Pat Workmon

1986

AA

HIGH SCHOOL WRESTLING

FORECAST

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ACTUAL STATE QUALIFIER

Sponsored by:

The East Ohio Gas Company Underwriters of High School Wrestling Coverage on WVIZ, Channel 25 February 1, 1986

INTRODUCTION

The object of these annual reports encompasses two basic goals. First, is to acquaint everyone with the basic character of each weight class, and identify the participants who are likely to play a major role in its resolution. In addition, each regional is examined as to whom its representatives might be. Second, is to stimulate interest in the whole state tournament process throughout Ohio. Naturally, accuracy is also of primary concern so care is taken to develop the most comprehensive list possible of outstanding wrestlers, though of necessity, the evaluation of their final place is, in part, subjective.

In terms of calibre of wrestling this is, undoubtedly, a weaker than average year throughout the entire state. Certainly, there are some exceptional seniors like Dernlan, Dagley, Funk, Donovan, and Marinelli, but the strength of the state is in its juniors. Next year will be a recruiting bonanza--probably the best year since 1982 when Heffernan, Elinsky, Jordan and that outstanding group matriculated. The difference between this year and 1985 has been the decline in good upper weight competitors. An outstanding exception to this is the "AAA" 185% class, but with that exception the calibre of big men has seriously diminished.

I've often used these reports as a forum to discuss ways in which wrestling in Ohio could be improved--particularly in the context of the individual wrestler. This year there are three issues that need addressing:

The regional format was promoted and approved as a method which allows equal representation of schools. Each regional would be equal in size and send an equal number of qualifiers to Columbus. Yet, this year the Mentor Regional has 69 schools while the Tiffin Regional has but 54. This makes no sense. The Mentor Regional has dominated "AAA" wrestling for the past few years, and has always left home wrestlers who could qualify from any other regional. To include even more schools at that location penalizes individuals for geography and not wrestling skills. If for some unfathomable reason regionals must differ in size by this much (almost 30%), then that area which has placed the most boys certainly shouldn't bear the brunt of that unequal division. If one of the goals of the regional format was to more nearly qualify the best 16 boys at each weight class for Columbus, then common sense suggests that the most. successful regional not be assigned the greatest number of teams. The NCAA selects qualifiers from its regionals based strictly on merit (number or placewinners and matches won the previous year). That, in my mind, is not an appropriate methodology at the high school level, but a system in which individuals are short-changed by unequal representation is even more distasteful. There would appear to be many solutions to this problem and, perhaps, a blue-ribbon panel out to be assigned the task of discovering the best alternative.

During the past few years, this classification has provided us with most of the exciting team races and many of the most memorable bouts. That is because these are good teams and outstanding individuals from every corner of the state, and no one team or even several teams has been able to dominate consistently. For example, since the three-class system was initiated in 1976, only 3 "AAA" high schools have won state crowns as compared to 8 "AA" schools.

As always the team title race should be exciting with two outstanding teams slugging it out for the team trophy. This classification has been bolstered by the addition of a number of formerly strong "A" teams that just fell over the "AA" line. It provides even more fine wrestlers and solid action at this classification.

98#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: MARK THINNEY (ROSSFORD)



TOP CONTENDERS:

- Grandison (Uhrichsville Claymont) 10.
- Shocklee (Akron St. Vincent)
- Knull (St. Paris Graham)
- fichem (Bishop Ready)
- Savage (Delta)
- Neikirk (Cardinal) 8.
- Manger (West Jefferson)

- Bowser (Tipp City)
- . 11. (Hillsboro)
 - 12/3 inches (Brooklyn)
- Kemp (Medina Buckeye) 13.
- 14. Faulkner (Clyde)
- Sasso (Chanel) 15.
- Yinger (Nelsonville York) 16.
- 17. Vallone (Briggs)
- 18. McKenzie (Ravenna Southeast)

This is a fine introductory weight with a solid blend of youth and ? experience along with solid contenders emerging from all four regionals. My choice as the eventual champ is Mark Tinney, the undefeated sophomore star from Rossford. Last year Tinney dominated his regional at this weight, and then had a quick first period fall in the first round at Columbus. However, he lost a hard-fought overtime battle to eventual state runner-up Brian Carter and failed to place. This year I see him winning the few close bouts he'll encounter and taking home that first place trophy.

Tinney exits from a very strong regional. There are probably ten legitimate contenders for the four qualifying spots. I have rated Savage, Benavides, Faulkner and Sasso, and while each has the ability to win a state berth, they also have at least one defect. Savage wrestles a weak schedule, while Benavides seems to lose a lot of close bouts, Sasso is just so doggone small, and Faulkner is erratic. Watch out for Benavides if he gets it all

together. Other possibilities from that region are Wegener (Swanton), Finkhousen (Van Wert), and Nguyen (Lima Central Catholic, but this group, at least to me, is at least one big step down from the rated boys.

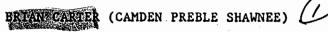
Tinney's biggest rival could be Grandison. This is an experienced junior who qualified last year, but lost a one-point decision to the eventual 3rd place medalist. He is undefeated this year, and is a very large 98fer. He also comes from a reasonably strong regional. The three Columbus boys--Lathem, Manger, and Vallone--have to be favored to grab the last three spots. I like Lathem the best, and he could be a real catalyst for the Ready team. Stillion (Byesville Meadowbrook) has an outside chance.

As always the Northeast Regional at Firestone features some strong performers. Sean Mariola was probably the best, but he has moved back to 105#. That leaves Shocklee in the top position here, but I don't see him as a dominating figure. The younger Neikirk, Kemp, and McKenzie all have reasonable shots at him and should grab a qualifying spot. A long shot might be Glass (Girard) or possibly Folden (Coventry).

The Dayton area has been touting a sensational freshman out of the Jordan's old high school and it's true that St. Paris Graham seems to have a new star. Knull is 15-0, but he is still untested. He will have some experienced talent in the form of state qualifier Gash in his own region, while Amos and Yinger are a senior /freshman combination. Knull has already beaten the former boy. Bowser is another talent with impressive credentials as is the unheralded Pencil (Springfield Northwestern).

105#

PROJECTED CHAMPION:





TOP CONTENDERS:

- (Highland)
 - (Genoa)
 - (Bishop Ready)
- Guers Cincinnati Reading)
- DiDomenico (Chanel)
 - 7. Heil (Brooklyn)
 - 8. Formick (Streetsboro)
 - Thom (Sandusky Perkins) 9.

- 10. Hargis (Little Miami)
- (Twinsburg)
 - 12. Nguyen (Lima Central Catholic)
 - 13. Hollis (St. Paris Graham)
 - 14. Bartos (Medina Buckeye)
 - Mochee (Steubenville) 15.
 - Glaconia (Kirtland) 16.
 - 17. Gochenour (Paulding)

This is a difficult weight to forecast because almost all of these wrestlers are within a few points of one another. The top place winners will be those who put it all together on one special weekend in Columbus. One boy who we know can handle that kind of pressure is Brian Carter, state runner-up last year at 98f. A rugged, almost feisty kind of wrestler, he does not back down from anyone. He won three close matches at Columbus last year, and he can probably look forward to more of the same in 1986.

Letzner, probably Carter's toughest rival, has made great strides this season. He won the MIT and was 2nd at North Canton as he began beating boys who had defeated him last season. The Firestone Regional also features the rugged Formick, the consistent Bartos, and state qualifier Mariola. This trio can each challenge Letzner and with good bracketing should join him in Columbus. The problem is that Letzner, Bartos, and Mariola exit the same district so if Formick draws into the 2nd and 3rd place winners, one of this group won't go.

The Fostoria Regional has a formidable cast of competitors. Hornyak, 3rd last year at 98%, is joined by state placers Heil, 4th and Nguyen, 5th. In addition DiDomenico was a state qualifier and Thom was a state alternate. The way I sort it out is Nguyen could be the odd man out based on his less-than-expected performance this year. However, with so many high quality kids, there is obviously a great potential for upsets. In addition, Gochenour, Reynolds (Cardinal Stritch) and Bohrer (Huron) could be factors. This regional should place two or three at States this year.

Marczika heads the New Philadelphia Regional. An OCC finalist this year and an "A" placewinner two years ago, this is his last chance to grab another state medal. His competition here is quite weak with McGhee the only other rated wrestler. Other possibilities are Rogers (Columbus DeSales), Byers (Jefferson Union) and Dickey (Logan Elm). This is not a threatening group.

The Dayton Regional is very good here. Clarely, Carter stands out, but he failed to win this regional last year and could have that same trouble in 1986. Hollis, Hargis and Burns are all returning state qualifiers with Hollis getting a 6th place medal and Hargis defeating Carter in the regional finals. This is not a group to be taken lightly. It's hard to see anybody muscling their way into this qualifying group, but, perhaps, Murphy (Casstown Miami East) and Bowser (Tipp City) have a chance. There should be excellent competition here.

112**#**

PROJECTED CHAMPION:



TOP CONTENDERS:

- (3) 2. A DiSabato (Bishop Ready)
 - 3. Anderson (Chanel)
 - 4. Wilkens (Kenston)
 - 5. Schade (Buckeye)
 - 6. Jacob (Cardinal Stritch)
- 7. Meyer (Olentangy)

- Darlak (Black River)
- 9. E. DiSabato (Columbus DeSales)
- 10. Imbroscio (Bellaire)
- /09 /11. EGSS (Ontario)
 - 12. Müllett (Marysville)
 - 13. Takach (Steubenville)

This weight and the next one both feature brilliant two man duels that should rank with the best in "AA" history. It is my fervent hope that both these contests will turn out to be state finals—because anything else would cheat these boys out of their rightful glory. At this weight we have the absolutely magnificent junior, Erik Burnett, already twice a state champ and Outstanding Wrestler at the prestigious Brecksville Tourney. He'll face the scintillating sophomore, Adam DiSabato, also undefeated and smashing winner over "AAA" state runner-up Kevin Biggs at the OCC.

Early this year my feeling was that Burnett was unbeatable by anyone in the state regardless of classification. I still feel that way. Yet many wrestling people whose opinions I respect now believe that DiSabato is the better choice—that he will neutralize Burnett's incredible speed and beat him physically for the victory. Both boys have tremendous heart and will be outstanding college prospects as seniors, but my belief is that Burnett will prove more resourceful in their individual encounter. The other plus for Burnett is that his moves are consistently of the 4 or 5-point variety while DiSabato tends to score in clumps of two. In any case this is an epic encounter that could well be repeated in 1987.

The rest of the field is almost lost in the shadow of these two giants. Burnett will be joined at Fostoria by state qualifier Anderson who is flashy on his feet, but not nearly as strong on the mat. In opposite brackets they should be the regional finalists. Foss and Jacob are other possibilities with Stiriz (Delta), Biddle (Lakota), and Siwek (Olmsted Falls) as other possibilities. There is an enormous difference between the top two boys and the rest of the field.

DiSabato will be coming out of an excellent field at New Philadelphia. State qualifiers Takach and Eric DiSabato (Adam's cousin) are there but one or both may not qualify. Takach is probably the one most on the "hot seat" as Meyer and Mullett will prove difficult obstacles and Imbroscio has already placed ahead of him once. Two or three qualifiers from this area have a shot at placing.

The Firestone Regional is also strong. Schade, a state qualifier in 1985 has had an outstanding season winning two tourneys and being runner-up at the huge MIT (to A. DiSabato 15-7). His only other loss was a first period fall to Burnett. Wilkens, just down from 119% where he won the Kenston and finished 4th at the North Canton, should do extremely well. Then, of course, there is "A" state champ, Dave Darlak, who cannot be overlooked in this analysis, although he may be overmatched against the top boys. This trio will dominate with people like Starcher (Rootstown), Meadows (Ravenna Southeast), and Mihok (Aurora) vying for the fourth spot.

The Dayton Regional will be cherished first round opponents because their qualifiers just will not be able to measure up to the rest. The astute observer will already have noted that no one from that area was ranked at this weight. The top four in my mind could well be state qualifier Williams (Hillsboro), Schaeffer (Brookville), Frye (Bethel-Tate), and Wentz (South Point). State qualifier Jenkins (St. Paris Graham) has had a slow start and will have to move quickly to qualify again.

MARK MARINELLI (COLUMBUS DeSALES) PROJECTED CHAMPION:

TOP CONTENDERS:

5.

Domestan (Chanel)

Casstown Miami East) Crawford (Sandusky Perkins)

Green (Twinsburg)

Ravenna Southeast) 7. (Marion River Valley)

Hosterrier (Waynedale) 8.

Bow (Cardinal Stritch)

10. Uzelac (Elmwood

11. (Bellbrook)

(Aurora) 12.

Bruno (Akron St. Vincent) *Џ*13. 14.

15. Detance (St. Clairsville)

Bible (Bellfontaine) 16.

17. Moor (Bryan)

18. Muennich (Mason)

This is a weight class filled with excellent wrestlers, but only two are of any consequence when forecasting a champion--Mark Marinelli and Dan Donovan. Marinelli has finished 3rd and 2nd the past two years, both times losing to Erik Burnett (once in overtime). He is quick and strong and tremendously good in the advantage position. The book on him is that he gets ; too nervous to win the big bouts, but I think that's nonsense and I expect him to prove it with a major upset against Donovan. Besides this is the third year I've picked him as champion and that has to be lucky.

His opponent, two-time state champion Don Donovan, will surely be the favorite when these two meet (hopefully in the finals). If Donovan had not lost a one point decision in the state finals as a freshman, he would now be going for his fourth straight title. He is a superb technician and also wonderfully tough in the advantage position. To beat him you must be willing to go six non-stop, all-out minutes and be extremely tough yourself. Only Marinelli has a hope of doing that. Their bout should be an often replayed classic.

All four regionals are strong with the Fostoria Regional being the most crowded. Besides Donovan; 6th place finishers Crawford and Bowlick will be in the competition, but they are assuredly not guaranteed state qualification. Uzelac and Moor have had outstanding seasons and can certainly be expected to challenge. State qualifier Lohman (Milan Edison) has moved up two weight classes and may not be prepared for this field, but Dolan (Bucyrus) could be a real surprise although his perfect record is somewhat tarnished by a weak schedule. Price (Brookside) has been one of Erik Burnett's toughest foes in past years, but has not done as well against other highly rated boys. He will have the element of surprise in this faraway regional.

The Firestone Regional is also loaded. Hostetler was 2nd in "A" last year, but I've rated him only third best in this regional. That's because he hasn't shown six minutes of intensity, but has, instead, looked more for the

big move. That won't work consistently with top-notch competition. The superbly talented Gregan is only a sophomore, but he should qualify for Columbus and possibly place and Bailey, already a state qualifier has about the same potential. Right below this trio are Edwards and Bruno who have had good seasons against staunch opposition. Two longshots are Coman (Liberty) and Zenn (Ursuline).

While Marinelli will dominate at New Philadelphia, there will be fierce competition for the other qualifying spots. Miracle and Sarver are tough Columbus area wrestlers who are used to pressure matches. Sarver has missed most of the year with injuries, but in his first week back placed at the OCC's. DeLande was 4th last year at 105% but has not been as successful this year. He'll need to make real progress to qualify although his down tempo, tough riding style is hard for takedown artists to beat. Two other possibilities are state qualifier Walberry (Big Walnut) and once-beaten Corbett (Utica).

The Dayton Regional is led by Jerry Williams, 4th last year at 112#, and a winner over Adam DiSabato in one of the consolation rounds. Most years you'd have to place him right near the top of the list with a real chance of winning it all. He can only make the finals if Donovan and Marinelli are paired together since he cannot match the firepower of either. For example, Donovan beat him 15-3 last year. Behind him are state qualifiers Bible and Mikula, but they face strong competition from Muennich, Wagner (Lewistown Indian Lake), Ryu (Hillsboro), and Matheny (Morgan). All these boys are reasonably equal with some chance of qualification. Below them, but with upset potential, are Knewasser (Carlisle) and DeWitt (Madeira).

126#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: MIKE SABATO (BISHOP READY)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- 3. (Barnesville)
- 4. (Ontario)
 5. Marder (Chanel)
 - . Coontz (Ravenna Southeast)
- 7. Save a (Highland) 8. Levis (Tipp City)
- 9. Hardy (Eastwood)
 (Oardinal)
 - 11. Stover (West Jefferson)

- 12. Hivnor (Oak Harbor)
- 13. Triway)
- 14. Weaver (Waynedale)
- 16. McCullough (Madeira)
- 17. Varadi (Tuscarawas Valley)
- 18. Uribes (Wauseon)
- 19. Moyer (Casstown Miami East)
- 20. Dowdell (Wellington)
- 21. Colacruglio (Huron)

By far the deepest and strongest weight in "AA" competition this year, and one of the best in recent history. My last count showed 17 returning state qualifiers—that included two former state champs, two boys who have twice been state runners—up, another who has twice been 3rd, and four other

place winners. What is truly surprising is that this concentration of talent exists here, and, yet, at 132# there is almost a void of talent after the top two or three boys. I can understand not wanting to go at 119# with Marinelli, Donovan and Company, but it's difficult to understand why some of these boys won't compete at the far, far easier 132# class.

With this concentration of talent, selection of the eventual champion is a perilous undertaking. Nonetheless, I've gone with Mike DiSabato based mainly on wins at both the MIT and the OCC. A former state champ as a freshman, DiSabato floundered as a 10th grader before coming back strong last season only to fall victim to a 3-2 upset in the quarter-finals. He has the maturity, the skill, and most importantly, the experience to win a number of close matches against the wide variety of styles he'll see this year. His principal competition will probably come from another former state champ, Mitch Tatonetti, but there are six or eight others here who could be possible finalists.

At New Philadelphia, DiSabato will face strong competition only in the last two rounds. Sean Bell, runner-up at 105# and 112# the past two years, seems to have righted himself after a slow start and his OVAC triumph confirms this return to form. He is short and extremely powerful, but I believe DiSabato will "outslick" him on his feet. State qualifiers Stover, Sigler, and Varadi are also in the field scrambling for the last two qualifying berths. I favor the first two, but Branstetter (Marion River Valley) and Miller (Olentangy) are capable of an upset.

The Firestone Regional is loaded. As mentioned earlier Tatonetti, a 1984 state champ, heads the field, and should be a major threat to DiSabato. Tatonetti has had an up and down year, but he is always dangerous. I don't always see the intensity it takes to win against tough opposition, but if it ends up DiSabato versus Tatonetti, it will be a toss up. Neikirk was twice an "A" state runner-up to Hansen. This year he'll have trouble qualifying as I've placed him behind Tatonetti, Savoia, and the super-soph Coontz. A little slip by any of these three would provide an opening for state 5th Woods, state qualifier Weaver, and the always tough Dowdell. Both Savoia, who has beaten Tatonetti this year, and Coontz, an upset winner over Marder, have a strong chance for state placement--if they can get out of this regional. I would not be surprised that after some of these folks read the 132# report they'll reclassify upwards.

The Fostoria Regional also has strong competition. Marder has twice been 3rd, but he has not wrestled particularly well this year. He has already lost three or four times, but that has been offset by an outstanding performance at the Brunswick Tourney. Part of the problem may be moving up three weight classes. Still he's a key boy who has always gotten better as the season wears on. Ohl and Hardy are both outstanding and the former certainly could be a finalist. He has been at 132# all year and I would have rated him 2nd there behind Ramsey. Here he may have a problem qualifying. Hardy has been

great all season-most of it at 1321. Uribes is probably a narrow favorite for the 4th spot, but Hivnor is coming on strong. State qualifier Scheufler (Castalia Margaretta) has been hurt and may not compete, but he has upset potential. Colatruglio is also coming off an injury and he, along with Tresch (Olmsted Falls) and Milum (Upper Sandusky) have long-shot possibilities.

The Dayton Regional doesn't quite match up to this group. Lewis was 5th last year and he should stand well above the rest of this group. McCullough, a state qualifier last year, certainly has good chances particularly with a year of added maturity. Moyer, Block (Bethel-Tate) and Griffin (Reading) have a chance at qualification, but I haven't had much luck finding standouts in this area so the boys having a "hot" weekend will be the big winners here.

132#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: KEN BUICEW (BISHOP READY)

TOP CONTENDERS:

Lamb (Evergreen) 10. Henessey (Brookfield) Speed (Chagrin Falls) Mathes (Toledo Macomber) (Hillsboro) . 12رط) Thomas (Lexington) Schultz (Kenston) 13. Davis (Perry) Grossenbacher (West Jefferson) 14. Zettler (Bexley) (Steubenville) 15. Jones (Blanchester) Hannah (Sandusky Perkins) Jones (Eaton) 16. Sold Tipp City) 17. Stutzman (Wauseon)

This is one of the weaker weights in "AA"--perhaps, the weakest and I've had to scramble to find names for ranking purposes. Until I learned that Ken Ramsey had dropped to this weight, there were serious problems in selecting a projected champion. However, Ramsey, a two-time "A" champ, whould have few problems winning here, although the next three rates boys could spring what would be a monumental upset. What is likely to happen is that some of the good 126's--seeing the handwriting on the wall--will opt for this weight class and make it more competitive. Incidentally, should my favorites win at 126# and 132# it will be the first time since 1983 that wrestlers from the same school have copped "AA" titles in adjacent weights.

Ramsey should dominate the New Philadelphia Regional, but it's a regional with considerable other talent. Grossenbacher and state qualifier Takach have both had solid seasons winning smaller tourneys and placing high in major ones. Zettler is probably the best bet for a fourth spot, but Chapman (West Holmes) and Sigler (Union Local) are possibilities. This regional could place as many as three of their qualifiers.

The tandem of Speed and Schultz will provide rugged action for everyone at this weight. Speed was 5th last year including an upset win over Mike DiSabato. He has had injury problems this year, however. Schultz is a tough

but not particularly creative wrestler, but his grind-it-out style wins. Two wrestlers from lesser known schools, Henessey and Davis, are my choices for the last two spots but neither has done much in past regional efforts. That's why you might look toward Yerger (Streetsboro) and state qualifier Hershey (Black River) for an upset.

There are sixteen wrestlers on my Fostoria list, but only two, Brad Lamb and Randy Thomas, jumps out at me. Thomas upset Mike DiSabato in the regional semi-finals but could only win one match in Columbus and did not place. Now that his arch-rival Parry Ohl (who generally bests him) has moved to 126%, he should have clear sailing here unless Lamb as I suspect moves down to 132%. I've also rated Hannah, Mathes and Stutzman, but that's based more on intuition than a calculated foreknowledge of the future. I could just have easily listed Clemens (Paulding), Burch (Swanton), and McCoy (Lima Bath). It will be wide open at this regional.

At Dayton, there is even less definition to the field. Spurlock, Kruse, state qualifier Jack Jones, and Jones are my top four but there is real uncertainty. Simpson (Milton Union) and Huff (Goshen) are other possibilities. Don't expect anyone in this group to place--or, perhaps, even progress beyond the first round.

138#

PROJECTED CHAMP: BRIAN KOSTA (CHANEL)



TOP CONTENDERS:

- 2. Smith (Ravenna Southeast)
- Lamb (Evergreen)
- 4. Poulson (Uhrichsville Claymont)
 - Bu trowicz Twinsburg)
- 6. Maish (Eaton)
- 7. (Steubenville)
- 8. Hammone (damilton Twp.)

- 9. Perry (Lexington)
- 10. Layne (Ironton)
- 11. Cole (Jefferson)
- 12. Watson (Olentangy)
- 13. Sweeney (Toledo Macomber)
- 14. Hayes (Utica)
- 15. Fecher (New Lebanon Dixie)

This is a weight class I examine with loving attention. After all, in the fourteen previous reports of this type I've always selected the eventual champ. That means my picks are 56-0 in state bouts at this point so I scrutinize the weight very closely before making a choice. Orginally, two-time state "A" champ Ken Ramsey was at this weight, and he looked like just the wrestler to extend my streak to 15 consecutive years. It seemed like a natural choice since Ramsey was certainly big enough for the weight and it would be a strategically wise move in that it would push down Kosla of Chanel--Bishop Ready's main competition for the state title. However, Ramsey has certified and wrestled at 132# and that is where he is rated--although given the opportunity I would still select him at this weight.

In his stead Brian Kosla is my choice at this important weight. Kosla. 4th last year at this weight, is still recovering from hepatitis, but he can be exceptional. He'll match up well with the Toledo area's best, Brad Lamb, if at 138%, and they dominate that regional. However, there are many other strong wrestlers at that site including one I rate quite highly--Perry. Certainly, Sweeney, Wells (Bellevue) and Carey (Swanton) are also potential threats, but they're yet another step below his level. One thing that should be noted is that Kosla beat Smith only a week or two after coming back from illness. His conditioning should improve and he should be much fresher than his competition at tourney time.

Smith was injured in last year's state semi-finals and defaulted down to sixth place. This year he has been healthy and effective winning both the Kenston and Smithville Tourneys and losing only the one close bout to Kosla--a result, incidentally, which could easily go the other way next time. Bultrowicz and the unheralded Cole are two strong possibilities at the Firestone Regional, but it will be a struggle for either to place at the state level. The field below this group strikes me as very weak.

However, for really weak we can look to the Dayton Regional. I've listed Maish, state qualifier Layne and Fecher, but this is really a noncompetitive area at this weight. I would be surprised to see any of this group win a first round bout. Other possibilities might be Waddell (South Point), Calloway (Greeneview) and Crist (Goshen).

Ramsey would have dominated the New Philadelphia Regional, but there will still be lots of interesting competition in his absence. State qualifier Poulson has had an excellent year and should lead the way, although he'll be pushed by veterans like Hammond, Watson and Hayes. He ler chart Holmes) is also an experienced wrestler with solid credentials. The intriguing wrestler here though is the wonderfully named freshman from Steubenville, Dunyasha Yetts. This boy is on an improvement curve that's just about out of sight. Whether he'll be ready to smash his way through this regional just yet is open question, but watch for him in the future.

145#



TOP CONTENDERS:

- Brady (Milton-Union)
- Pagnessa (Akron St. Vincent)
- Durieux (Hebron Lakewood)
- Szendrey (Elyria Catholic) 5.
- Green (Marysville)
 - Mendicino (Fairview)

- 8. (West Holmes)
- 9. Jones (Lima Bath)
- 10. Sturgis (Middletown Madison)
- 11. Pierce (Oak Harbor)
- 155/12. Vinces er (Woodridge)
 - Crespo (Trinity) 13.

Last year this was the strongest weight class in "AA", and, in fact, one of the strongest in the history of the classification. It's a shame that it ended in such an inept manner, but nothing can take away from the brilliance of Hoy, Patrick, Matt Peters and Aaron Peters. This year we're at the other end of the spectrum with a relatively weak field and few real individual stars.

My top choice is the tough junior from Kenston, Mike Hagan. Not the slickest wrestler in the world he is a punishing competitor ready and able to go six rugged minutes. He'll not throw away a won match, and he'll not lose a bout in the first minute either. Another advantage is that he emerges from a weak regional that offers only one real threat. That will appear in the person of Paonessa, who has already won the MIT, Doylestown and Lake Invitationals. One match from States last year he could be a finalist. Other contenders are well behind these two but people like Loar (Tuslaw) and Winovich (Chagrin Falls) have a solid shot at the last two qualifying berths. One intersting competitor is Andexler, 4th last year in "A" who is an unorthodox wrestler. Usually involved in high scoring bouts he could surprise those unfamiliar with his style.

Brady dominates the Dayton Regional and he will certainly challenge the other top contenders. Sturgis, who I would rate second-best in this area, was in a car accident recently and may not compete. If he does he should qualify. After that it's chaos with names like Meyers (St. Paris Graham), Milleson (Ironton), Voisard (Versailles) and Brodermann (Eaton). It's a list I've been unable to sort out in any meaningful way.

The New Philadelphia Regional has a number of solid contenders. I like Durieux the best, but he is not even rated in the Columbus area. One of us has to be real wrong--and I think Durieux will prove it's not me. Undefeated Green and once-beaten Alexander are two other strong choices for qualification. The fourth spot is open for grabs with Mitchell (Martins Ferry), perhaps, slightly ahead of the rest.

The regional with by far the most depth is at Fostoria. State qualifiers Mendicino and Jones are joined by top performers such as Szendrey, Pierce and Crespo. With only four qualifying one of these boys won't make it, and that doesn't even include past regional performers like Pace (Olmsted Falls), Crum (Sandusky Perkins) and especially the Solon Invitation champ, Sesny. It's interesting that neither of the state qualifiers in this group could count 1986 as the year that met all their expectations. That's why this weight will be a real donnybrook at Fostoria, and the winners may be that much tougher for it at Columbus the next week.





TOP CONTENDERS:

- (Columbus DeSales) Spencer (Belpre) (Cardinal Stritch)
 - (Springfield Northwestern) Cardinal)
 - (Sandusky Perkins)
 - Cruze (Eaton)

- Lurch (Kenston)
- Bellaire) 10.
- Stickley (St. Paris Graham) 11.
- 12. Marzetti (Lexington)
- 13. Gregan (Twinsburg)
- Chanel)
- (eec. (Byesville Meadowbrook)

This is not a very strong or a very interesting weight class. important point though is that almost none of the top six boys have ever wrestled one another which suggests that guesswork is at work on an overtime basis here.

I had Romp ranked in my top five at this weight last year, but he had bad luck and a bad draw at the regional. He lost to eventual state runner-up McClone in the quarter-finals and then was eliminated--thanks to the archaic consolation rule--when McClone was upset the next round. This year he shouldn't have to worry about the draw since it's likely that only a handful in the state will be able to challenge him. Of that top group every member has solid credentials and we'll examine each in the context of that individual's regional assignment.

Romp should win his regional but he will face challenges from both Ackerman and Faggionato. The former has wrestled at three weight classes this year but seems most comfortable here. A state qualifier at 167# last year, he finally seems to be hitting his stride judged by his OCC result. The latter, a regional quarter-finalist at 167# last year, is not quite in Romp's or Ackerman's class, but after that the quality really drops off quickly. Marzetti, Keil (Swanton), Williams (Toledo Macomber) and Cook (Delta) are journeyman performers. The one wild card will be Durham who is crushingly strong, but is inexperienced and not hardened to tournament pressure. He may pull a huge upset and then disappear from the scene.

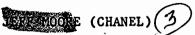
Graziani will be one of Romp's tougher assignments. He's a wrestler who never quits and works six full minutes. At the Brecksville he trailed 17-5 and brought it back to 18-13 by match's end. However, he can be scored on and does, occasionally, go to his back. He towers over the remainder of the New Philadelphia field. The competition there will be extremely weak with little chance of the other three qualifiers winning a match in Columbus.

Spencer and Rountree head an extremely capable group from the Dayton Regional. Spencer, 4th last year at this weight, is unorthodox and hard to beat. Still he twice cam back from deficits to win in overtime and he may not be so fortunate this year. Rountree was 28-6 last year at 167% and has been enormously successful this year. He should challenge anybody at this weight. State qualifier Cruze was at 175% last year in Columbus before being destroyed in the first round. Now at 155% he will be very strong. Stickley has handed Rountree his only loss and cannot be discounted. However, he could be vulnerable to people like Faris (Wilmington) or Green (Carlisle). This is the best regional at this weight.

At Firestone, Peters will be trying to take his first steps toward a 1986 state title. He has twice been runner-up in "A" competition and he is good enough to challenge here. He--like Faggionato, Rountree, Ackerman and Cruze-is down a weight class and it's unusual having so many top contenders at an upper weight dropping so much weight. The Firestone Regional is not particularly strong with Lurch and Gregan possible qualifiers and the fourth spot wide open.

167#

PROJECTED CHAMPION:



TOP CONTENDERS:

New Lebanon Dixie)

New Lebanon Dixie)

Chagrin Falls)

Youmans (St. Marys Memorial)

10. (Brooklyn)
11. Nacon (Brooklyn)
12. (Columbus DeSales)
13. (Moodridge)
14. Terebuh (Bellfontaine)
15. (Buckeye)
16. Miron (Aurora)
17. Jackson (Rossford)

(Ravenna Southeast)

There is a good chance that this is the weight class that could well decide the "AA" team title. One could foresee Chanel and Ready battling on about an even basis in the lower weights with the difference being the points Moore can score here. However, it must be remembered that Moore lost in the first round of Districts last year and it would be a huge jump from that to a state title (although his brother Jon did it). One mitigating factor is that Moore had an injured elbow all last year which is now at nearly 100%. He also has the best moves in this weight class, but he is really a 155% who prefers not to cut weight and thus could be overpowered.

18.

The competition that Moore faces comes from all areas of the state, but is not particularly distinguished. His own regional contains a wide variety of possible opponents. Dixie and Youmans are both powerful wrestlers, but lacking in Moore's technique. They could be very dangerous. Marconi and Kipp

have had fine seasons with the latter boy a step better than the former. He is a real pinner and that erases a lot of mistakes. That would leave Marconi as the odd man out, but he, Jackson, and Friedhoff (Wauseon) are all dangerous. My view is Moore easing has way through this regional with Dixie and Kipp having solid shots of qualifying. The upset victim here, if there is one, is likely to be Youmans.

The experienced Meyers is just marginally placed ahead of the next four into the runner-up spot. A state qualifier last year he leads a district that has depth and diversity. Szwec, also a state qualifier, is also very good, but Miller and Terebuh are probably not terribly far behind. Two darkhorses are Bray (Reading) and Carter (Loveland), but they will have to show improvement to get through this regional.

The most interesting regional is clearly the one at Firestone. State qualifier Williams has had a sparkling season and benefits from working out with Chagrin's other fine upper weights. Cassel won the MIT and has to be one of the most improved wrestlers in this area. He definitely has state placement potential. Donat will be a major surprise. A state qualifier in "A" last season, he is powerful and a pinner. His problem is that he can be outslicked. That leaves Naples, Miron, and Mulhollen battling for one qualifying berth. This will provoke strong competition since they are all probably within a couple of points of one another.

The three regionals so far discussed are all relatively strong and deep. This is not true at New Philadelphia--which is by far the weakest regional. The three Columbus area representatives--Bowman, Cua, and Nicol--look to be strongest, but they certainly appear not to be state placement material. Bowman, like Moore, has strong team obligations here. A possibility is the young Keenan, still a year away from duplicating some of his older brother's feats.

175#

PROJECTED CHAMP:



(SPRINGFIELD NORTHWESTERN)

TOP CONTENDERS:

2. Stone (Ravenna Southeast)

(Uhrichsville Claymont)

4. (Dayton Northridge)

Weber (Madeira)

6. (Apple Creek Waynedale)

7. (Eaton)
8. (Huron)

3)9. Damonal (Chagrin Falls)

10. Warwick (Clyde)

11. Ward (Fairfield Union)

12. Granito (Wickliffe)

13. Stennett (Otsego)

14. Proceeding (Elyria Catholic)

15. (London)

Somehow, this is the weight class that I've found most difficult in coming up with top-notch wrestlers. I just haven't seen any real outstanding 175# wrestlers in "AA." Based on my long-held theory that in such situations

you choose that wrestler furthest from where you live, I've gone with state qualifier Todd Smart to lead the pack here. Smart will exit from by far the most rugged regional, where, incidentally, he is the defending champ. He is an explosive wrestler with excellent pin production, and a year of added maturity should make him a most difficult opponent.

His regional is loaded. State qualifier Hatfield is a solid competitor with good credentials and better moves. He can place. State qualifier Weber got caught in the first period at Columbus and that gave us no indication as to what he can really do. His record suggests that he is a good one. State alternate Lindley is an exciting competitor who could win bouts in Columbus—if he can get there. This is my top four at Dayton, and it's an outstanding quartet. Other top boys in this area are Enoch (Belpre), Grisez (Versailles), and Klaper (Middletown Madison), but they will have to be at their peak to have even a chance of qualifying.

All three other regionals are weak. At Firestone "AAA" state qualifier Tim Stone will represent Ravenna Southeast this year and he should lead the pack. He has the look of a possible finalist, and could boost Ravenna Southeast's team chances immeasurably. MIT champ Stanley had all falls in that tourney, but the competition was weak. Still, he can cancel out his mistakes with matchless strength. Campbell and Granito finished in this order at Richmond Hts. and are the best guesses for the third and fourth qualifying spots. However, Ross (Columbia), Renz (Buckeye), Reicosky (Canton Central Catholic) and Crone (Sandy Valley) are possibilities. It's likely that an unknown having a hot weekend will take one of those qualifying spots.

The 6'6" Starkey is likely to be one of the most exciting wrestlers in Columbus. Strong, with terrific leverage, and a pinner, he really goes after his opponents. Last year at Columbus he looked tentative and unsure, but that shouldn't happen in 1986. His weakness is on the bottom and his relatively weak schedule may not have prepared him for the very best. Still, he could place or even win it all if he wrestles at the top of his potential. His regional is weak. Ward and Minner are unknowns and may fold under the pressure. Stahr (Logan Elm) and Burlian (St. Clairsville) fall in the journeyman classification.

The Fostoria Regional is really in a muddled situation. State place-winner Warwick has had an erratic season and may not even qualify. The top performers have been Klima and Procaccini, but they have no assured path to the State either—although I particularly like Klima. Stennett has pulled some big upsets while Huffman (Lexington) has some potential. It's my feeling that this regional is totally wide open. Several other possibilities are Willis (Wauseon), Burkheimer (Van Wert), and Wood (Oak Harbor).

PROJECTED CHAMPION: JACK LEEDER (ORRVILLE)

TOP CONTENDERS:

2. (Oore (Rootstown)
3. (Oak Harbor)
4. (Bellfontaine)
5. (St. Mary Memorial)
6. (Goshen)
7. (West Holmes)

8. Link (Castalia Margaretta)
9. Byesville Meadowbrook)
10. (Wellington)
11. (Garfield Trinity)
12. (Marion Pleasant)

13. Nicholas (Buckeye)

This is a weight with some real firepower, but not much depth. The top people are very good, but below that elite group are a carload of journeyman performers without much to differentiate them. That's why it's likely that the battle for the last two state berths at each regional will be hectic.

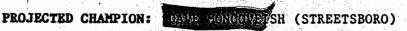
At the top of this weight is defending state champion, Jack Leeder. A marvelous athlete, he has been slowed by injury and, perhaps, a certain lassitude after his brilliant four year sports accomplishments. However, he's down from heavyweight now, and I expect him to round into top shape just about district time. His toughest competition will come from an old rival right in his own regional, Dave Moore. He's beaten him several times including a narrow 8-6 triumph in last year's regional finals. Moore has been outstanding all year, and he should get several shots at Leeder. Ironically, Rootstown High is only two boys above the "A" limit or, perhaps, both boys would be state title favorites. The rest of the Northeast Regional is weak with Mohrman and Nicholas two possible state qualifiers. The last two, whoever they are, will have trouble winning a bout in Columbus.

Ferd Miller transferred from Genoa to Oak Harbor this past year, but the big junior has lost none of his ability. He was devastating at the MIT and is certainly the best out of the Fostoria Regional. He will challenge both Leeder and Moore for the top spot. The enormously powerful Lauth was one bout from States last year, and qualification this year should be within easy reach. His problem is that he can be "outslicked" by the top trio. Link and Perrine are two other possibilities from that regional and they could be winners at Columbus, too. Burnett (Toledo Macomber) and Jump (Willard) are other possibilities here.

The Southwest Regional features two 185's who qualified for States as sophomores. McDonald, now a junior, has had a splendid season and seems in line for a low or middle place this year. He will have to overcome a weak schedule, however. Hogue, in his senior season, failed even to qualify for Columbus last year and his progress this year is still uncertain. He will need a good draw to place. Other potential qualifiers out of this area are Reeves (Mason), Hickman (Eaton), and Doss (Lewistown Indian Lake). This group will not do well in state competition.

The regional at New Philadelphia will be very competitive, very fierce, and, ultimately, not critical to state placements. That's because it's difficult seeing any of these boys capturing even a low place unless they have an extremely favorable pairing. State qualifier King returns but he has been beaten several times and Weigand has passed him by. Sloboda is a solid performer while Thomas (Jonathan Alder) and Grove (Marysville) could gain a state spot. Even Milic (Steubenville), who has been hot recently, has upset potential.

HVY.



TOP CONTENDERS:

(Loveland-Hurst) (Toledo Macomber) (Medina Highland) (Upper Sandusky) Gilbert (CAPE) Reconey (Steubenville) Mohrman (Wellington)

(Hillsboro) 10. Ross (Philo) 4/11. (Swanton) 12. (West Jefferson) 13. 14. Ryan (Ashtabula Harbor) 15. (Preble-Shawnee)

A fine weight class with strong competitors in all four regionals. My projected champ, Dave Moncoveish, finished 4th last year, and has compiled an undefeated record this year. Two years ago, he did not appear to have much potential, but he seems to have worked very hard and his results have shown a dramatic improvement. His competition this year is so pervasive that he faces strong regional pressure, and will undoubtedly draw a tough opponent in all four rounds of state action. He will need to be at his very best.

The Northeast Regional has so much depth at this weight that a returning state qualifier is unlikely to make a return trip to Columbus. Besides. Moncoveish, I favor the quick and agile Keffer, the solid Mohrman, and the powerful Fitzpatrick. Keffer was within four seconds of winning the North Canton over the brilliant Datkuliak before losing in overtime, although he did not wrestle well the next week at the MIT. He wrestles more like a 175fer than a heavyweight. Mohrman qualified at 185# last year, and has done very well at heavyweight. Again, he has moves not often seen at this weight class. Finally, Fitzpatrick has lost only to Moncoveish this year and should grab the 4th spot. This leaves state qualifier Ryan as a darkhorse to qualify, but he was in that same position last year and fought his way to Columbus. It could happen again. Darkhorse candidates might be Cione (Brookville) and Berta (Ravenna Southeast).

I look for Medert to give Moncoveish his toughest competition. His only loss last year was a 7-3 decision to Moncoveish in the state quarter-finals. He is, I believe, that best pure athelete in the field, but he does not wrestle "heavy duty" competition in his area, and may not be prepared for 3 tough days at Columbus. He, too, emerges from a fine regional which features master intimidator Gilbert, 3rd last year in "A" and state qualifier Cole. Gilbert may not be ready for this level of competition even with his past credentials. Brown was one bout from Columbus last year and he makes a solid fourth choice in this regional. Harness (Springfield Northwest) and Pell (Clermont Northeastern) are all possible place winners at this regional.

James (Boogaloo) Gibson is the other candidate to upset Moncoveish. A qualifier in the "AAA" ranks last year, Gibson is super-tough and rugged. He may be ready to win it all this year. Another state qualifier, Rick Young, will also be at this regional, but he cannot beat Gibson. Flathers looks like a state qualifier while the fourth spot is "up for grabs." Possibilities include Goecke (Ottawa Glandorf), Gray (Genoa), and Cornelius (Elmwood). The race is wide open.

The New Philadelphia Regional is not as strong as the others. State qualifiers Acconey and Ross have the best credentials and should make it to Columbus once more. The sophomore Pullins has had a great year and he may be improving so rapidly that he will surpass one or both of the more experienced duo. There are many contenders for the fourth spot including Briggs (Barnesville), McNabb (Licking Valley), Murphy (Bishop Ready), and Heath (St. Clairsville). Of this group, I like McNabb the best.

TEAMS

- 1. CHANEL -- The team scoring should be close and team depth and experience is important. Chanel has the most of both these ingredients and should scrape past Bishop Ready, although it's likely to be very close. The key element would be strong performances by Moore and Kosla and continued fine work by Donovan, Anderson, and DiDomenico. If Sasso, Sesny, or Durham get to Columbus that would be a bonus. The biggest question mark is Marder, erratic all year, at the tough 126# class.
- 2. BISHOP READY -- No team, not even Chanel, can match them for individual brilliance. The two DiSabatos, Ramsey and Marczika are all possible finalists. However, they need help from people like the recently recovered Sarver, Kruse, and Bowman, and after that there is absolutely no one. They can really hurt Chanel with individual victories over them at 105#, 112# and 126#.

- 3. RAVENNA SOUTHEAST -- A team that has a wide assortment of parts that could just mesh together to provide a very high team finish. Stone, a "move-in" from Columbus, gives them a "big gun" at the upper weights while Smith is a possible finalist at 138#. The brilliant sophomore Coontz is at an exceedingly difficult weight, but will do well anyway. State qualifier Bailey should also score well. What they need is points from people like McKenzie, Mulhollen, and Meadow and the likelihood of that is not high.
- 4. <u>COLUMBUS DeSALES</u> -- They'll place high with individual stars and not team depth. Marinelli, Graziani, and Eric DiSabato are their stars, and they should do well--especially the first two. Cua has a chance at 167#, but after that the cupboard looks bare.
- 5. KENSTON -- A team that has guns to make the Top Three, but their recent state tourney track record doesn't give you much hope. Still the potential is there. Wilkens, Tatonetti, Schultz and Hagen are all excellent while Lurch could contribute. This team can go a long way--if it wants to.
- 6. SANDUSKY PERKINS -- A team that only once in its history has posted a Top Ten finish. Still this is their year--if its ever to be--and they do have some solid performers. They're led by Crawford, Thom, and Dixie, but Faggionato and Hannah are also good. Even Crum and Uhl could help.
- 7. <u>HIGHLAND</u> -- Since they started changing coaches they have not performed well at the regional and state level. This year they should redeem themselves with Letzner, Savoia and Keffer being an outstanding trio of stars. Gangle or Murray could help, too.
- 8. STEUBENVILLE -- A team that has come on strong in recent years with a succession of stars. They were hurt badly when State 4th Brian Young was injured and out for the season. Still they have both Takach boys, Acconey, McGhee and Keenan. Mix in the whirlwind freshman Yetts and it could be another Top Ten finish.
- 9. <u>UHRICHSVILLE CLAYMONT</u> -- they don't have the team depth from last year, but Grandison, Poulson and Starkey should all do very well. The problem is finding extra help from the rest of the squad.
- 10. ROSSFORD -- Two state champs score a lot of points and Tinney and Romp have the ability to do it. After that Jackson is just about the only hope to put some points up on the board.
- 11. ST. PARIS GRAHAM -- A far out choice. Knull, a freshman at 98#, is really the key to their hopes. If he can do well and Hollis and Stickley come through they'll be alright. State qualifier Jenkins could help a lot.
- 12. EATON -- The typically fine team led by Lindley, Jones, Cruze and Maish. They always seem to qualify a darkhorse, too.

- 13. BUCKEYE -- Excellent low weights but the key to their success are Naples and Renz at 167# and 175#.
- 14. AKRON ST. VINCENT -- Individual stars like Shocklee and Paonessa can score a lot of points.