

## DIVISION III

103#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: TIM DERNLAN (WEST LIBERTY SALEM) (1)

### TOP CONTENDERS

- |                                      |                                         |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| (2) 2. Klco (Perry)                  | (6) 13. Clemens (Lima Central Catholic) |
| 3. Williams (New London)             | 14. Frohnapfel (Bridgeport)             |
| (5) 4. Workman (Coventry)            | 15. Zientek (Liberty Center)            |
| 5. Firem (Chanel)                    | 16. Spencer (Edison North)              |
| (2) 6. Merrill (Mansfield St. Peter) | 17. Kosins (Bellbrook)                  |
| (4) 7. Wright (Belpre)               | 18. Roesch (Sandusky St. Mary)          |
| 8. O'Dell (Brookville)               | 19. Smith (Cardinal Stritch)            |
| 9. Dilger (Norwalk St. Paul)         | 20. Kuntz (Cuyahoga Hts.)               |
| 10. Booth (Smithville)               | 21. Kinzel (Wellsville)                 |
| 11. Ballard (Barnesville)            | 22. Logsdon (Fremont St. Joseph)        |
| 12. Steiner (Batavia)                | 23. Ziegler (Cardinal)                  |

Last year we talked about the Dernlan brothers and the DiSabatos winning potentially 11 state titles apiece. Well, both sets of brothers are right on track to do so and none of them may have been any better than Tim. He has the look of a four-time state champ and there is little in this competition that will provide much of an obstacle. Already twice the winner of huge MIT, Tim would be competitive in any of the three school classifications. His title would make the four Dernlan brothers the second set in history to have four two-time state champs among their number -- the DiSabatos with Dominic winning last year were the first. Incidentally, no Ohio wrestler has ever put together four consecutive unbeaten years, but Tim has the first 55 during his career.

Dernlan emerges from an otherwise competitive district. O'Dell has now wrestled four years at the weight class (two varsity, two JV) and has the "senior edge" against the mostly freshman and sophomores. He was fourth at the huge GMVWA, third at Fairfield and first at Troy and is undefeated against Division III competition. Steiner and Kosins have the best shots at the final qualifying berth, although Creech (Milton-Union) could be a factor. Another contender might be the recently cut down Biribilas (Dayton Oakwood).

The Cuyahoga Hts. District could have as many as three placers as there is a good pool of talent present at this weight. Last Klco was eliminated in district competition by two place winners in what was a tough draw. This year he has been outstanding and is certainly at a comparable level to everyone but Dernlan. So far, his only loss was a tough overtime affair to the highly rated Division I Cummings. Workman, too, was one bout from state qualification and has been solid all year. The real surprise, though, might be Firem, who has grown into a legitimate 103#. Only 17-17 last year, he has wrestled an extremely difficult schedule with real success. Coach Coghill, who has had excellent success in the past decade has seemingly worked his magic once again. Firem has lost twice to Workman the past two seasons but may be poised to vault past him by March. The unheralded Booth is my choice for the fourth qualifying spot, with Kuntz and

Ziegler possibilities. Mescan (Columbia Station), the brother of last year's district champ, may also play a role at this weight.

The huge Fostoria District will again send five qualifiers at each weight, but at 103#, there will not be the top-to-bottom strength we saw last year -- when they placed three wrestlers in the top five. The recently "cut down" Williams was district runner-up and state qualifier last season and had been very successful at 112# so far this year. He is a physically tough competitor. Merrill is extremely quick and will be a real challenge to the three Cuyahoga Hts. District boys rated ahead of him. He is the major unknown factor here. The freshman Dilger also has placement potential, while Clemens and Zientek are vulnerable in even the district context. Two other possibilities are the very tall Roesch -- down from 112# last year -- and the quickly improving freshman Logsdon, who pinned to win the Van Buren. Also a contender might be Smith -- just down to 103# -- after some successful efforts at 112#.

The Olentangy District may be a step behind the other three at this weight class. An exception might be senior state qualifier Wright who, so far, has campaigned exclusively at 112#. He was a district runner-up in 1990 and should dominate his generally much younger competition. Last year his two losses were the district finals and first-round state bout after winning his first 30 in a row. He needs to meet some tougher people during regular season action. The Eastern schools look to dominate (over the Central) at this weight with Ballard, Frohnappel, Spencer and Kinzel being rated. Their intramural battles go on all year, so they are very familiar with one another. Arnold (West Jefferson) is a possibility as well and I never totally discount Ready lightweights and so Amicon (Bishop Ready) cannot be forgotten.

#### 112#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: JIM BOARDWINE (STREETSBORO) (6)

#### TOP CONTENDERS

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|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2. Maiani (Sandusky St. Mary)     | 12. Wilkovich (Columbia Station) |
| 3. Walker (Akron Manchester)      | 13. J. Soto (Otsego)             |
| 4. Blackburn (Licking Hts.)       | 14. Nightengale (Wellsville)     |
| 5. Fowler (Apple Creek Waynedale) | 15. Walz (Ayersville)            |
| 6. J. Steiner (Batavia)           | 16. King (Brooklyn)              |
| 7. Crum (Caldwell)                | 17. Perez (Stryker)              |
| 8. Circle (Delta)                 | 18. Hider (West Salem NW)        |
| 9. Littleton (Shadyside)          | 19. Al-Samkari (Dayton Oakwood)  |
| 10. Breuer (Cardinal Stritch)     | 20. Terrill (Brookville)         |
| 11. Meyer (Versailles)            | 21. Buckley (Union Local)        |

This is not a particularly strong weight class, but it does feature legitimate contenders from virtually every part of the state. What will make it even more interesting is that there has been very little interaction between most of those rated so that we should see a lot of surprises.

The strongest district is at Cuyahoga Hts. where four state qualifiers (three of whom placed) match up. Top on the list and my choice at this weight is

the very tall Jim Boardwine. In Division II last year, he captured the district crown over then state runner-up Sampson and then lost a heartbreaking 7-6 rematch in the state finals. By now he should be used to the pressure and still operate at full efficiency in close bouts. He won at Hudson in very impressive fashion and has lost only to Lucas the first week of the season. He should be there at the end. Walker was a district third last year, but then caught fire at the State meet. He won two one-point decisions and then lost his semi-final on criteria --ending up fourth. Undefeated this year in limited action, he has been, again, very impressive. Fowler, sixth last year at States, is now down to 112#. He was second at the incredibly difficult MIT, finishing ahead of Kirkbride, Hegarty, Allen, Minick and Cameron -- although a wonderful draw didn't hurt. In contrast, he was sixth at Smithville losing three times. He, too, is very tall and a match up with Boardwine will look like a basketball game. State qualifier King was a surprise last year, qualifying despite an 18-16 record. He had the worst draw at 103#, being outscored by Dernlan and Maiani 39-9. In my mind, Wilkovich has a better chance of gaining that fourth spot, though the draw will be crucial. Last year Wilkovich was a 103# terror, but had to move to 112# when Mescan went down. Hider and Skolnick (Liberty) are other possibilities.

Maiani was a strong third at 103# last year, losing only a 5-2 bout to Dernlan. Now at 112#, he has had very good success once more and will be a stiff challenge for Boardwine. There is a gulf between him and the remaining 112s at Fostoria, although certainly not an insurmountable one. Circle, Walz and Perez have wrestled many times, so there'll be no surprises here. The ending order will mostly depend on who's hot that particular weekend. Circle was an impressive second at the GMVWA handling a number of solid Division I wrestlers there. State qualifier Breuer has just dropped to 112# after finding it tough sledding at 119#. This class should better suit him and he has placement possibilities. The young Soto is still developing, but he has lots of talent and may capture a qualifying spot this year. Right behind this group is a solid trio of Boroff (Evergreen), Poth (Hicksville) and Tester (Genoa). It should be an exciting competition.

There is also a lot of contenders at Olentangy. Blackburn was fourth at the MIT and was very impressive winning at Licking Hts. He could be a finalist based on recent efforts. Crum wrestles in an out-of-the-way part of the state, but he continues to perform well. Last year he won two district bouts and finished 28-6. State qualifier Littleton has been up-and-down this year with a big win at Bellaire St. John and a second at Shadyside to Buckley. However, he was sixth at the OVAC, although losing only to competitors from much longer schools. Nightengale and Buckley are two other possibilities here, with Gardner (Columbus Academy) another possible choice.

Steiner seems much better than the rest at Dayton. He was a state qualifier in 1990, but lost in the first round. This year he has won several small tournaments, but more impressive was his strong third at Fairfield against the top 112s in the area. Again, I see a gulf between Steiner and the rest of the field with Meyer and Al-Samkari having the best chance of bridging it. Other contenders include Terrill, Oudomsauk (Wyoming) and, maybe, Donley (Milton-Union).

PROJECTED CHAMPION: JIMMY SMILES (BISHOP READY) ①

TOP CONTENDERS

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|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2. Lambdin (Black River)       | ⑥ 12. Boardwine (Streetsboro)    |
| 3. Rowland (West Salem NW)     | 13. Reineck (Fremont St. Joseph) |
| ④ ④ 124. M. Kosins (Bellbrook) | 14. Hehr (Woodsfield)            |
| ③ 5. M. Feckanin (Ledgemont)   | 15. Miller (Hopewell-Loudon)     |
| 6. Barnes (Otsego)             | ④ 16. Allen (Brookfield)         |
| 7. Stout (Brookville)          | 17. Minton (Cincinnati Reading)  |
| 8. Goodson (Union Local)       | 18. Brown (Edgerton)             |
| 9. Rosin (Sandusky St. Mary)   | 19. Reid/Garza (Hicksville)      |
| 10. Mirolo (West Jefferson)    | 20. Wingfield (Versailles)       |
| ⑤ 11. Spencer (Edison North)   | 21. Quinn (Hannibal River)       |

There are certainly more than the average number of weight classes in Division III where one wrestler appears set to dominate. This is one of those with defending state champion Jimmy Smiles well ahead of everybody. An excellent takedown artist, he is just too good for the rest of the field. Last year he pinned in the state finals and had only one somewhat competitive bout -- a semi-final win over Ethan Moran. This season, injuries gave him a late start which might have positive effect of keeping him fresh for March. His only loss was to Division I pick Herb Russell at the OCC final and his first week back Soto scared him in a 6-5 bout at 125#. If healthy, he won't have any that close at the Nutter Center.

There is a good field at Olentangy. Goodson and Spencer were 2-3 at the OVAC and have been mostly solid all year. Mirolo just dropped from 125# and is the best in Columbus after Smiles. He will have to be at his best to qualify, though. Both Hehr and Quinn were disappointing at the OVAC, but both were a bout from state qualification last year. Hehr losing by the margin of a single takedown. Another candidate would have been Platt (Licking Hts.), but injuries look to keep him out of the competition. Kellett (New Albany) might also contend at the district.

Lambdin and Rowland are old rivals who are only a point or two apart. Rowland won their latest meeting, but I think Lambdin's turn may be next. Lambdin is already a three-time state qualifier, but has never placed. He has had a string of incredibly difficult draws and bad luck. If there's an evening up process in this life, he should be a finalist this year. Rowland, a two-time state qualifier, was a finalist in 1990, losing to Hartman in the 112# finals. It was kind of a magical story with Rowland finishing fourth in the district and then almost winning the whole thing. He, too, has been excellent this year, winning three tournaments and this week defeating the excellent Hegarty at Doylestown. Right behind this duo is state qualifier Mike Feckanin who beat Rowland for third last year at Cuyahoga Hts. Feckanin drew defending champion Mattin the quarter-finals losing 2-1 and being eliminated. He, too, has been outstanding in 1991. That leaves only one qualifying berth open with the elder Boardwine, state alternate Allen and a whole host of other to vie for. Watch for Shipman (Cardinal), Lynch (Perry) and Gray (Smithville) in this donnybrook.

Things are just as confused at Fostoria, although the quality is not as good. Barnes qualified at 125# last year, but has switched weights with Soto. His top effort was a narrow 11-10 loss to Amicon at the higher weight. Behind him is the sensational freshmen Rosin, who already this year has won at Edison and Fremont St. Joseph, while finishing third at Sandusky St. Mary and Marion Harding. If he hasn't worn down, he should qualify. Also close by is state qualifier Reineck, who has battled Rosin all year and "A" Classic champ Miller who has had a very good year. Behind this quartet is another foursome with qualifying potential. I think Brown and Reid are the best of this second group, but Goeltzenleuchter (Ayersville) and Grime (Archbold) are also possibilities. As is so often the case in the Northwest, the five man qualifying format generally results in a wild, frantic scrambling for the last several berths.

State qualifiers Kosins and Stout are way ahead of the rest of the 119s at Dayton. Stout was sixth last year and fifth the year before and has been a steady placer and occasional winner at tournaments this year. My thinking is now that Kosins may have inched past him. Both could capture low places. The rest of the field is at least 8 to 10 points behind.

125#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: MATT DERNLAN (WEST LIBERTY SALEM) ①

TOP CONTENDERS

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|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ③ 2. Soto (Otsego)             | 12. Case (Cadiz)                 |
| 3. Hartman (Wellington)        | 13. Meade (Clear Fork)           |
| 4. Amicon (Bishop Ready)       | 14. Lipinski (Brookville)        |
| ②-119 5. Shinkle (Batavia)     | ⑤ 15. Edwards (Columbia Station) |
| 6. Lawless (Bellbrook)         | 16. Fetterman (Gibsonburg)       |
| 7. Mokros (Shadyside)          | 17. Bailey (Brookfield)          |
| 8. Reichert (Norwalk St. Paul) | 18. Hinkle (Highland Sparta)     |
| 9. Donahue (Bellaire St. John) | 19. Krzynowek (Cuyahoga Hts.)    |
| 10. Torzok (Perry)             | 20. Reid (Hicksville)            |
| 11. Moody (New London)         | 21. McMullen (Smithville)        |

This really an excellent weight class, but as good as it is, Matt Dernlan cruise to his third state title. Now the winner of over 100 consecutive bouts, this deceptively appearing competitor is the best 125# wrestler in Ohio regardless of school classification. Like all the other Dernlans, he is just so well trained and superbly conditioned that it takes an extraordinary effort just to stay close to him. His technical fall in the State finals over the excellent Peters clearly demonstrated just how good he is at the Division III level and his MIT triumph over Marchette placed that superiority in a broader context.

Dernlan is not the only good wrestler at the Dayton District. Shinkle was fourth last year at 112# and he spearheads what is becoming a fine Batavia team. He was voted OW at the Fairfield Invitational -- a real honor considering the excellent field assembled there. Only a junior, he has lost but two bouts in two years and will be a real factor in 1992. Lawless should be the third qualifier as this expatriate from Xenia has already won three tournaments this year. All

three qualifiers ought to place at the state level. Left out in the cold is the improving Lipinski and Wright (Valley View).

At Fostoria, Soto should be the big gun. He gained a state third as a sophomore two years ago, but last year lost in the quarter-finals and was eliminated (that cannot happen this year). He is excellent on his feet and should spend as little time on the mat as possible. As mentioned, he lost a 6-5 decision to 119# choice Smiles earlier in the year for his only defeat. There are three other state qualifiers here -- Reichert, Meade and Fetterman -- and the last named may be in qualification difficulty. Even Meade and Reichert won't have it real easy as a strong field will converge on Fostoria. I particularly like Moody and Reid (if at this weight). Barnes (Delta) and Demorest (Edgerton) are all good. Besides Soto, only Reichert would seem to have a reasonable chance at state placement.

I've put defending 112# state champ Hartman third -- not so much on a diminution in his skills, but as a reflection of the top caliber competition. A district runner-up in 1990, he wrestled brilliantly at States giving up only one point despite a schedule that included a defending state champ and a former state runner-up. At 125#, he has been somewhat less successful -- although only marginally so. He could be a finalist again. Torzok is second best here and wrestled Amicon tough in a 10-8 loss. The rest of this district is very weak with the last two berths open for grabs.

Amicon heads the Olentangy District though I suspect he might just a bit small for the weight. Last year he drew defending state champ Mattin in the first round of states, lost a competitive bout and was then eliminated when Mattin last was defeated. Two-time state placer Mokros (second and fifth) will vie with Amicon for district superiority and may, in fact, win it. He'll be the larger of the two and his scrappy style is pretty much unrelenting. Donahue, a clever legman and a State third two years ago, is another top contender here. He and Mokros have bumped heads before with the latter generally winning. At the OVAC, Mokros was third while Donahue was injured and forced to default out. State qualifier Case was only seventh at the OVAC, but that is not indicative of his talent. He should get the last qualifying spot. One other important candidate is Hinkle. A move in from Texas, where he was a free-style champ, he has performed well in smaller tournaments. Other thoughts are Waller (Caldwell) and Pinkerton (Waterford).

PROJECTED CHAMPION: JEFF ABBOTT (WEST LIBERTY SALEM) ①

TOP CONTENDERS

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|------|------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------|
| ②    | 2. Moran (Versailles)        | ④/125 | 13. Fuentes (Liberty Center)    |
| ③    | 3. S. Feckanin (Ledgemont)   |       | 14. Wilson (Olentangy)          |
|      | 4. Howard (Licking Hts.)     |       | 15. Soppitt (Perry)             |
|      | 5. Kramer (Delphos St. John) |       | 16. Baker (Union Local)         |
| ⑥    | 6. Johnson (Jonathan Alder)  |       | 17. Genovese (Woodridge)        |
| ②/25 | 7. Garcia (Columbus Academy) |       | 18. Castro (Otsego)             |
|      | 8. Adams (Aurora)            |       | 19. Howard (Batavia)            |
|      | 9. Hengsteler (Arcadia)      |       | 20. Schmenk (Sandusky St. Mary) |
|      | 10. Moritz (Brookville)      |       | 21. Mamich (Chanel)             |
|      | 11. S. Allan (Brookfield)    |       | 22. Privette (Dayton Oakwood)   |
|      | 12. McKeever (Cadiz)         |       | 23. Gleckler (Evergreen)        |

I think this weight is likely to evolve into a three way dogfight for top honors between Abbott, Moran and Feckanin. With the first two exiting from the same district, it would mean that the one away from Feckanin would have a far easier path to the finals. Feckanin, of course, would have to beat both to win. Let's look at each top contender individually.

Abbott is already a three-time state qualifier in Division II when he wrestled for St. Paris Graham. As a sophomore, he captured a fourth place, but last year a very difficult draw cost him a place he surely deserved. Now wrestling at West Liberty Salem, he certainly benefits from having Dernlan as a workout partner. He was a solid fourth at the MIT, losing to Chris Grant twice and won the Wayne at 135# against arch-rival Ethan Moran. A tremendous pinner, he seems to have had trouble staying relaxed at the State level and wrestling his best.

Moran is also a three-time state qualifier in Division III including a runner-up finish to Dernlan as a sophomore and a fourth place finish last year. He has lost only to Abbott this year and should really be labeled a cofavorite with him. Not the pinner like Abbott, he uses good strength and fine athletic ability to insure victory. Shorter than Abbott, the cut to 130# should not affect him as much.

, Feckanin, only a junior, has qualified for States each year -- finishing second to Yinger as a freshman and fifth last year after a heartbreaking semi-final loss. I think he may match up better with Moran than Abbott, but either will be tough for him to beat. He is quicker than either of them and should be able to score on his feet, however.

At Dayton, former state qualifier Moritz is a reasonable third choice beyond the top duo. He has performed in a steady manner, placing at the GMVWA (sixth), Troy (fourth) and Fairfield (second). He should be more battle-hardened than his closest competition, Howard and Privette.

Feckanin would appear to have unequalled stature at Cuyahoga Hts. However, both state qualifier Allan and Adams are good enough for a low place. Adams, in

particular, has wrestled well this season. The fourth berth is wide open. I've listed Soppitt, Genovese and Mamich, but they are only marginally superior to a whole spectrum of other contenders. Mitchell (Chargin Falls), for example, missed state qualification by one bout and three points last season. He may be better than my listed trio. Wise (Rootstown), if this is where he certifies, may also play a role here.

I'm not quite sure about the Olentangy District. State qualifier Howard is starting to come on at this point in the season and may be slightly better than either Johnson or state qualifier Garcia -- but it's very close. Last year Howard defeated Garcia 10-9 at Districts and Johnson took Garcia 3-2 at the North Union Invitational. Two other strong possibilities from the Eastern sectionals are McKeever and state qualifier Baker, both of whom placed at the OVAC. McKeever, in particular, has had a truly excellent season. Baker came on strong at the end of last season to gain state qualification and could do so again this year. This would appear to leave out Collins (Bishop Ready) and Lindsey (Marion Pleasant), although each has had some high points this year.

The Fostoria District will provide a lot of folks for the bracket sheet, but not many potential placers. State qualifier Kramer is a strong, blocky competitor with good riding abilities. He'll outmuscle many in this competition. The rest of the eventual qualifiers are likely to be overmatched at the Nutter Center, although Hengsteler or Fuentes could pull a surprise. Two other possibilities beyond those rated are Zeller (Genoa) and Johnson (North Baltimore). Not too exciting here.

135#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: DOMINIC DISABATO (BISHOP READY) ①

TOP CONTENDERS

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|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ⑤/30 2. Hoffman (Liberty Center)    | 13. Vonier (Wauseon)            |
| 3. Wilson (Olentangy)               | 14. Peace (Batavia)             |
| ④ 4. Behrens (Hawken)               | 15. Nicola (St. Thomas Aquinas) |
| ⑥ 5. Ford (Delta)                   | 16. Tyson (Elmwood)             |
| 6. Wheeler (Otsego)                 | ⑤ 17. Lamanna (Ledgemont)       |
| 7. Rinehart (Galion Northmor)       | 18. Safenovitz (Beachwood)      |
| 8. Broud (Wellington)               | 19. Al-Samkari (Dayton Oakwood) |
| ② 9. Tipton (Cadiz)                 | 20. Ledesma (Evergreen)         |
| 10. Courtot (Newark Catholic)       | 21. Wax (Bellbrook)             |
| 11. Bey (Versailles)                | 22. Gross (New London)          |
| 12. Fisher (Garrettsville Garfield) | 23. Joyce (Chanel)              |

This is the last year for the last of six brothers who have made wrestling history in Ohio. Between them, they have already won ten state titles and the 11th will probably be the easiest one of all. When Dominic stands on the victory stand, I think we'll all remember Vince, Luke, Leo, Mike and Adam as well, in tribute to a great wrestling family. Dominic will be the first to take three titles in the family and, in fact, will become a very rare four-time finalist.



As for the competition -- there won't be much, not at least for first place. This is the weakest weight class in Division III -- except for DiSabato -- and I've struggled to find people to put in the second through sixth slots. It seems like we ought to go from first to about seventh. Last year, DiSabato's closest bout was a 17-7 quarter-final blow out and he won't have one that close this year. His only loss has been to Division II state champ Carcelli in an exciting one-point bout, but there is no chance of that here. Incidentally, this is the weight class with the longest unbroken string of winners in the report -- six -- and the extension of that streak seems pretty certain.

At Olentangy there should be a four-way battle for the three spots left behind DiSabato. The leading contender is Wilson, who was the district runner-up at 125# last year and won a bout at States. It's a bout I won't soon forget as he was way behind Tuttle when he caught and pinned him with 12 seconds left. He lost a close match to Lippert next round. Rinehart had a much shorter district effort -- it was a quick two losses and out. However, he won the big Gorman Invitation over a very tough field and when healthy is certainly capable of placing. Courtot was one bout from state qualification, but lost a narrow 7-5 decision. He has been very successful at a number of smaller tournaments around the state this year. Finally, Tipton has made great progress throughout the season winning the Cadiz Round Robin, the Mountaineer Classic while placing third at Buckeye Local and fourth at the OVAC. Earlier, McKnight (New Albany) would have been rated as a fifth prime candidate for these three spots based on an excellent 1990 district culminating in his state alternate finish. So far, in 1991, he has not been as successful.

District champion and state qualifier Hoffman is probably the best at Fostoria. He won a state bout last year. This year he cruised to the "A" Classic title and has generally been very tough on Division III competition. Ford and Wheeler are other candidates for low places. Wheeler was a district qualifier as a freshman and ended the year at 27-8. This year he has wrestled at several weights with good success, including a runner-up finish to Romp at St. John. Ford was a strong third at GMVWA and is a sound, experienced competitor. Vonier has a terrible (relatively) record, but has been searching for the right weight class. If this is it, he'll do just fine. Last year he was twice one victory from States, but lost both times. Tyson, Ledesma and Gross are other possibilities -- each of whom has been a consistent placer. Two other possibilities are Fiant (Clear Fork) and Kesson (Lima Central Catholic).

Two-time state qualifier Behrens heads the Cuyahoga Hts. contingent and he is still looking for his first state victory -- it should happen this year. There is a big fall off after that with the tough Broud standing next. He has never quite put it together, but this should be his year. Behrens eliminated him last year. State qualifier Fisher is back, but is by no means a sure choice. He needs to reach peak form if he is to qualify again. Lamanna is pretty much an unknown -- though I think he might be a transfer from Euclid -- but this excellent sophomore is 15-4 against some good competition. Wrestling a weight up most of the year, he was third at Ledgemont and Bishop Ready, although DiSabato TFed him there. He may already be ahead of Fisher. I've also listed Nicola, Safenovitz and Joyce and they both have qualification chances. Two other thoughts are Hampton (Richmond Hts.) and Maruschak (Perry).

It's pretty weak at Dayton at 135. Bey and Peace are possibilities, with Al-Samkari and Wax looking for that third state berth. Maybe they're better than

I think, but for now this contingent looks like they'll be facing first-round trouble.

140#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: RYAN PETERS (BEACHWOOD)

TOP CONTENDERS

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|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ① 2. Mazey (Chanel)                    | 12. Wilson (Jonathan Alder)       |
| ② 3. D. Wright (Wellington)            | ④ 13. Fow (Chagrin Falls)         |
| ③ 4. Wellmeier (Lima Central Catholic) | ⑤ 14. Cook (Sycamore Mohawk)      |
| 5. Kantor (Dayton Oakwood)             | ③ - 13 15. Gregory (Williamsburg) |
| ⑥ 6. Sams (Wellsville)                 | 16. Kepling (Otsego)              |
| 7. Miracle (Sidney Lehman)             | 17. Balwanz (Bellaire St. John)   |
| 8. Alvarado (Archbold)                 | 18. Brumbaugh (North Baltimore)   |
| 9. Mamere (Huron)                      | 19. Gray (Norwayne)               |
| 10. Wright (West Jefferson)            | 20. Straughter (Grandview Hts.)   |
| 11. Lavender (Casstown Miami East)     | 21. Foote (Wauseon)               |

Last year as a sophomore, Peters won his first 35 bouts moving into the state finals before losing on a technical fall to Dernlan. It was already his second state qualification and boded great things for the future. That should begin to happen this year as Peters moves toward his first state title. Again undefeated, Peters has wrestled as high as 152# while preparing for tournament action. While he has to be accorded the favorite's role, he will face stiff competition -- particularly within his own district.

The Cuyahoga District is loaded. Two-time state qualifier John Mazey was the district champ at this weight last year and then lost a hotly contested state semi-final bout on a high disputed stalling call. He ended up fourth as his vanquisher went on to the title over an opponent Mazey had majored at the district level. Mazey has wrestled a very strong schedule, winning at Solon and Wadsworth and placing fourth at North Canton -- all at 145#. Former state qualifier Dean Wright was a 16-13 upset loser in first-round district action last year and didn't qualify. Had he done so, Wellington may well have won the state title instead of Bishop Ready. He was second to Strunck at Medina and will be a major factor at this weight. The excellent Fow should grab the fourth berth, but there is no margin for error either in wrestling or pairings. Gray is a possibility for a qualifying spot somewhere with Ebert (Apple Creek Waynedale), Kasarda (Streetsboro) and Huggins (Sandy Valley) other challengers. This is a great weight class here, but I wouldn't be surprised some people move up to 145#.

Wellmeier was 34-5 last year as a sophomore, including state qualification. A wrestler who likes to roll around, he is a big scorer racking up points and pins in a big hurry. This district has some other interesting possibilities. I've rated Alvarado over Mamere, despite a lot of past evidence suggesting that it should go the other way. After all, Mamere pinned Alvarado at the district level and while both gained the States, Mamere placed fifth while Alvarado was a first-round loser. Still, recent results have seen Mamere struggling while Alvarado has looked great. Buddy Cook was pretty much unknown until his big win at Van Buren, including an overtime win over state placer Tyson from Kansas

Lakota. It suddenly put into the proper context his other tourney wins during the year. Kepling is another strong possibility coming off last year where he ended up as the state alternate. Other possibilities are Foote and Brumbaugh, with McHugh (Liberty Center) a real long shot.

The Dayton District features four returning state qualifiers, although that could change quickly. Two-time qualifier Kantor leads the way after a season which has seen him win at Edgewood, Springfield Central Catholic and Oakwood. He won on a default over Miracle, who would seem to be his closest competitor. Miracle should be perfectly well by tourney time and should qualify easily. He could possible grab a low state place. Lavender was a district third at 130# last year and then dropped a 12-11 first round bout. I wouldn't be surprised to see look at 135# as an opportunity. State qualifier Gregory has disappeared from view, but a third-hand source told me he would be at 140#. He could be a factor. Tucker (Valley View) is another possibility.

The natural choice at Olentangy would have been state quarter-finalist Lee Miller (Olentangy), who seemed on his way to outstanding year. He has left the team, presumably for the rest of the season, and will not compete. That leaves state qualifiers Sams as the top choice here and he also was a quarter-finalist last year, losing to Homer Wright at that point. He suffered his first two losses recently -- both heartbreakers -- but has definite placement capabilities. Wright and Wilson are both good with the former winning two district matches as 145# last year. Wilson has recently won two smaller tourneys and has been sharp in doing so. Balwanz and Straughter have been on the fringes of success and have state qualification potential, although it is unlikely they could win there. Three other candidates are Gregg (Shenendoah), Howard (Licking Hts.) and Dubinsky (Union Local).

145#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: HOMER WRIGHT (WELLINGTON) ①

TOP CONTENDER

- |                               |                                    |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ② 2. Futo (Streetsboro)       | ④ 13. Hayes (Caldwell)             |
| ③ 3. Demorest (Edgerton)      | 14. Flesher (Sandy Valley)         |
| 4. Slone (Jonathan Alder)     | 15. Dorley (Lima Central Catholic) |
| 5. Donaldson (Milton-Union)   | 16. Noble (Bellbrook)              |
| 6. Buckley (Union Local)      | 17. Coiffard (Sandusky St. Mary)   |
| 7. Moyer (Brookville)         | 18. Hanood (Tusky Valley)          |
| 8. Smith (Norwalk St. Paul)   | 19. Versch (Aurora)                |
| 9. Spencer (Genoa)            | 20. Worst (Carey)                  |
| 10. Witherite (Richmond Hts.) | 21. Bergman (Versailles)           |
| 11. Kelly (Bishop Ready)      | 22. Bakos (Mapleton)               |
| 12. Babcock (Evergreen)       | 23. Call (Wellsville)              |

This is a weight class with a lot of imponderables dealing with injuries, weight changes and styles. My choice is Homer Wright, a two-time state qualifier and third place finisher at 140# last year. Wright has had some injury problems, but should be healthy by tourney time. Wright was second at the MIT, beating Division I contenders like Seesholtz and Beres and losing to the superior Foston

by just 3-2. He scores well from his feet and has wrestled a lot of pressure bouts, which may be the telling consideration at this weight class.

Wright's biggest challenger could be at that same Cuyahoga Hts. District. Futo was a Division II district qualifier last year at 140#, but Streetsboro competes in Division III this year. I think Futo has made a quantum jump in terms of improvement during the past year. He's been up at 152# most of the year and gave Division I choice, Joe Plouse, one of his best matches of the year. Witherite is at a clear level lower than either of the top two boys at this district. Up three weight classes, he may lack muscle for Wright or Futo. Flesher is also up those same three weights and may face the same problem. He has been excellent, however, so far this year. It would not really be good strategy to move to 140# considering the crowded competition there. Versch and Bakos are two other possibilities, with Rose (Cardinal) an outside chance.

Demorest was sixth last year at 140#, losing 9-3 to Wright along the way. He crushed Worst at the "A" Classic and has had little trouble against anyone so far this year. It can't hurt either having Nye as a workout partner. State qualifier Spencer is my second choice at this district and he is low-place potential. State qualifier Smith had an injured knee that kept him out of the line up the first six weeks. After a couple bouts, it apparently continues to bother him. It casts doubt on his tournament availability and his conditioning. Norwalk St. Paul, while not blessed with lots of wrestlers, has had a good record in state tourney action. Babcock is just down from 152# and could be a factor. Dorley is something of an unknown, but his track is very good. He was a semi-finalist at the OCC. Coiffard is just down from 152# and immediately won the Panther Classic. He may be able to qualify at this weight. Worst was a 103# qualifier two years ago and is still finding out how to wrestle with his new huge body. His team, Carey, looks to be developing a fine squad, which should really mature next year. Good (Collins Western Reserve), Tate (Eastwood) and Meyer (Ottawa-Glandorf) are other state candidates.

A major unknown is which way Slone will go. At 145#, he looks like a good candidate for placement. He was one bout from state qualification last year at 153#, but rumors persist that he will drop to 145#. Buckley also has placement potential. He was second at Bellaire St. John (to a Pennsylvania wrestler), second at the OVAC (to a West Virginia champ) and first at Barnesville. It's been an exceptional year. Kelly was one bout from qualification at this weight last year, so he should be a top candidate to make it this time. He has had trouble with Smith this year losing to the Norwalk St. Paul version at Ready and to the Dayton Wayne version at St. John. Hayes is also strong, although Buckley beat him by six in the Barnesville final. Hanood, Call, Smarella (Mingo) and Sensenbaugh (Newark Catholic) are other possible contenders.

Donaldson, a Division II state qualifier, and Moyer, a Division III state qualifier, head the Dayton District. Both were first-round losers, but should fare much better in 1991. There is a big drop off after them, with Noble and Bergman contending for the last spot.

PROJECTED CHAMPION: TOM NYE (EDGERTON) (1)

TOP CONTENDERS

- |                                 |                                  |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2. Vcelka (Union Local)         | 13. Dimel (West Jefferson)       |
| (3) 3. Connelly (Rocky River)   | 14. Patrick (Galion Northmor)    |
| 4. Ramsey (Licking Hts.)        | (4) 15. Link (Oberlin)           |
| (2) 5. Weber (Wauseon)          | 16. Goettke (Bishop Ready)       |
| (5) 6. Pittman (Ontario)        | 17. Estridge (Batavia)           |
| 7. Phelps (Cincinnati Reading)  | 18. Mericle (Sherwood Fairview)  |
| 8. Baird (Govermory)            | 19. Carpenter (Marion Pleasant)  |
| 9. DeGenova (Bellaire St. John) | 20. Hopperton (Columbia Station) |
| 10. Surmay (St. Thomas Aquinas) | 21. Colwell (Eastwood)           |
| 11. Miller (Versailles)         | 22. Seim (Dayton Oakwood)        |
| 12. Sedlick (Wellington)        | 23. Villareal (Gibsonburg)       |

Tom Nye really is an amazing wrestler. A rapid fire pinner, a tremendous scorer right from the neutral position and a turner in almost every situation, he dominates this weight class. Nobody has beaten him during the last two years and during that time he has had only one close bout (Shepherd in last year's semis). And yet, I can foresee a possible upset here under just the right conditions. The perpetrator would have to be Buster Vcelka, a two-time state qualifier and fourth in Division II last year. Vcelka is amazing with the legs and, if he could get the opening takedown and put in the legs, he just might be able to create the down-tempo, low-scoring bout where he excels. It's not likely, but it could happen. Vcelka, incidentally, is a three sport star in the Ohio Valley and an outstanding wrestler. He just won the giant OVAC and his only defeat was at Barnesville to Division II Kirk Henry.

Nobody is close to Nye at Fostoria. State qualifier Weber won the big Rogers Tourney, while Pittman was champ at the Gorman and Tiffin. Weber is probably a more solid performer, but Pittman can really go. He'll be a crowd pleaser at every venue where he wrestles. That locks up three spots, but the last two are really wide open. I've listed Patrick, Mericle, Colwell and Villareal, but they are just marginally better than about a half dozen others. While the headlines cruise to the top three spots, there will be a tremendous struggle for those last two berths. A possible qualifier to emerge from these entanglements is Good (Collins Western Reserve).

Vcelka, too, faces a crowded field, but he does not dominate it like Nye does Fostoria. Bo Ramsey was second at the MIT and Licking Hts., losing only to very strong champions. He should get a place. DeGenova has placed in three strong tourneys this year, including a final round 2-1 loss to Vcelka at Shadyside. Dimel just missed qualification by that ever elusive one bout last year and will be "in the hunt" in 1991. Goettke placed fifth at the OCC and was third at the Ready Classic. He may be peaking at just about the right time. Carpenter is rated first at this weight in Columbus, but in my mind will struggle to qualify. Patrick is very good, but will need good fortune to get through at this weight.

Connelly is the last of, maybe, nine wrestling brothers at Rocky River. A state qualifier as a sophomore in Division II, he fell victim to a first round district upset last year and was eliminated. Now a senior, he should place at this weight and could easily be a finalist. It would be a great finale for an exceptional wrestling family. ~~Derek Baird has done well all year, finishing runner-up at both Wadsworth and Coventry. I've also listed the undefeated Surmay (although he has not wrestled a strenuous schedule), Sedlick, Link and Hopperton.~~ The field is so well balanced, that any of this group could qualify. An intriguing competition is Esposito -- a district qualifier last year at 171# -- who has moved down to this weight. He has placed in two tourneys at 160#.

In the past, the Southwest District was what you hoped to draw into if you were in the small school category. Almost uniformly, the contestants from there were overmatched at the state level and quickly succumbed. Now with teams like Brookville, West Liberty Salem, Bellbrook and Versailles, that mindset is no longer relevant. There are tough kids at every weight class. Well, almost every weight class. Here at 152#, the cupboard is close to bare. State quarter-finalist Phelps may be an exception but everybody else here is probably in trouble. I've chosen Wayne Invitation runner-up Eric Miller for the second spot and Fairfield runner-up Estridge for the third slot. Seim could move either of them out on a hot weekend.

160#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: BRIAN WILLIAMS (SHERWOOD FAIRVIEW) ~~2-171~~  
 (3)-171

TOP CONTENDERS

- |                                  |                              |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. <del>Belknap (Coventry)</del> | 13. Godwin (Otsego)          |
| 2. Alex (Bellbrook)              | 14. Hupp (Bridgeport)        |
| 3. Evans (Elmwood)               | 15. Lambdin (Black River)    |
| 4. Rose (Hannibal River)         | 16. Fribourg (Batavia)       |
| 5. Gibeaut (Union Local)         | 17. DiFranco (Ledgemont)     |
| 6. Scott (Sandusky St. Mary)     | 18. Wilson (West Jefferson)  |
| 7. Blubaugh (Clear Fork)         | 19. Misch (Perry)            |
| 8. Merillat (Archbold)           | 20. Frank (Galion Northmor)  |
| 9. Bene (Columbia Station)       | 21. Miller (Milton Union)    |
| 10. Bergman (Versailles)         | 22. Heiser (Newark Catholic) |
| 11. Cover (Mapleton)             | 23. Edwards (Berkshire)      |

My friends, this is the kind of weight class we all wish would happen more often. A weight class that can be mulled over, discussed and argued about with the greatest of pleasure. One that features a multitude of fine performers from all over Ohio, showcasing many different styles. A competition that contains ten returning state qualifiers, none of whom even slightly dominates the weight class. It should have something for everyone -- except for forecasters -- because almost anyone could win it.

My choice is the talented senior from Sherwood Fairview, Brian Williams. Last year Williams wrestled up a weight (for team reasons) and still managed a third place finish at 171#. In fact, three of his four victories were cakewalks. This year he opened the season at 160# -- winning at Wayne Trace -- and has since

competed at 171# in a flawless manner. I understand he weighs in at around 162#, so I feel confident he will be here at tourney time.

Williams will be tested in his own district. Shad Evans won the giant MIT and was very impressive in doing so. A former state qualifier, he had something of an up-and-down career. Two-time state qualifier Scott got a late start because of football and, consequently, began the season less than impressively. However, his recent win at the Panther Classic over Blubaugh suggests he is about in form now. He was sixth at 140# two years ago. Blubaugh has twice won the Gorman -- this year as OW -- but has yet to make a state appearance. Last year an overtime loss was the crusher. Merillat is yet another interesting candidate. A state qualifier at 135#, he has returned -- after football -- up four weight classes. No problem. He won the "A" Classic final 10-0 and recently defeated Evans in a dual. I may have ranked him too low. That's five outstanding candidates, but Godwin is also a strong possibility. He beat Division I Sweet at the St. Johns. I also like Ryan (Huron) and Giles (Cardinal Stritch), but they may be overmatched here. All in all, this should be a splendidly competitive district.

Many in the Akron-Canton area see Belknap as a title favorite at this weight. Strong praise for a wrestler who has never seen state action. However, his results indicate exactly that type of potential and his Wadsworth and Coventry wins came against good opposition. Once beaten this year, his strength, in particular, makes him a formidable opponent. Bene, just down from 171#, could be a finalist in this district based on his past performances. A district qualifier at 171# last year, he will have a size and strength advantage on many at this class. After this duo, there is a substantial drop-off in quality at Cuyahoga Hts. State qualifier Cover transferred from Crestview to Mapleton and now competes in this district. He was 29-11 last year, losing in the first round at States. Lambdin and Cover have had some titanic struggles the past couple years with Cover just a little ahead. That may not continue. DiFranco, Misch and Edwards are other possibilities here, but we cannot forget Pastva (Mogadore) either. A state qualifier last year (when Belknap slammed him), he was outscored 36-5 in two state bouts. It would be a surprise, but he could qualify again.

Alex is another of those fine Xenia wrestlers who fled to Bellbrook to avoid the budget cutter's axe. A state qualifier at 145# in Division I last year, he lost a tough first round bout 13-12. It was a difficult cut to 145# last year and 160# seems a much more comfortable location now. His results are improving suggesting that he may have started practice late and is just now rounding into top form. If so, he is a district threat to win since he is a very talented wrestler. His recent OW at the Bellbrook suggests that he will be a very difficult opponent. State qualifier Bergman should also qualify easily, but then that last spot is wide open. State alternate Fribourg is an early favorite, but Miller and Audas (Brookville) could contend.

At Olentangy, we will see yet another renewal of the Rose-Gibeaut match up. Already this year, state qualifier Rose has met his Union Local counterpart three times -- winning the first two narrowly and losing the OVAC final in the same manner. Gibeaut did not see tournament action last year or he, too, would probably have qualified. Opponents drawing either of these two contestants can anticipate six grueling, physical minutes. Both have good placement potential. Hupp was fourth at the OVAC and lost to Rose 4-2 in the semi-finals. He seems to be gaining on the top two as the year progresses. Frank, Wilson and Heiser are

also possibilities for qualification here, but will need a good draw. The key to that may be a strong sectional performance. Whitehurst (Cadiz) and Seiter (Marion Pleasant) have also had some successes this year.

171#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: TROY SINTOBIN (DELTA) ①

TOP CONTENDERS

- |       |                                   |                                |
|-------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ②/160 | 2. Hartel (Apple Creek Waynedale) | 12. Vance (Cincinnati Reading) |
|       | 3. Manteau (Union Local)          | 13. Jahna (Gibsonburg)         |
|       | 4. Voltz (Sandusky St. Mary)      | 14. Baughman (Manchester)      |
| ②     | 5. Williams (Steubenville CC)     | 15. Vanderhorst (Covington)    |
|       | 6. DeHoff (Tuslaw)                | 16. Bates (Evergreen)          |
|       | 7. Monnett (Dayton Oakwood)       | ①/17. Modra (Hannibal River)   |
|       | 8. Babcock (Archbold)             | 18. Powell (Barnesville)       |
| ④     | 9. Rocchi (Cadiz)                 | 19. Carmichael (Independence)  |
|       | 10. White (Licking Hts.)          | 20. Moore (Milton-Union)       |
|       | 11. Stewart (Perry)               | 21. Brown (Eastwood)           |

This is a weight class that has two interesting features -- one is a very unbalanced geographical configuration where one district has eight contestants who probably deserve state qualification (only four will make it) and second, except for Sintobin, the overall level of competition is not very strong.

Sintobin is first and foremost a weight lifter who happens to wrestle. Still, you can't argue with his results -- third at 152# as a sophomore and champion last year at this weight. In 1990, he won both his semi-final and title bout by a single point, but it shouldn't be nearly that close this year. Not fancy, he just executes the basics time and again wearing down the opponent's resistance.

At Fostoria, Sintobin meets mild opposition -- especially now that Williams is at 160#. State qualifier Voltz would seem to stand second best here with "A" Classic winner Babcock, perhaps, next. Voltz has lots of experience and performs in a reasonably predictable manner. Babcock is basically wrestling his first varsity year at Archbold and may be more subject to the vagaries of chance and nerves. Babcock's big rival, Jahna, should also content strongly for a qualification spot. Last year he had to default in his last go-to-state bout. Both Bates and Brown are rated with some trepidation, since they both have had a season of some real highs and real lows. I would have rated Thompson (Clear Fork), but he has not competed in some time and may be out for the season. Other possibilities are Linder (Collins Western Reserve), Theis (Sycamore Mohawk), Baumgartner (Carey) and Medaugh (Stryker).

The really crowded district is the one at Olentangy. I've rated six of this field in my top group, but there are two others that probably deserve equal consideration. The quintet of Manteau, Williams, Rocchi, Perkins and Modra have been battling with each other all year without coming to real conclusion. Manteau has probably been the most consistent with a second at Bellaire St. John (to Modra), first at Barnesville (over Powell), first at Shadyside (over Perkins)



and a third at the OVAC (losing to Modra, who didn't place). Each of this group has the same kind of track record, with pluses and minuses against each of the others. Clearly the pairings will make an enormous difference in the final outcome. The other complication are three Central District wrestlers, the best of whom is probably White. However, both Sloboda (Marion Pleasant) and Sanzo (Grandview Hts.) could beat various of these OVAC wrestlers, too. In point of fact, some of the non-qualifiers here would make it easily from the other districts.

Former state qualifier Hartel is a potential finalist here. A strong fourth at the MIT where he lost of Hepp twice, he has otherwise been perfect. DeHoff, possibly his closest rival, was scheduled to meet him in the finals at Smithville and was forced to forfeit after a semi-final injury. He has not lost any bout wrestled. With Bene now down at 160#, Stewart (Perry), Baughman (Akron Manchester) and Carmichael (Independence) may be next best. Stewart was walloped down at the Ready Invitational, but has done well in this area. Baughman was third at Smithville losing 8-7 to DeHoff and won handily at Copley and Mogadore. He may be rated too low. Carmichael also gave DeHoff a tough battle in the Cat Classic and won solidly at Hawken. He's a long shot. Haslom (Sandy Valley) and Riddle (Black River) also could be factors here.

The Dayton District has some veteran performers who, for the most part, haven't established themselves yet as people who can win at the state level. Monnett did qualify for States last year, but was buried in the first round 18-3. This year he was first at Springfield Catholic and second at Edgewood and Oakwood. Vance was the state alternate losing to Monnett in the consolation finals. Vanderhorst and Moore are other possibilities, but nobody here will challenge the top boys.

189#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: MATT HAMBURG (CARDINAL) 2

TOP CONTENDERS

- |                                           |                                        |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <u>3</u> 2. Partee/Lewis (Ayersville)     | <u>5</u> 13. Hicks (Amanda-Clearcreek) |
| <u>1</u> 3. Schumacher (Woodsfield)       | 14. R. Sintobin (Delta)                |
| <u>4</u> 4. Gresser (Wauseon)             | 15. Jackson (Brookville)               |
| <u>6</u> 5. Hickman (Jamestown Greenview) | 16. Klima (Huron)                      |
| 6. Kigar (Genoa)                          | 17. Haegele (Licking Hts.)             |
| 7. Metzger (Olentangy)                    | 18. Amato (Aurora)                     |
| 8. Schaffer (Black River)                 | 19. Nemeth (Cadiz)                     |
| 9. Monnin (Versailles)                    | 20. Grime (Archbold)                   |
| 10. Steffen (Mapleton)                    | 21. Veith (Marion Pleasant)            |
| 11. Rippey (Sandy Valley)                 | 22. Hoke (Milton Union)                |
| 12. Tomblin (Tusky Valley)                | 23. Arbogast (Hopewell-Loudon)         |

I don't have a clue here. For a variety of reasons which we'll discuss, many of the best performers have been essentially "invisible" so that there is no way of really evaluating their progress. At the same time some of the results received seem almost contradictory in nature with big swings in results. My choice is Matt Hamburg -- certainly not a name descriptive of performance -- who

at 171# last year reached the quarter-final round at States before losing an epic 15-14 OT bout that left everyone watching breathless. Since Cardinal wrestles a schedule that has few tourneys and less reportable results, I'm not totally sure how well Hamburg has progressed. Only at West Geauga were results forthcoming which showed Hamburg winning on a technical fall over a rated (at 171#) Stewart. Sometimes, on such tenuous evidence are selections made (but not often).

At Cuyahoga Hts. the field is likely to be rather inexperienced. Steffen won two district bouts last year, and has been very good in 1991. He blitzed the fields at Hillsdale and Bucyrus, including big wins in the finals. At Black River, heavyweight state qualifier Schaffer dropped to 189# and beat Steffen 6-5. Recovery from a football injury and a 30 pound weight loss may have hurt Schaffer's stamina, but it appears that these two warriors are about even. Rippey was a district semi-finalist last year before losing twice and being eliminated. This is a strong quartet (I think) and should do well at Nutter. Amato is the competitor with the best chance of pulling an upset.

While Hamburg's results haven't been very illuminating, at least he's wrestled -- with Partee, who may or may not be the best at Fostoria, that hasn't even happened. Last year Partee was runner-up to state champ Wasiniak in district competition, but then was eliminated at States in a first-round upset. Those were his only two losses of the year. This year Partee, who is a fantastic running back in football, was injured in the play offs and has not yet wrestled. No problem for Ayersville. His substitute won the "A" Classic and the Stryker handily and is undefeated currently. Now it's my understanding Partee is about to return at 189#, and if he rounds in to good shape will be exceptional, again, I'm sure. Where that would leave Lewis is unclear. State placer Mangas is at heavyweight so that is not a good option and he may be too big to reach 171#. Gresser is also excellent in this district winning the Rogers with ease. Several times he was at the top of my countless ratings list, but right now he's #4. State qualifier Kigar should be a factor again this year after his narrow 14-11 first round loss at States. He has been second at Clay and Oak Harbor and third at Northwood this year. Yet another Sintobin, the fourth I believe from two related families, is a possible qualifier here, while Klima should challenge again. I've also listed Grime and Arbogast since the last two slots, in particular, are reasonably wide open. Collum (Woodmore) and Smith (Edgerton) have also been steady placers.

Schumacher wrestles in an out-of-the-way location (at least for me) and so most of what I know comes from the OVAC. Last year he looked outstanding, if a little rough-edged, and then missed state qualification by a single bout. An unexpected upset by Veith was a crusher. This year he was runner-up at the OVAC, including a big victory over Division II stalwart Nate Burress. He has the raw power to excel. State qualifier Metzger has missed some time with injuries, but he has to be highly considered based on last year's strong effort -- which included wins over Tomblin, Hicks and Veith. Hicks pinned Haegele at last year's district before succumbing to Schumacher. Again, Amanda-Clearcreek wrestles a schedule that makes state evaluation difficult. Haegele, Nemeth and Veith are all other contenders here in what is again a crowded field. Tomblin, arch-rival of the Cuyahoga Hts. District's Rippey, also has a potential shot at qualification. All in all, this, like 171#, will be a donnybrook.

At Dayton, a pair of state qualifiers should play the lead in district action. The one I like the best is Hickman who qualified at 189# and won a

first-round bout. Again, we have a contender from a very small school with a limited-exposure schedule. Hickman has won at both Bellbrook and Springfield Catholic this year. Monnin qualified at 171# and lost a close bout to Hamburg in the first round. This year he has missed some time and may be considering 171# again. Jackson and Hoke are two other possibilities here, although if Monnin does drop, they could become more critical factors. Stanley (Dayton Oakwood) who was a runner-up at Edgewood and Oakwood, but did not place at Springfield Catholic, might also have a chance should Monnin drop.

HVY.

PROJECTED CHAMPION: ANDY MANGAS (AYERSVILLE)

TOP CONTENDERS

- |                                  |                                 |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2. Pardon (Lincolnview)          | 12. Pullins (West Jefferson)    |
| 3. Browning (Cincinnati Reading) | 13. Brock (Streetsboro)         |
| 4. Stark (Sycamore Mohawk)       | 14. Burre (Huron)               |
| 5. DelGarbino (Liberty)          | 15. Filinger (North Union)      |
| 6. Hart/McGee (Ledgemont)        | 16. Carr (Elmwood)              |
| 7. Conkel (Amanda-Clearcreek)    | 17. Bochik (Chagrin Falls)      |
| 8. Tharpe (Bellbrook)            | 18. Robinson (Highland Spartal) |
| 9. Hill (Perry)                  | 19. Whetsel (Gibsonburg)        |
| 10. Wagers (Wyoming)             | 20. Chill (Monroeville)         |
| 11. Green (Columbus Academy)     | 21. Baker (Woodridge)           |

There is no particularly obvious choice at heavyweight this year in sharp contrast to 1990 when Jack Lowther was a clear-cut (and correct) selection. Instead, it really came down to choosing Mangas or Pardon and this is one time where there was comparative information -- maybe too much so. Last year Pardon was district runner-up to Medon and then went to state, where he lost a frantic first-round battle to the excellent Froehlich 20-12 -- and was, as it turned out, eliminated. Mangas, on the other hand snared the fifth and last qualifying spot and drew Lowther immediately. After being pinned, he got "carried" into the consolation round and won enough to finish fifth. He, too, lost to Froehlich 11-9. An unusual combination -- fifth in both district and state. Interestingly, Mangas had defeated Pardon twice during the year -- 5-3 and 13-10. This year they have also met twice, splitting the two bouts -- Mangas winning 9-7 and Pardon triumphing 16-12. Now if you have been paying attention to the scores, you know these fellows aren't your usual "push and pull" heavyweights that end up with an escape apiece. No, they score a lot and, perhaps negatively, roll around a bit, too. Basically, I chose Mangas for one reason -- he has two great workout partners in Partee and Lewis. In my mind, that kind of competition is worth quite a bit and, in the long run, it might give Mangas that last little edge that gains victory.

The Fostoria District has some other place possibilities as well. Stark, also a state qualifier, missed placement there by a single point has had done well this year, too. He beat Mangas at Districts last year and won big as the Fostoria Invitational. Unfortunately, he wasn't in the line up at Van Buren and thus missed a confrontation with Pardon -- who beat him 8-7 last year. Burre was the state alternate in 1990 -- losing to both Stark and Mangas on fulls. This

year he won at Stritch and was second at Bellevue. Carr won two matches at Districts last year, losing only to Pardon and Mangas, and won at Northwood this year. Whetsel, Chill and Gockstetter (Collins Western Reserve) are also possibilities in this high powered competition.

At Dayton, all three qualifiers return to renew their heavyweight competition. The champion last year was Devin Browning, the 240# all-state football player. He went to States undefeated and, after a first round win, was pinned by the excellent Froehlich -- and eliminated. He should win here again and this time place at States. Both Wagers and Tharpe should retain their qualification positions, although the latter, I believe, has surpassed Wagers and may win a bout at Nutter. Samworth (Valley View) is a dark horse here.

At Cuyahoga Hts. I'm looking for a real dark horse to take top honors. DelGarbino, who did not even wrestle last year, has been undefeated the entire season -- most of his wins on rapid-fire pins. I have been assured by reliable sources that DelGarbino is for real and his statistics certainly suggest that. At Ledgemont, both Hart and McGee have wrestled. Again, McGee started the year at heavyweight placing second at Tournament of Champions there. A 189# state qualifier last year -- he finished sixth -- he had apparently grown into the heavyweight division. Then at the Ready Invitation, Hart appeared -- did he ever -- winning the individual championship in great style. Either McGee is injured, lost the wrestle off, or is moving eventually to 189#. In the latter case, he would be a real factor at that weight. Nevertheless, Hart, too, seems to be for real and should do very well during tourney time. Hill has stepped into the Perry line up and performed well all season. He lost to Hart 14-12 at Ready, but was second at West Geauga and his losses have been to Division I or II wrestlers. None of this top trio (excluding McGee) wrestled even in district competition last year. The next trio of Brock, Bochik and Baker all did so, but collectively failed to win even one bout. What we apparently have here is a situation where inexperience could play a major role when whoever qualified reaches the States. Especially considering the high level of experience from other areas. I keep worrying that I've missed somebody good here, but I haven't been able to identify who that might be.

At Olentangy all the good heavyweights come from the Columbus area rather than from along the river. Best of this groups is the unheralded Conkel, who was a district semi-finalist last year and then lost to Meade and Froehlich and was eliminated -- they ended up #2 and #3 in state competition. Green also has kept a low profile -- he's not even rated in the local paper -- but he's beaten Filinger (9-2) and Pullins (12-10). He, however, has no previous district experience. Pullins, brother of the state champion, is making excellent progress and should qualify with Filinger also in line for a state appearance. Robinson, Davis (Wellsville) and Mascolino (Steubenville Central Catholic) are other possibilities.

## TEAMS

1. West Liberty Salem -- This is only a three-man team, but what a trio of performers. Both Dernlans should win with relative ease, but will need to pick up some bonus points for falls. Abbott is the big question mark. No one doubts he has the ability to win, but it could be very close. He'll have to be in peak form mentally and physically -- since there isn't much margin for error.
2. Bishop Ready -- They have a good opportunity to defend their State title, but they'll need to tap some hidden resources. DiSabato is a cinch winner and Smiles is close to that category. The question is where they can find some more points. Amicon can help at 125#, but then it's up to people like Collins, Kelly and Goettke -- and that's a long shot. Of course, should West Liberty Salem falter, what they have here may be enough.
3. Wellington -- A team that could have won it last year has a second chance this year. Both Wrights could be finalists and that's a lot of points. Hartman, too, could really contribute if he can regain that fierceness he showed last year. After that, they need people like Broud and Sedlick to qualify and score. That won't be easy.
4. Union Local -- A beautifully balanced team that may not have quite enough firepower at the State level. Vcelka is their main man, but Buckley, Goodson, Gibeaut and Manteau are not far behind. They need State qualifier Baker to regain top form and, maybe, help from the younger Buckley, Kline and Dubinsky. If they can get eight or nine to State, they will be the Division III school with the best opportunity to utilize the new consolation rules.
5. Delta -- Troy Sintobin has been awesome of late and he's worth a lot of points. Other possible scorers are Ford, Circle, Barnes and Green. If Ryan Sintobin continues to improve, he could have a major impact at 189#. It's not quite the team we saw in 1989, but there are some real positives here.
6. Bellbrook -- The exodus of Xenia wrestlers has helped several schools -- Bellbrook being one of the prime beneficiaries. A key element will be how well Alex performs, but there are a lot of other possible resources as well. Real standouts are Lawless, Mike Kosins and Tharpe, but Bobby Kosins, Henry, Wax and Noble are also possibilities. If Kaleb Henry regains form, they will be in the top five.
7. Streetsboro -- Jim Boardwine has to be a slight favorite at 112# and Futo is a real threat -- especially at 145#. That leaves Joe Boardwine, Brock and Kasarda as helpers and output from them is very problematical.
8. Ayersville -- The two upper weight stars -- Mangas and Partee -- could both be finalists, although that's asking a lot of the latter boy since he has yet to wrestle his first bout this year. Other possibilities are Walz (who is overdue) and Goetzenleuchter, but somehow more firepower has to be found. If Lewis can be somehow wedged into the line up, they could move up.

9. Ledgemont -- This is a team that generally does better than forecasted and this year will probably be no exception. Both Feckanins are excellent and Lamanna and DiFranco look able to make unexpected contributions. A major factor will be at the upper weights where Hart and McGee have both wrestled effectively. If that continues and somehow McGee surfaces at 189#, this is a top five team.
10. Otsego -- This is the mystery team as far as I'm concerned. They could make a run at the team title or fall totally flat. The one sure star is Soto, who has finalist potential at 125#. Barnes, Wheeler, Kepling and Godwin could finish anywhere, while Jay Soto has yet to appear at 112#.
11. Sandusky St. Mary -- A nice squad that has the sophomore Maiani as its main man. However, State qualifiers Scott and Voltz could help at the upper weights, while Roesch, the excellent freshman Rosin and Schnell could contribute at the lower ones. Two unexpected aids could be the recently cut-down Coifford and Capizzi.
12. Licking Hts. -- There is potentially a lot of fire power and the question is whether it can all be brought into use by March. Blackburn is excellent and Ramsey and Howard are not far behind. What they need is help from the big boys -- White and Haegele.
13. Coventry -- A team that is often overlooked, but one with good staying power. Belknap and Workman are the two stars, but both Bairds -- especially Derek -- and Davis can score.