-up in this weight class is 2013 state qualifier Phillips, who was at 170 until mid-January. While in that weight class, he was seventh at the Beast and a runner-up at Medina; since dropping to 160, he was champion at the Top Gun with wins over a pair of Division II state qualifiers. However, there is question about his availability for the state series, as an injury kept him out of Delaware Hayes and the state duals. Not having Phillips would be a big loss for the Panthers in their quest to repeat as state champions, as well as in the battle for the second place trophy.

The Mentor district features three ranked wrestlers behind him, as well as returning state alternate Poling. Returning state qualifier Edwards is the first behind Phillips in the rankings at this district, and on the season he was runner-up at Solon and the Bill Dies, third at Kenston, and champion at the NOC. Mancini placed third at Kenston and seventh at Top Gun in the 170 weight class, before dropping to 160 at the Hephner and placing third. That included a win over DeGroff, who was held out of tournaments until the Hephner, just competing in dual meets; there, the very talented senior placed fifth. He also beat Steed 6-4 in a dual meet, though Steed weighed-in up at 152, and bumped a weight class.

Five ranked wrestlers, including four state qualifiers, make Hilliard Darby the deepest district in this weight class. Sepeda was one of those to win a state match last year, went 3-2 at the Ironman and then missed a bunch of time due to injury; he then returned in late January. District placer Thompson is next on the ladder, and this season he was champion at Olentangy Liberty, third at Medina, and a semifinalist at the Hephner; he has not been on the mat since then. The senior McCafferty also won a state match last year; he has three tournament titles to go with a fifth place finish at Medina. Returning state qualifier Hinkle was champion at Mt. Vernon, SWOWCA, and Central Crossing to go with a runner-up finish at Oregon Clay; while another state qualifier Hammond was runner-up at Dublin Scioto.

Wrapping it up is the Kettering Fairmont district, which features just three ranked wrestlers, none with state tournament experience. The sophomore Bryant was third at SWOWCA, champion at the CIT, and went 3-2 at the Ironman and Powerade respectively. Returning state alternate Hoinous was third at the GMVWA and champion at Beavercreek, with a dual meet victory over Bria. The aforementioned Bria bat Edwards on the way to Kenston title, was also champion at Fairfield, and took fourth at SWOWCA.

170 pounds

1. Jesse Palser, Mansfield, senior (Cleveland State)
2. Tim Knipl, Wadsworth, senior (Cleveland State)
3. Andrew McNally, Uniontown Lake, junior (Mentor)
4. Jordan Paul, Loveland, junior (K. Fairmont)
5. Keegan Driscoll, Hilliard Bradley, senior (H. Darby)
6. Clayton Ray, Central Crossing, senior (H. Darby)
7. Zach Donatelli, Hilliard Darby, senior (H. Darby)
8. Branden Bryant, Brunswick, senior (Cleveland State)
9. J.T. Brown, Elyria, sophomore (Cleveland State)
10. Tony Caraffi, Olmsted Falls, junior (Cleveland State)
11. Matt Waltermeyer, Perrysburg, senior (Cleveland State)
12. Riley Etherington, Stebbins, senior (K. Fairmont)
13. David Blanchard, Walsh Jesuit, freshman (Mentor)
14. Cameron Pitts, Mason, senior (K. Fairmont)
15. Kyler Slade, Olentangy, senior (H. Darby)
16. Chad Salzer, Springboro, senior (K. Fairmont)
17. Colton Carroll, Teays Valley, junior (H. Darby)

CSU – Palser, Knipl, Bryant, Brown; Caraffi, Waltermeyer
HD – Driscoll, Ray, Donatelli, Slade; Carroll, Jake Crosby (Grove City, senior)
KF – Paul, Etherington, Pitts, Salzer; Mark Kimbrell (Kettering Fairmont, sophomore)
MEN – McNally, Blanchard, Chris Head (Massillon Jackson, senior), Eric Murdock (Twinsburg, senior);
Lewis Glass (Maple Hts, junior)

The three returning state placers competing in this weight stand ahead of the field. The top two in the rankings will exit the Cleveland State district in state runner-up Palser and returning state fifth Knipl. Knipl beat Palser in the district semifinal last year, but lost in the state semifinal 3-0 to eventual champion Joe Heyob, who was extended to the ultimate tiebreaker by Palser; Knipl's second state tournament loss was to Isaac Bast, whom Palser beat in the opening round at state.

The projected champion is Palser, who placed eighth at the Ironman, defaulting out of the tournament after winning his placement match; his lone contested loss was 4-3 to Brandon Dallavia, a top ten in the country wrestler from Blair Academy. Ranked second is Knipl, who was at 182 for the first half of the year, where he finished one match short of placement losing to a pair of nationally ranked wrestlers. He also was champion at North Canton and third at Medina while at 182; after dropping to this weight class, he lost 3-2 to projected Division II champion Whisler in the Wadsworth final.

There are four other state ranked wrestlers in what is an absolutely loaded weight class at Cleveland State. The senior Bryant was runner-up at Solon and the NOC, champion at North Coast and the Bill Dies, and third at Medina. Brown, a sophomore, is the other projected state qualifier; having placed fourth at the Bill Dies (two losses to Caraffi) and first at the NOC (4-3 over Brown in the final). Next in line is the junior Caraffi, who was fourth at Medina (losing 9-3 to Bryant in the medal match) and third at the Bill Dies (10-3 loss to Bryant in the semi). Finally, it's the senior Waltermeyer, who was a state alternate down three weight classes last year; this year he was 2-2 at both Ironman and Brecksville, before a runner-up finish at Perrysburg and fourth at Oregon Clay.

The other returning state placer is the junior McNally, who was fifth at 152 pounds last year. This year, he was champion at North Canton, Top Gun, and the Hephner with just a 3-1 semifinal loss to Patchin at Brecksville as a blemish on the resume. He anchors a paper thin Mentor district, which has just one other ranked wrestler in the freshman Blanchard, who placed fifth at the Top Gun.

Along with Cleveland State, the other deep district at this weight class is the one at Hilliard Darby that features a pair of returning state qualifiers and five ranked wrestlers (though one of the returning state qualifiers – Donatelli – has been injured all year, so his status is in question). The other returning qualifier is the senior Ray, who has returned from the half-season transfer suspension with a third at Oregon Clay and a second at Delaware Hayes. Last year a state alternate, Driscoll has been excellent this season with titles at Olentnagy and the GMVWA. The senior Slade was third at Olentnagy, seventh at Medina, and fourth at Top Gun; while the junior Carroll was eighth at Brecksville and runner-up at Groveport Madison.

Closing it out is the Kettering Fairmont district with four ranked wrestlers, led by the returning state qualifier Paul who was runner-up at SWOWCA and fifth at Brecksville, before winning titles at Troy and Delaware Hayes. Next on the ladder is the senior Etherington, who was champion at Mason. Fellow senior Pitts follows, and he was fifth at the Dvorak with a runner-up finish at Mason, before winning titles at Groveport Madison and the GMC; he also has an overtime victory over Salzer in an early

February dual meet. Returning state alternate Salzer is the other ranked wrestler, and this season was sixth at the GMVWA and a runner-up at Beaver creek.

182 pounds

1. Ben Darmstadt, Elyria, junior (Cleveland State)
2. Jordan Collins, Mason, senior (K. Fairmont)
3. Mike Lewis, Parma, senior (Mentor)
4. Jacob Hinz, Westerville North, senior (H. Darby)
5. Nate Hall, Olentangy, senior (H. Darby)
6. Garrick Ginter, Sidney, senior (K. Fairmont)
7. Julian Daniels, Cincinnati Northwest, senior (K. Fairmont)
8. Luke Strnad, Brecksville, sophomore (Mentor)
9. Eric Deluse, Lancaster, junior (H. Darby)
10. Cameron Mayell, North Royalton, senior (Cleveland State)
11. Lucas Staten, Mt. Vernon, senior (H. Darby)
12. Anthony Perrine, Nardon, sophomore (Cleveland State)
13. Kaden Russell, St. Ignatius, sophomore (Mentor)
14. Mike Coup, Ashtabula Lakeside, sophomore (Mentor)
15. Donald Martin, Gahanna Lincoln, junior (H. Darby)
16. Jeff Christian, Solon, senior (Mentor)
17. Mike Bekeny, Brunswick, senior (Cleveland State)

CSU – Darmstadt, Mayell, Perrine, Bekeny; Tyler Stepic (St. Edward, sophomore)

HD – Hinz, Hall, Deluse, Staten; Martin, Patrick Yeo (Hilliard Bradley, junior)

KF – Collins, Ginter, Daniels, Mark Adams (Elder, senior); Matt Kennedy (Glen Este, senior)

MEN – Lewis, Strnad, Russell, Coup; Christian

In terms of resumes, this is a relatively barren weight class. Just six kids have state experience, tied for second least in Division I with 106 and 195 (220 has the least at five). However, in that lot, there are a pair of returning state placers. Leading the way is returning state runner-up Darmstadt, even though his runner-up finish came down three weights. However, one could argue that the 2014-15 season has shown that jump in weight class augmented his performance. He placed fourth in the preseason Super 32 Challenge, was third at Ironman, had four first period pins and a major in winning Brecksville, before a runner-up finish at the Bill Dies. Since that, he pinned Margheim in early February, and won the NOC meet with a 13-4 major decision over the third ranked Lewis.

The other returning state placer is Hall, who placed sixth in this same weight class last year. This season he was fourth at North Canton and Medina, while winning titles at Top Gun and Delaware Hayes. However, it is returning state qualifier Hinz, who leads the way at the Hilliard Darby district, having beaten Hall 5-4 in the semifinal on the way to a runner-up finish at Medina. Those two are joined by three other ranked wrestlers in this district weight class. The junior Deluse is a returning state alternate, who has titles at Olentangy and the Hephner to go with a runner-up finish at Olentangy Liberty and a fifth place finish at Medina. The senior Staten qualified for state as a freshman, and this season was runner-up at SWOWCA, sixth at Brecksville, and fifth at Oregon Clay; he did drop to 170 during the state dual series, though the inclination here is that he stays up. Rounding out the ranked lot is returning district placer Martin, who was runner-up at Delaware Hayes.

The other district with five ranked wrestlers is the one at Mentor, which is anchored by returning state qualifier Lewis. This season, he was champion at Aurora (at 195), Hudson, and Kenston before finishing third at the Bill Dies and runner-up at the NOC. Next on this district's ladder is the sophomore Strnad, who was one match from placing at the Ironman before taking fourth at both Brecksville and the Bill Dies (where he lost twice to Lewis). Another sophomore Russell had a very hot CIT where he pinned both returning state placer Huffman and state qualifier Beauch to win that title. Next is Coup, another sophomore, who was runner-up to Lewis at Kenston; while the senior Christian rounds it out having finished third at Solon and the North Coast Classic before taking fourth at Oregon Clay.

Circling back to Darmstadt, he anchors a Cleveland State district, which features three other ranked wrestlers. Most notable on the list is Brecksville runner-up Mayell, who was also champion at the North Coast, runner-up at the Hephner (7-0 loss to Deluse), and third at the NOC after getting pinned by Darmstadt in the semis. The sophomore Perrine was a state alternate last year, and was the starting tailback on Nordonia's state runner-up football team, so the start to his season was a bit slow; failed to place at Brecksville before taking fourth at Top Gun. The senior Bekeny was fourth at Solon and the NOC, while finishing runner-up at the North Coast.

Rounding it out is the Kettering Fairmont district, which is led by our second ranked wrestler, the senior Collins who went just 2-2 at district last year. However, this season, it's been excellent form; starting off with an 8-7 win over Patchin on the opening Saturday of the year. It continued with a title at Olentangy Liberty and a runner-up finish at the Dvorak, which included a win over three-time Illinois state placer Alex Benoit in December. Then, he won titles at Mason, Groveport Madison, and the GMC.

Just two other ranked wrestlers exit the district, but both are projected state placers. Returning state qualifier Ginter was first at Sidney and runner-up at the GMVWA, while fellow senior Daniels was champion at SWOWCA, Fairfield, and Milford.

195 pounds

1. Matt Stencel, Oregon Clay, junior (Cleveland State)
2. Isaiah Margheim, Lorain, senior (Cleveland State)
3. Robbie Fusner, Central Crossing, junior (H. Darby)
4. Aaron Naples, Brunswick, sophomore (Cleveland State)
5. Gary Traub, Sycamore, junior (K. Fairmont)
6. Drew Fenton, Lakota West, junior (K. Fairmont)
7. Jared Campbell, St. Edward, sophomore (Cleveland State)
8. Brady Durieux, Massillon Perry, senior (Mentor)
9. Chris Martinez, Delaware Hayes, junior (H. Darby)
10. Nick Kramer, Westerville North, senior (H. Darby)
11. Alec Winston, North Olmsted, senior (Cleveland State)
12. Joe Conway, St. Ignatius, senior (Mentor)
13. Grant Martin, Uniontown Lake, junior (Mentor)
14. Gage Brock, Elder, senior (K. Fairmont)
15. Tristen Weirich, Ashland, junior (Cleveland State)
16. A.J. Jones, Thomas Worthington, junior (H. Darby)
17. Logan Kemp, Centerville, junior (K. Fairmont)

CSU – Stencel, Margheim, Naples, Campbell; Winston, Weirich
HD – Fusner, Martinez, Kramer, Jones; Shawn Norris (Lancaster, senior)
KF – Traub, Fenton, Brock, Kemp; Ahmad Doucet (Kettering Fairmont, junior)
MEN – Durieux, Conway, Martin, Devin Johnson (Chardon, junior); Matt Delsanter (Hudson, senior)

Two wrestlers in this weight class have finished as state runners-up in the past. These two wrestlers met in a very entertaining semifinal match at the Walsh Ironman, one that Stencel won by 8-6 decision on a takedown in the last seconds of regulation countering action off a Margheim throw. These two wrestlers exit the same district, so another meeting in the semifinal or final at Cleveland State looms prior to state. Hopefully these wrestlers will provide more entertainment in their next meeting(s).

Stencel was runner-up at Ironman, while he has added titles in five other tournaments this season. Along the way, he has wins over both projected Division II finalists, the second ranked wrestler in Division III, and the fourth ranked wrestler in this division. In three of his tournament wins, the Cadet National double champion from this summer pinned his way through the bracket. Margheim ended up placing third at the Ironman with an OT win over projected Division II finalist Faust in the medal match. He won the title at Medina a pin of his own against Naples, and was champion at Oregon Clay down at 182.

Four other ranked wrestlers also compete at Cleveland State, so they are essentially seeking two state spots. Ranked fourth in this division, Naples is just a sophomore; this season has been runner-up at Solon, North Coast (losing 7-1 to projected Division II champ Kremiller), and Medina before winning titles at the Bill Dies and NOC. Fellow sophomore Campbell was a state alternate in this weight last year, and this season was a semifinalist at Medina (losing by fall to Margheim before having to injury default during the consolation semi). Other ranked wrestlers here are the senior Winston, who was runner-up at Aurora and champion at Kenston; along with the sophomore Weirich, runner-up at North Canton and the Gorman while placing fourth at Brecksville.

The Hilliard Darby district also features a pair of state qualifiers, with four ranked wrestlers in all. Returning state qualifier Fusner leads the ladder here, finishing fifth at Oregon Clay before winning titles at Delaware Hayes (7-1 over Martinez in the final) and Central Crossing; while up at 220, he was third at North Canton and fifth at Medina. Next on the ladder is the junior Martinez, who was third at the GMVWA, runner-up at the Top Gun (losing 4-3 to Durieux) and Delaware Hayes, and has a 3-2 dual meet victory over Kramer this season. The senior Kramer is a returning state qualifier, who placed seventh at Medina; while the junior Jones was champion at Olentangy and Marion Harding before taking fifth at Wadsworth.

One of the two remaining returning state qualifiers, the junior Fenton, exits the district at Kettering Fairmont. He started the season up at 220 pounds, where he was third at the GMVWA and fourth at Beavercreek; since the drop, he was champion at Mason and runner-up at the GMC. The champion at that GMC meet, fellow junior Traub, leads the rankings in this district; he also was champion at SWOWCA, Fairfield, and Milford. Additional ranked wrestlers in this district include Brock, who placed third at SWOWCA and fifth at Brecksville while up at 220, while in this weight class finished fifth at CIT and third at Delaware Hayes. Rounding out the ranked group is the junior Kemp, who has placed in five tournaments this season, the highest being a runner-up finish at Mason (loss 3-2 to Fenton in the final).

Last among the districts here is the one at Mentor, which has just three ranked wrestlers, including a returning state qualifier (Martin) as the third of them. The junior Martin made state last year up a weight at 220, and was navigating some issues early in the year when he placed fourth at North Canton

and going two-and-out at Brecksville. Since then, he was third at Top Gun (3-2 loss to Durieux in the semifinal) and won the Hephner to find his form. Leading the way here is the senior Durieux, a returning district placer, who was one match from placing at the Beast, fourth at Medina and Delaware Hayes, and a Top Gun champion. The other ranked wrestler is fellow senior Conway, who was third at Solon and the CIT and fifth at Brecksville. Returning district placers Jimmy Suhayda (Brecksville) and Johnson are not ranked within the top 17 at this weight.

220 pounds

1. Jonathan Jones, St. Xavier, senior (K. Fairmont)
2. Parker Knapp, St. Edward, senior (Cleveland State)
3. James Ford, Worthington Kilbourne, senior (H. Darby)
4. Jack Meyer, Moeller, junior (K. Fairmont)
5. Noel Caraballo, Olmsted Falls, junior (Cleveland State)
6. Sheldon Sims, Mason, senior (K. Fairmont)
7. Jacob Daniel, Stebbins, senior (K. Fairmont)
8. Jeff Virden, New Philadelphia, senior (Mentor)
9. Marshall Messer, Fremont Ross, junior (Cleveland State)
10. Connor Slade, Olentangy, senior (H. Darby)
11. Tyler Koester, Oregon Clay, senior (Cleveland State)
12. Amir Mansour, Hilliard Davidson, senior (H. Darby)
13. Paul Gilmore, Eastlake North, senior (Mentor)
14. Ras Lumpkins, Dublin Scioto, junior (H. Darby)
15. Eddie Sternad, Brecksville, junior (Mentor)
16. Ryan Durham, Lakota East, senior (K. Fairmont)
17. Brian McNamara, Aurora, senior (Mentor)

CSU – Knapp, Caraballo, Messer, Koester; Paul Sturm (Avon, junior)

HD – Ford, Slade, Mansour, Lumpkins; Sterling Roseberry (Dublin Coffman, junior)

KF – Jones, Meyer, Sims, Daniel; Durham

MEN – Virden, Gilmore, Sternad, McNamara; Floyd Rogers (Green, junior), Matt Slater (Hudson, junior)

Just five wrestlers in this weight class possess state tournament experience, which is the least of any weight in this division. The first three ranking positions, and four of the first five, are occupied by such wrestlers. Top of the field in this weight is the highest returning state placer, the senior Jones, who is an excellent football player in his own right. While all the attention on the St. Xavier defense went to Ohio State signee Justin Hilliard, many who follow prep football suggested that it was Jones who was the better high school linebacker between the two. On the wrestling mat, he has titles at Olentangy (13-5 over Ford in the final), SWOWCA, Troy, and the CIT to his credit this season.

Four other ranked wrestlers join Jones in the Kettering Fairmont district. Leading that challenge group is the junior Meyer, who was runner-up to Jones at both SWOWCA (loss by fall in OT) and CIT (1-0); in addition, Meyer was fifth at Ironman and seventh at Powerade. Next on the list is returning state alternate Sims, who was third at Olentangy Liberty and the Dvorak before winning titles at Groveport Madison and Mason. The fourth state spot in this district is occupied by the senior Daniel, who was fifth at the GMVWA, third at Beaver creek, and runner-up at Mason; while also ranked here is Durham, a runner-up at the GMC in this weight class after also taking second at SWOWCA up at 285.

Three of the others with state experience come from the Cleveland State district. Leading the way is returning state placer, and 2013 Junior freestyle All-American, Knapp. He was third at the Ironman losing in overtime to Ford during the early rounds; but since then was champion at Medina and runner-up at the Cheesehead, losing an 8-7 match to a nationally ranked wrestler from Iowa. The junior Caraballo won a match at the state tournament last year, and this year was third at Medina before winning the Bill Dies; while Messer qualified for state two years ago as a freshman at Clyde, and this year lost in overtime to state placer Richards at Oregon Clay before having to default from that tournament. The fourth ranked wrestler at this district tournament is the senior Koester, who has been a runner-up in four different tournaments this year, while going two-and-out at the Ironman and Brecksville.

The other returning state qualifier is Ironman runner-up Ford, who was also runner-up at Olentangy and the Top Gun (5-4 to projected Division II champion Dodd). He anchors a Hilliard Darby district that features three other ranked wrestlers. Next on the ladder in this district is fellow senior Slade, who won a title at Delaware Hayes (12-7 over Mansour), while placing at three major tournaments this season. Returning state alternate Mansour was runner-up at Delaware Hayes; while the junior Lumpkins was third at Olentangy, champion at Marion Harding, and second at Dublin Scioto.

Four ranked wrestlers exit the Mentor district, though none possess state experience. Leading the way is returning district placer Virden, who was champion at Smithville before finishing second at both Hudson and the ECOL. Returning state alternate Gilmore is next, though he missed Solon and Kenston, and I haven't seen his name in any brackets this year. The junior Sternad, who earned match-clinching wins in both the state dual semifinal and final for Brecksville, placed fourth at Brecksville and fifth at the Bill Dies; while it's rounded out by McNamara, who was champion at Aurora and third at Hudson.

285 pounds

1. Kevin Vough, Elyria, sophomore (Cleveland State)
2. Kameron Teacher, Central Crossing, junior (H. Darby)
3. Nik Urban, Willoughby South, junior (Mentor)
4. Aaron Crosby, Valley Forge, senior (Mentor)
5. Josh Burger, Aurora, junior (Mentor)
6. Cale Bonner, Perrysburg, senior (Cleveland State)
7. Chris Crumb, Olentangy, junior (H. Darby)
8. Ryan Cloud, Northmont, senior (K. Fairmont)
9. Gage Archer, Westerville North, senior (H. Darby)
10. Joe Hensley, Moeller, junior (K. Fairmont)
11. Jovahn Fair, Firestone, senior (Cleveland State)
12. Brennen Sawicki, Dublin Scioto, senior (H. Darby)
13. Tristen Roberts, Massillon, senior (Mentor)
14. Arman Samouk, Copley, junior (Cleveland State)
15. Christian Eubanks, Reynoldsburg, senior (H. Darby)
16. Matt Carrick, Massillon Perry, sophomore (Mentor)

CSU – Vough, Bonner, Fair, Samouk; Mike O'Malley (St. Edward, junior)

HD – Teacher, Crumb, Archer, Sawicki; Eubanks

KF – Cloud, Hensley, Tristen Taylor (Tecumseh, senior), Trevor Jackson (Xenia, senior); Joe Isham (Elder, senior)

MEN – Urban, Crosby, Burger, Roberts; Carrick

Rare is it that we talk about “youth” at heavyweight. However, that’s the theme this year in the big-school division. Of the eight returning state qualifiers, four are non-seniors, while three of the four returning state placers are non-seniors. In addition, four of the other eight ranked wrestlers are non-seniors, which means things set up for a really interesting 285 class next year.

The favorite in this weight class is the sophomore Vough, who placed third at state last year, and was a Cadet National double finalist (Greco-Roman champion) this summer. He is undefeated this season, with titles at the Ironman, Bill Dies, and the NOC. Eleven of thirteen matches in those tournaments were pins, with the other two being a 7-0 decision and a 15-1 major decision. Vough also has a 3-0 dual meet victory over Bonner, who he beat in last year’s state consolation final, from early February.

His primary challenger is a wrestler that went 2-2 at the district tournament last year a sophomore in Teacher, who is undefeated on the season with titles at North Canton, Medina, Oregon Clay, Delaware Hayes, and Central Crossing. Notable wins include 9-6 over projected Division II runner-up Loughman, a 12-1 major decision over Bonner, a pin and major decision against the projected Division III finalists.

Four other ranked wrestlers join Teacher in district competition at Hilliard Darby, most notably among them is a trio of returning state qualifiers. The junior Crumb was runner-up at North Canton and Delaware Hayes to Teacher (forfeit and 3-1 respectively); the senior Archer was fourth at Medina (losing 6-2 to Teacher in the semifinal) and has a 5-1 dual meet victory over Hensley; while the senior Sawicki made a mid-season return to the mats in placing at Marion County. The other ranked wrestler in this district is fellow senior Eubanks, fourth at North Canton, champion at Kenston, and fifth at Oregon Clay.

The other deep district in this weight class is at Mentor, where there are five ranked wrestlers, three possessing state experience. The junior Urban leads the way here, placing sixth at state after winning this district last year. On the season, he was champion at Solon (pinning Fair), Olentangy Liberty, and Eastlake North (beating Burger) before finishing third at the Hephner (5-1 to Cary). Burger, another junior, was runner-up at this district last year before placing eighth at state; this year he was runner-up at Aurora (4-3 loss to Crosby), Brecksville (4-2 to projected Division III champ Veller), and Eastlake North while winning titles at Hudson and CVC.

Also a returning state qualifier is the senior Roberts, who was third at the Gorman. Fellow senior Crosby was a district placer last year, but has been excellent this season with wins over state placers in both the Aurora and North Coast Classic finals; while his only loss came to Vough in the NOC final. Last among the ranked wrestlers is the sophomore Carrick, who was fourth at the Beast, seventh at Medina, and eighth at Top Gun, and third at Delaware Hayes.

Circling back to Vough, three other ranked wrestlers exit the district at Cleveland State with him, led by returning fourth place finisher Bonner. An all-state football player, he had a delayed start to the season after suffering an injury. Since the return, he was third at Brecksville (2-0 semifinal loss to Burger), along with runner-up finishes at Perrysburg (pinned by Veller) and Oregon Clay. Two returning state alternates, the senior Fair and the junior Samouk, round out the ranked group. Fair was runner-up at Solon, champion at Toledo St. John’s, and third at the Bill Dies; while Samouk was runner-up at Perry and the Hephner, along with a fifth place finish at the Bill Dies.

Closing it out is the shallow Kettering Fairmont district, which has just two ranked wrestlers in the senior Cloud and the junior Hensley. Cloud was a district placer last year, and this year is undefeated with dominant tournament titles at GMVWA, Troy, Valley View, and Eaton; while Hensley won titles at SWOWCA and the CIT, with a third place finish at Powerade.

Team Board

1. St. Edward
2. Massillon Perry (status of Phillips x-factor)
3. Brecksville
4. Elyria
5. Wadsworth (status of Randolph x-factor)
6. Central Crossing
7. Mason
8. Brunswick
9. Oregon Clay
10. Moeller