

# 1992

## HIGH SCHOOL WRESTLING

### FORECAST <sup>©</sup>

(21st Annual Edition)



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## 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 district 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. This report was written during an eight-day period in mid-January ending January 30 based on the information available at that time. It's kind of a snapshot in time with a picture that will surely change in many ways by tournament time. The new weight certification rules (there really aren't any) have made switching of weight classes much simpler, so that I anticipate many changes from what is shown here. In fact, some of those moves may well be precipitated by information contained within this document.

This will be about an average recruiting year in Ohio with the usual number of blue chip prospects. Two-time Junior National champion Luke Fickell, of course, has already committed to playing football and wrestling at Ohio State, and he is probably the single most incredible heavyweight I have ever seen. In addition, there are other outstanding seniors like Nutter, Pariano, Chandler, and several others who will almost certainly be outstanding at the collegiate level. However, what is startlingly evident is the incredible number of standout juniors and sophomores already at the highest levels in our state. I don't believe that we have ever had a junior class this good, and the sophomore trailing immediately behind may turn out to be even better. Without question Ohio will be a prime recruiting state the next two years, and fans of high school wrestling here will be the prime beneficiaries of an influx of tremendous wrestlers for the next several years as well.

As faithful readers know, this report has long been used as a vehicle to promote change in the administration of high school wrestling -- particularly at the tournament level. While it has not been a rapid process, progress continues to be made in establishing real equity for every competitor. Perhaps the high water mark of that struggle was reached last year with expansion of the wrestle-back system to include all participants who have lost to a semi-finalist. This system guarantees a proper balance between fairness and interminable consolation rounds that can be provoked in double-elimination tournaments. The first year's results were most heartening. Thirty-seven wrestlers who would not have placed under the old system rightfully earned medals in 1991. This means there was a 47.4% change over from the old, archaic process -- just about at the predicted 50% level. I cannot imagine that we will ever consider taking a huge step backward and go back to the old system, since, currently, there is not one tournament in Ohio that employs the old format.

One last item. It appears that each year, more and more coaches get this report. One thing that would really help me is if they would send me bracket sheets for tournaments that they enter -- particularly the sectionals and districts this year. This is a good way to get a report mailed to you when it is first prepared. My address is:

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DIVISION I

Several weeks ago the weight classes looked very unbalanced with some very strong and others packing little punch. However, as generally occurs, a "smoothing out" process is now underway which has begun to even out these differences. One thing that cannot be erased is the preponderance of excellent sophomores and juniors in this classification. If LaCure decides to wrestle at 152#, seven of the first 10 weight classes would have underclassmen as favorites -- an unheard phenomenon in Division I. In addition, there are large quantities of other underclassmen who are in the very top echelon of every weight class waiting impatiently for the slightest misstep by the higher rated seniors.

103#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: ① EDDIE JAYNE (ST. EDWARD)

TOP CONTENDERS

- |                                    |                                    |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ③ 2. Contos (Toledo St. John)      | 12. Mendez (Lorain Southview)      |
| 3. Daniels (Canton Timken)         | 13. Marinelli (West Carrollton)    |
| ② 4. Pender (Cincinnati Princeton) | 14. Peloso (Alliance)              |
| 5. Calderon (Bowling Green)        | 15. Perry (Holland Springfield)    |
| 6. Carioti (North Canton Hoover)   | 16. Rockey (Cincinnati St. Xavier) |
| 7. Raney (Westerville North)       | ⑤ 17. Trinetti (Eastlake North)    |
| 8. Campbell (Hilliard)             | 18. Pozdol (Shaker Hts.)           |
| 9. Phou (West Chester Lakota)      | ④ 19. Gamble (Massillon Perry)     |
| 10. Lambers (Cincinnati Elder)     | 20. Wright (Fairfield)             |
| 11. Cirino (Painesville Riverside) | 21. Plouse (Walsh Jesuit)          |

There is always something of an aura of mystery that hovers around the 103# weight class because of the large influx of newcomers that debut here. In most years, at least two or three of the placewinners are freshmen (Wineberg, Johnson, and Jayne last year) with no previous track record. The competition this season, however, may yield no freshmen medal winners as there is a very strong nucleus of returning contenders.

And, yet, it now appears that despite a strong field the ultimate champion is almost surely going to be one of two outstanding contenders -- either the splendid sophomore Jayne or the brilliant junior Contos. The vexing question is, of course, which one? Let's look at the facts. Jayne was 5th last year and then placed 2nd in the Cadet Nationals. This season he dominated at Medina and has wrestled a difficult schedule with a hard-nosed, energetic style that demonstrates nothing less than 100% effort. Contos was a state qualifier last year, but failed to place. He was small for the weight and was overpowered by the bigger 103s like Wineberg or Johnson. Last summer he won the Junior Nationals in both styles and did one other important thing -- grow much bigger. This year he was at 112# until the OCCs and did very well at the higher weight -- losing only once (to Owens of Norwalk). Contos defeated Jayne 9-7 in the OCC finals -- a bout which evoked two responses of about equal size. One either believed that Contos dominated the contest and will beat Jayne consistently, or felt that the match turned on a 5-point move in a flurry at the edge of the mat

and that otherwise Jayne was the better boy. My belief leans toward the latter viewpoint with Jayne my choice to nip Contos in a hard-fought bout which will hopefully kick off the final round at Wright State. This one, however, is really a toss up.

Jayne should dominate the Mentor District. The veteran Cirino is probably the second choice here, but Jayne buried him 11-1 in a district semi-final. The rapidly improving Mendez may soon surpass Cirino, but he is not yet close to Jayne or any other of the top state contenders. After this trio there is a major drop off in talent, with the 4th qualifying berth wide open. I've listed Trinetti and the recently shrunk down Pozdol, but any of a half dozen other 103s could grab that last berth. For example, Phillips (Mayfield), Gonzales (North Royalton) and Lipps (Parma) certainly match up with either Trinetti or Pozdol.

Contos will face much sterner competition at Hilliard. Calderon, a state qualifier last year, is a powerful competitor who can score points in bunches. He will probably be out-slicked by the very best boys, but his ability to put people on their back makes him very dangerous. Both Raney and Campbell are excellent and have been trading narrow, hard-fought victories all year. Both have strong placement potential, but they'll have to be in top form to realize that goal. This would seem to be the four qualifiers, but there is still substantial strength here. Perry was runner-up at both the giant GMVWA tourney (losing by default to a Pennsylvania wrestler) and the Rogers. Kennedy (Mount Vernon) is a dark-horse contender who may be able to pull a few surprises here. Watch out for him. Other possibilities are Corron (Groveport) and, when he makes weight, Heidleberg (Fremont Ross).

There are also a bevy of contenders at Dayton. I like Pender the best and foresee him capturing a low to middle place at this weight. He is quick and very physical and will be a large 103. Phou has been at 112# all year and so it is somewhat difficult to judge how well he'll do at the lower weight. His record there does include a win over state 6th place winner Lambers, who I feel, will have difficulty retaining a placement medal. Marinelli and Rockey will also battle for state qualification with only Pender seemingly assured a spot. Wright and Anderson (Greenville) are also possibilities in what should be an outstanding competition.

At Perry there will be two distinct battles. Daniels and Carioti will compete for the district crown while everyone else vies for the last two spots. Daniels, a state runner-up in Cross Country, defaulted his first round battle to Jayne last year in overtime when he crashed to the mat in a heap after a violent flurry. Some felt there was unnecessary roughness, but it was, clearly, correctly judged and Daniels was eliminated. This year he is undefeated, but his schedule is very soft, certainly not preparing this veteran senior for the battles to come. Carioti won three district bouts last year, but did not qualify for Wright State. This year he was 4th at Medina losing to Jayne and splitting with Raney. The loss to Jayne was 4-3 but was not indicative of the manner in which Jayne dominated. A huge chasm exists between this duo and everyone else. Besides Peloso, Gamble and Plouse you might look for Seryak (Wadsworth) and Alessi (Buckeye Local).

112#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: <sup>3</sup>JIM JOHNSON (WALSH JESUIT)

TOP CONTENDERS

- |                                 |                                   |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ① 2. Wineberg (Fairfield)       | 13. Collier (Sycamore)            |
| 3. Whitmer (Uniontown Lake)     | 14. Nieman (Groveport)            |
| 4. Boda (Fremont Ross)          | 15. Anderson (Medina)             |
| 5. Kaleal (Mayfield)            | 16. Mayes (Maple Hts.)            |
| 6. Friedle (St. Edward)         | 17. Miller (Cincinnati Oak Hills) |
| 7. Colucci (Westerville North)  | 18. Ramos (Massillon Perry)       |
| ② 8. Cameron (Hilliard)         | 19. Garrett (Oxford Talawanda)    |
| 9. Hickin (Kent Roosevelt)      | 20. Cole (Ashland)                |
| 10. Quimbaya (Lorain Southview) | 21. Fowler (Vandalia Butler)      |
| ⑤ 11. Diefenbacher (Grove City) | 22. Grove (West Chester Lakota)   |
| 12. Singleton (Alliance)        | 23. Hawkins (Cleveland Hts.)      |

Again, as we saw at 103#, it appears to be strictly a two-man competition for the state title at this weight class. Both Johnson and Wineberg are outstanding sophomores who have already compiled glittering records in less than two years of varsity wrestling. Wineberg was the first freshman in over 30 years to win a state title in the large school division (Musser followed about 20 minutes later), and he did it against a truly formidable field. This year he stands totally undefeated including wins at the SWOCA and Kenston tourneys. Last year he was the master of the close bout, but this year he has been winning with comfortable ease. Johnson was 3rd last year, but has been a quantum jump better this season. He snapped Tim Dernlan's 87 consecutive victory streak while handing him his first high school loss at Medina -- and he did so by taking him down three times at vital junctures in the bout. Since then he has dominated every opponent including impressive wins at the OCC. This duo met in the state semi-finals last year which Wineberg won 2-1 when a referee unnecessarily and ill-advisedly interjected himself into a dead-even bout. The decisive stalling point was one of the few times when officiating clearly changed the course of an entire weight class. This time I think Johnson will win because of a major change in attitude. Last year it seemed that Johnson and Musser were equally talented but the latter boy was more successful mainly because he remained supremely confident no matter what the circumstance. Now Johnson has acquired that attitude and big victories over Dernlan and Friedle have made him far more confident and aggressive than before. This time, against Wineberg, that new outlook should translate into a victory.

Johnson emerges from an excellent district. Whitmer, another sophomore, is a budding star and he will give everyone but the top two all they can handle. He just gets better and better. Hickin beat Whitmer and Anderson last year for a state berth, but he'll be hard pressed to repeat that feat. He has been at 119# all year, but the reality is that his chances of qualifying here are dramatically better. Singleton is something of a sleeper who like the little girl with the curl can either be very good or very bad. The times when he is very good -- watch out. Anderson had a tough draw at Medina losing to Dernlan and McDaniel, but he could qualify with the new four-man format. Last year he was the alternate with a 4th place effort. A second quartet of hopefuls seems clearly behind this first group, but they certainly have upset chances. For that second

group I like Ramos the best, but Distler (Geneva) who upset Jason Franklin last year is back while Krieger (Austintown Fitch) and Long (Akron Buchtel) have done well in recent competition.

At Dayton, Wineberg stands well above another six to eight wrestlers with qualifying potential. However, it is unlikely that any of this second group has realistic chances for placement at this weight. I've listed Collier, Miller, Garrett, Fowler and Grove and there is really very small differences between any of these competitors. All have been consistent placewinners, but none has captured the top spot in a major tourney this year. Other possibilities are Morvatz (Dayton Wayne), Fillback (Fairborn Baker) and White (Cincinnati LaSalle). Morvatz, in particular, may well deserve a higher rating than he has been given here.

At Mentor, Kaleal and Friedle are strong, solid seniors with the savvy to capture a middle to low place at Wright State. Last year Kaleal was a quarter-finalists losing to Wineberg by a single point while Friedle was the state alternate with a district 4th. This year Friedle was buried twice by Johnson and also lost to Dernalan and Whitmer -- so he has been defeated by only the best. Kaleal lost to Boda at Kenston, but he is the kind of wrestler who keeps bouts close and always within reach. If he scores early he is very tough to come back against. The rest of Mentor is weak with Quimbaya and Mayes the marginally best bets for the last two qualifying spots. Hawkins was a district semi-finalist at their weight last year, but his performance this year has been very erratic. Falcioni (North Royalton) should he be here and, possibly, Topoly (Shaker Hts.) or Hall (Valley Forge) are other contenders.

At Hilliard two-time state qualifier Dave Boda heads a solid field. A rapid-fire pinner, he has never done quite as well in state competition as anticipated. This is his last attempt and he has the tools to place. He beat Kaleal at Kenston, but dropped the final to Wineberg. He seems to have trouble on the bottom. Colucci has been injured all year, but he was a state qualifier last season and like Boda this is his last chance. State qualifier Cameron will also be here and his recent victories suggest a possible place -- although he was only 6th at Medina. The last berth is wide-open with Columbus area stalwarts like Nieman and Diefenbacher battling Toledo area competitors like Cole, Monaghan (Toledo Bowsher), and Puntieri (Toledo Rogers).



119#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: <sup>1</sup> CLINT MUSSER (WALSH JESUIT)

TOP CONTENDERS

- |                                  |                               |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2. Lanese (Brush)                | 16. Lewis (Reynoldsburg)      |
| 3. Fichter (Massillon Perry)     | 17. Anderson (Medina)         |
| 4. Schork (Solon)                | 18. Rozick (Mentor)           |
| 5. Ratliff (Marion Harding)      | 19. Seig (Oak Hills)          |
| 6. Allen (Worthington Kilbourne) | 20. Dennis (Colerain)         |
| 7. Cameron (Hilliard)            | 21. Tiggett (Warren Harding)  |
| 8. Haro (Cincinnati Princeton)   | 22. Cummings (Euclid)         |
| 9. Clement (St. Edward)          | 23. Glodich (Strongsville)    |
| 10. Herbert (Uniontown Lake)     | 24. Badgely (Centerville)     |
| 11. Marroquin (Defiance)         | 25. Allen (Mansfield Madison) |
| 12. Wahl (St. Ignatius)          | 26. Massie (Fairfield)        |
| 13. Carver (Valley Forge)        | 27. Tyburski (Toledo Start)   |
| 14. Butler (Bowling Green)       | 28. Rust (Sycamore)           |
| 15. Bender (Sidney)              | 29. Roe (Marietta)            |

There are probably more state caliber wrestlers at this weight class, as it is currently constituted, than anywhere else in Division I competition. There are by my count at least 16 former state qualifiers presently competing at 119# and another dozen or so with nearly equivalent skills. This crush of bodies is particularly acute at the Hilliard District. Eight wrestlers with previous state experience and another handful with solid credentials will battle for but four state berths.

Nonetheless, the clear favorite must be the brilliant sophomore Clint Musser who capped a sensational freshman season by upsetting defending champion Karl Grove to win the 112# title. This year he is even better and is, I believe, on the verge of becoming a true superstar in this sport as early as the 10th grade. An outstanding athlete, he also possesses that inner fierceness that when called upon can take him to another, higher level of performance. Watching him during the dual meets with Bedford, Michigan and St. Edward's, one could see him gripped with a competitive fever that elevated his performance.

There is a solid crop of performers behind Musser at Perry. Most prominent of these is another great sophomore Fichter -- a state alternate last year. Years of youth wrestling has given Fichter more insight into Musser's style than anyone else possesses, and his defensive genius is well suited to take advantage of this knowledge. He beat Musser 6-5 during the opening week of the season, but lost in the Medina Final by a point. He will be away from Musser at Wright State and could well be the other finalist. Herbert, also a sophomore, is third best here after a state qualifying performance last year (including one win at States). He failed to place at Medina at 125#, but lost two one-point bouts to past state place-winners. He is probably cutting a lot of weight to make 119#, but if he can handle that obstacle, he has state placement potential. Herbert beat Anderson 2-1 in last year's district, but with four qualifying spots now that may prove just enough for Anderson to qualify. Glodich, Roe, and Tiggett are other possibilities.

Lanese was 4th at 112# last year losing to Musser 16-10 in the semi-finals after stunning Barden in the quarter-finals. This year his only loss was an overtime thriller to Blair (Division II) in the Kenston final. Only a junior, he has a history of coming on strong at the end of the season and veteran coach Dom Iammarino has always had a great touch with lightweights. Two time Division II state runner-up Schork has been at 125# the past two years, but will almost certainly move down to 119# at tournament time. He is not physically strong, but has exceptional technical skills and has always wrestled brilliantly in the state setting. At 119# he will be a real factor in the final resolution of this weight class. I think there is a clear difference between Lanese and Schork and the trio of Clement, Carver and Wahl. Clement, only a freshman, has already defeated such outstanding performers as Wahl, Cameron, Anderson and defending Michigan state champion Schumaker. However, he is still very young and is a long-shot even to place this year, but, trust me, he'll win at least two state titles before he graduates. Carver and Wahl are wily seniors who have vast experience and good skills. Wahl qualified last year while Carver, with a difficult draw, wrestled a bad district. That's my top four picks out of Mentor, but state qualifier Cummings -- if he doesn't head for the far more congenial 112# class -- and the great sophomores Rozick and Falcioni (North Royalton) are also possibilities.

At Hilliard the crush of competitors at this weight class is almost ludicrous and I expect to see movement to 112# or 125#. Already the excellent Penn (Franklin Hts.) appears headed to 125# and it seems likely others will follow his lead. Topping the competition are state qualifier Rocky Ratliff and former state runner-up Jason Allen. The indefatigable Ratliff has been sensational all year at 130#, but should have little trouble making 119#. His draw at Wright State last year was incredible hitting Lanese and Barden back-to-back and going two and out. This year he has already won four major tournaments at 130# and will be very difficult to beat at this weight. Allen was 2nd at 103# two years ago and then opened last season at 119# and was having some trouble making that adjustment. Then a season ending injury cost him any opportunity for state action last year, but he seems reasonably fit this season. As he did two years ago he could well be a finalist (or even a champ) if everything stays on track. Cameron placed 5th last year and has bounced between 119# and 125# so far this season. He will be a factor at either weight class. Ratliff beat him 6-4 for the district title last year. Also here are state qualifiers Marroquin, Butler, Tyburski and Smith, all theoretically competing for the last qualifying spot. Marroquin has been particularly excellent this year and may be the slight favorite at this time. Lewis has been solid all year, but a real darkhorse candidate is Greg Allen who has won a number of important tournaments including both the Marion Harding and Gorman back-to-back. Alejandro (Fremont Ross) and Bedell (Upper Arlington) would both be terrific candidates at most weights -- Bedell was a state alternate last year -- but are likely to be crushed by the competition at 119#.

The only weak district is at Dayton where only state place-winner Haro and state qualifier Bender have past state experience. Haro beat Butler 16-12 and Herbert 6-3 on his way to a 6th place finish and he stands way above the rest of the Southwest field. Bender lost to Haro at Districts for 3rd place 16-4 and then was walloped twice at Wright State -- 18-5 by Musser and 12-0 by Marroquin. Seig may have surpassed him by this point, while Dennis is a tenuous choice for the fourth qualifying spot. Squadrons of people like Massie, Badgely, Rust and Zorb (Glen Este) are also candidates.

125#

PROJECTED CHAMP: SEAN KIOUSIS (MEDINA)

TOP CONTENDERS

- |                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| (4) 2. Rizer (Marion Harding)     | 13. McQuery (Brunswick)                 |
| 3. Franklin (Massillon Perry)     | 14. Pluhar (Maple Hts.)                 |
| (3) 4. Minick (Uniontown Lake)    | (6) 15. Schillig (Gahanna Lincoln)      |
| 5. Ford (Walsh Jesuit)            | 16. Estep (Fairfield)                   |
| (2) 6. Parks (Toledo St. Francis) | 17. Penn (Franklin Hts.)                |
| 7. D. Jones (Cleveland Hts.)      | 18. Monroe (Centerville)                |
| 8. Richner (Painesville Harvey)   | (5) 19. Denholm (Akron Springfield)     |
| 9. Newsome (Toledo St. John)      | 20. Smith/Metzger (Cincinnati Oakhills) |
| (1) 10. Bentley (Valley Forge)    | 21. Thompson (St. Ignatius)             |
| 11. Orellano (Lorain Southview)   | 22. Tessofo (Amelia)                    |
| 12. Miller (Ashland)              | 23. Mlod (Fairborn Baker)               |

In the first three weight classes, one or two contestants are so dominant that it would take an upset of some substantial proportion to bring others into the title picture. However, at 125# there are probably eight to ten candidates who could take the championship without causing any major dislocations in the laws of probability. My choice is the solid senior from Medina, Sean Kiousis. Not blessed with the greatest natural ability in the world, he uses all resources wisely and is excellent when leading. He never carelessly throws away a lead and can husband a one-point margin through the last minute of a match as well as anyone. A state runner-up last year and already a three time state qualifier, he is my favorite to take the crown winning a succession of close hard fought bouts.

Kiousis emerges from a dynamite district. Franklin has been exceptional all year winning at Medina and Massillon Perry. His only loss was to Ford the first week of the season, and he avenged that at Medina. Last year he was the victim of a shocking first round upset at the district level, but that will not happen again. Minick qualified for states as a freshman, but injuries kept him from competing last year. An absolutely brilliant performer, his only loss was at 130# to the Louisiana state champ (whom Kiousis beat in the finals). On a hot weekend he could win it all. Ford is an enigma. Several times I have seen him wrestle four outstanding minutes and then collapse. Whether it's conditioning, weight loss, or hyperventilation, it makes him vulnerable to someone who pushes him hard. I keep thinking he might be better off at 130# (switching with O'Neil), but he does have a chance to win it all here -- a chance which probably doesn't exist there. McQuery, a state qualifier last year, seems only fifth best here, but he has proven he has upset potential in the past. He has lost to Orellano and drew with Bentley. Denholm is excellent winning four tournaments this year while Kallai (Wadsworth), Ferrar (Akron Kenmore), and DeYarmon (Buckeye Local) are also strong. This will be a fabulous district competition.

Rizer heads the Hilliard contingent after a 4th place finish at Wright State last year -- which included wins over Parks and Richner. He has the huge advantage of Ratliff as a workout partner and four years of varsity performance. Parks and Newsome are very close, alternating victories with both having low place potential. Newsome won the OCCs with a 9-8 win over Parks, but I like the latter competitor a little bit better. I may not be giving state qualifier

Miller enough credit especially since he won two bouts at Wright State last year including a fall over McQuery. He has spent some time at 119#, but it seems to me the odds are better here. This quartet would leave state qualifier Schillig out in the cold, but he has shown good resourcefulness in the past and could easily move ahead of one of the four I've rated above him. Penn, up from 119#, will also be a threat while state qualifier Fisher is back from Division II status and may be a factor here.

There is a lot of talent at Mentor, but it's difficult to sort out the ordering. Jones, a district semi-finalist last year, has made incredible progress and this fine junior can beat anyone on a good day. He lost to Bentley 1-0 at Brecksville, but beat him 8-2 in a dual keyed by a late 5-point move. Two-time state qualifier Richner is always tough -- last year taking out my top choice, Herbie Russell, in district competition. Kiouis pinned him in the state quarter-finals. Bentley is extremely strong and solid and started the year with a brilliant triumph at Solon, including the MVP award. The recent loss to Jones, and draw with McQuery drops him somewhat in my overall evaluation. Pluhar pinned Jones in district action last year and he could be a real factor now that he moved down from 130#. On a hot weekend he could be the district champ, but everything would have to be perfect. Orellano and Thompson are both battlers with the latter also having a very unorthodox style. They cannot be overlooked.

The Dayton District looks to be very weak. Estep seems best but he appears to have minimal placement potential while the other candidates seem even less formidable. They could end up being first-round fodder for the more powerful districts.

130#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: ① JON VAUGHN (ST. IGNATIUS)

TOP CONTENDERS

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| ③ 2. Whitaker (Warren Harding)         | ④ 13. Steely (Kettering Fairmount)  |
| 3. Ranallo (Mayfield)                  | 14. Dawson/Kaufman (St. Edward)     |
| ⑥ ③ ④ 4. Lovejoy (East Liverpool)      | 15. Gasper (Cloverleaf)             |
| ② ③ ④ 5. Hollo (Cincinnati St. Xavier) | 16. Miller (Springfield South)      |
| 6. Caldwell/Cannon (Groveport)         | 17. I. Williams (Lorain Southview)  |
| 7. Miller (Canton McKinley)            | 18. Clingman (Hilliard)             |
| 8. Madia (Thomas Worthington)          | 19. Davis (Lakewood)                |
| 9. Medina (Perrysburg)                 | 20. Chiamonte (West Chester Lakota) |
| ④ 10. J. Jones (Cleveland Hts.)        | 21. Kotlyn (Strongsville)           |
| 11. Peterson (Pickerington)            | 22. Allison (Toledo Bowsher)        |
| 12. Smith (Sycamore)                   | 23. Whitman (Berea)                 |

This is a weight class that I expect to be dominated by the exceptional junior, John Vaughn. Already a two-time state qualifier Vaughn was a semi-finalist last year when injuries caused him to forfeit to Marchette and eventually drop to 5th place. This year he has looked sensational and it's difficult to anticipate anyone really challenging him -- unless Nathanson unexpectedly moves down. Up until now, nobody has been within a half dozen points of Vaughn.

The Mentor District also features the experienced Ranallo -- who twice now has been beaten twice after reaching the district semi-finals. He's due to qualify and probably place. Jerome Jones has also shown rapid development winning at Richmond Hts. and placing 3rd at Brecksville only because of an overexuberant slam. Basically a first-year varsity wrestler, he has moved forward at an extraordinary pace. The fourth spot is wide open. Dawson, the current incumbent down from 135#, at St. Ed's has done well but last year varsity starter Kaufman will soon return from an injury to challenge him. Both are good. Whitman, a state qualifier two years ago, is beginning to adjust to his new size and is always dangerous. Davis is another candidate for that fourth slot, while West Tech transfer Goins (Shaker Hts.) has all kinds of big move ability. Also check out Smith (North Royalton) who upset Kiouisis in a recent dual and won at Copley.

Whitaker is the quintessential big move wrestler who is never out of a bout. Last year in the state semi-finals he trailed Gustovich of St. Eds 8-2 with a minute to go when he escaped, hit a five-point throw to tie, and then cranked a cradle to win. He will be a real threat to Vaughn, but may also be an easy victim for Vaughn's clever leg rides. Lovejoy pinned for a district title last year and then won two bouts at Wright State -- losing to Whitaker by but 6-3. He has good placement potential. State qualifier Miller will also exit Perry, but his relatively weak schedule may not adequately prepare for the rigors of state competition. Kotlyn, Gasper, Angione (Uniontown Lake), and Blake (Massillon Perry) are all state caliber wrestlers who could get caught in the numbers game at this weight. An intriguing candidate is the freshman O'Neil -- who while probably better suited to 125# -- may still qualify here. He has lost five times -- all to top quality opponents with only Kiouisis blowing him out.

Hollo has been at 140# all year but the scuttlebutt is that he'll cut to 130# for state competition -- he was at 119# last year. If true, he should dominate the relatively weak Dayton District. He won at St. Xavier and was runner-up to Chandler at the OCCs. The rest of that district is quite mediocre with the listed wrestlers having the best shot to qualify. Two other possibilities are Gatto (Cincinnati Moeller) and Dotson (Cincinnati Elder).

The Hilliard District is also relatively weak with few placement candidates. An exception might be state alternate Cannon or teammate Caldwell both who have wrestled very well at this weight. At the same time Madia -- just down from 135# -- is also a possibility for placement, but good fortune would be needed for it to be much higher than a 5th or 6th. I would not be surprised to see one or possibly two unknowns qualify out of this district. Another very distinct possibility is that some of the excess 135s discussed next will drop to this weight class.

135#

①  
PROJECTED CHAMPION: PETER NATHANSON (SHAKER HTS.)

TOP CONTENDERS

- |   |   |                                   |                                    |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ② | ③ | 2. Owens (Walsh Jesuit)           | 13. Clayton (Milford)              |
| ④ |   | 3. Arnold (Cincinnati St. Xavier) | 14. Petro (North Canton Hoover)    |
|   |   | 4. Davis (Hilliard)               | 15. Finding (Valley Forge)         |
|   |   | 5. Jageman (Fairborn Baker)       | 16. Dailey (Defiance)              |
|   |   | 6. Lindsey (Col. Independence)    | 17. Sackett (Akron North)          |
|   |   | 7. Merrill (Elyria)               | 18. Cottrell (North Royalton)      |
|   |   | 8. Mays (Fairfield)               | 19. Collett (West Chester Lakota)  |
|   |   | 9. McKee (Medina)                 | ⑤ 20. Kuntz (Cincinnati Oak Hills) |
|   |   | 10. Steinmetz (St. Edward)        | 21. Priestas (Gahanna Lincoln)     |
|   |   | 11. Lewis (Reynoldsburg)          | 22. Buemi (Maple Hts.)             |
|   |   | 12. Summerlin (Warren Harding)    | 23. Ramsey (Strongsville)          |

Peter Nathanson had a brilliant season last year going 30-0 up through his district title including a 9-1 drubbing of eventual state runner-up Bryan Gron in the finals. Then at Wright State somebody who looked very much like Peter Nathanson but must have been someone else began wrestling a first round bout but was immediately "found out" when he lost 11-1 to Zinkan and then later 8-3 to Dobosh. This person was clearly not the same wrestler we had seen all year -- at least that's how it appeared.

This year the real Peter Nathanson is again totally undefeated and I'm sure will this time show up at Wright State. If so, he has to be considered the best choice to win at this weight. It seems to me that his only real challenger is Owens and the real Nathanson has to be the favorite in that confrontation. A brilliant youth wrestler, Nathanson has some marvelous set-ups and his wide experience should enable him to avoid the wicked throws that Owens specializes in. So while it won't be easy, Nathanson should be Shaker's first state champ since Tim Karpoff more than 20 years ago.

Nathanson will dominate at Mentor. However, both Merrill and Steinmetz are rumored to be headed toward this weight, and they will shake up the remainder of the field if the stories are accurate. Merrill has been on the fringes of excellence for a long time, but has never quite reached it. Steinmetz is the prototypical St. Ed's wrestler -- beautifully trained, good on his feet and in superb condition -- but he cannot match Nathanson in either strength or speed. Finding has had an excellent senior season marred only by a draw with Ramsey while winning at Solon and Brecksville. But again, his physical gifts are limiting when matched against the really good boys. Cottrell has also been excellent, winning at Copley and Brunswick, and he could grab a qualifying spot. Pressing this top group are Buemi, Hess (Midpark), Norris (Elyria) and Waldvogel (Mentor).

Nathanson's biggest threat is the explosive Owens -- only a sophomore -- who has begun to demonstrate why he was one of the great youth wrestlers in this area. Ineligible last year he capped his summer efforts by finishing second at the Cadet Worlds in Budapest. This year he has wrestled up a weight or two all year with sometimes spectacular results. A tremendous "thrower" he picked up a

large percentage of falls, and can never be considered out of any bout. His only losses were one pointers, at 140#, to the excellent Feckanin and Merrill. At this weight he will be awesome as evidenced by his OCC title. McKee will lead a whole bevy of excellent challengers to Owens at Perry. A state alternate last year he was runner-up at Medina and is a solid hard-nosed competitor. Summerlin, the North Canton champ, has the advantage of Whitaker as a daily workout partner and he is rapidly improving. Petro is a scoring machine with a somewhat shaky defense so he has a lot of 13-10 bouts. It's a difficult task to convert that style into a consistent winner at the very highest levels, but is made-to-order in terms of upset. Furlong wrestles nearly an invisible schedule for me, but he won the very tough Brooke Classic and he has excellent talent. He will be a big unknown in this competition. Sackett and Hull (Massillon Perry) are also very good and you begin to wonder whether some of these boys might consider moving to 140# -- where this district is much easier -- except for Grammes. Other possibilities are Ramsey, MacKinnon (East Liverpool) and Harrison (Akron Kenmore).

State qualifier Arnold heads a strong field at Dayton as six fine candidates vie for four spots. Last year he lost to eventual champ Zinkan by one point in the district consolation finals and then succumbed in the first round at states to Leemaster, 14-9, in a hard fought battle. This year he has won several major tournaments with his only loss to Malloy at the OCCs -- an upset since he had crushed that same wrestler a week earlier at St. Xavier. Mays was runner-up at Kenston at 145# but has dropped all the way to 135# -- a class below what he wrestled last year. He won the Fairfield at this weight and, if effective here, really improves his team's overall chances. Jageman is solid -- winning at the mammoth GMVWA and Troy -- and missed qualification last year by a single point. Clayton and Kuntz are both good while Collett will drop to this weight and become a factor. Shepherd (Xenia Beaver creek) was one point from state qualification last year but has had a disappointing season. Unless he makes a real turnaround the quality of this field will make short work of him. Those that emerge from this district at 135# will be a battle-hardened crew.

State qualifier Davis looked terrific at Medina crushing McKee in the finals and that has been indicative of his season -- except for a one-week lapse at the Hamilton Invitational. With a great draw (away from Nathanson and Owens) he could be a potential finalist. Lindsey was MVP at Circleville pinning Cain in the finals and should be a factor here. His biggest disadvantage is a relatively weak program that may not challenge him. Dailey is undefeated in the Northwest District, but he seems to wrestle an inordinate number of close bouts -- giving him few breathing spells and always keeping him in imminent danger. Last year he lost his first round district bout 2-1 and his consolation bout 6-5. He'll go further this year. Other possibilities are Priestas (who defeated Lewis), Cain (Delaware Hayes) and Ruiz (Toledo St. Francis).

140#

①  
PROJECTED CHAMPION: ROGER CHANDLER (ST. EDWARD)

TOP CONTENDERS

- |                                     |                                   |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ② 2. Grammes (Strongsville)         | 12. Blind (Wadsworth)             |
| 3. Tammerine (Perrysburg)           | 13. McDaniel (Xenia Beaver creek) |
| ⑤ 4. Bloomer (Toledo Start)         | 14. Deubel (Maple Hts.)           |
| 5. Hinton (Cincinnati Oak Hills)    | 15. Murphy (Marion Harding)       |
| 6. McCullough (Wapakoneta)          | 16. Blalock (Madison)             |
| 7. Whitehead (Sycamore)             | 17. Barringer (Warren Howland)    |
| 8. Stackhouse (West Chester Lakota) | 18. Wyrick (Logan)                |
| 9. Francis (North Royalton)         | ③ 19. Duganier (Parma)            |
| 10. Miller (Clayton Northmont)      | 20. Morr (Barberton)              |
| 11. Boeding (Toledo St. John)       | 21. Burdette (Lakewood)           |

Three weeks ago this weight seemed incredibly overcrowded with the best middleweights around. But then Nathanson and Owens opted for 135#, Hollo will probably drop to 130#, and Zinkan and Kosarko decided to stay at 145#. That thins out the competition but it still leaves a star-studded cast at the top of the charts.

Chandler, none too affectionately nicknamed "The Hammer," is one of the finest wrestlers in Ohio. Intensely physical, he dominates opponents with speed and power and on top he is positively brutal. Last year he was runner-up at 135# losing a narrow 7-5 decision to Steve St. John -- one of Ohio's finest last season -- in the finals. Indicative of his skills was the quarter-final dismantling of Buck Miller (then 32-0) where he focused his tremendous talent for two and a half minutes of sustained fury. This year he has crushed everyone except the nearly equally brilliant Feckanin who pushed him to the limit in the Medina final before losing 13-11 in overtime. Chandler, already signed with Indiana, is something special, but he'll have to be at his absolute best to beat back the challenge of Grammes.

Grammes, runner-up at 140# last year, will not be intimidated by Chandler. He, too, has had a brilliant career, and his loss in the finals was bitter medicine considering he had beaten Sabo just the week before. His semi-final bout where he dominated the excellent Strunck was indicative of his skills. He has not been pushed this year. We can only hope that the wrestling gods intervene so this dream match-up takes place late Saturday afternoon with the state crown in the balance. As my long-time telecasting partner Mike Massa would say, "It should be a real beauty."

Both Chandler and Grammes will dominate their districts. Chandler has already TFed Merrill and driven him to 135#, and everybody else left here was already behind him. I've listed Francis, Deubel, Blalock, and Burdette, but they are just marginally better than a cadre of other candidates. Another possibility is Duganier -- who has tried 135# -- but may now see that with all the drops to avoid Chandler the numbers game favors him back at 140#.

There is a real opportunity for state advancement at Perry. Except for Grammes no one really stands out as state material. Several of them Blind (at



North Canton), Morr (at Wadsworth), Barringer (at Brooke) and Rollins (at North Canton) have had good weeks but no one has shown sustained excellence. O'Neill (Boardman) and Paulus (Uniontown Lake) are two others that pretty much fall into that same pattern, but at a slightly lower level. There are 11 excellent 135s in this district competing for four openings. Do not be surprised if some of them decide that 140# is a far more attractive setting.

The best district -- top to bottom -- is probably at Hilliard. Tammerine lost two overtime bouts -- either of which would have taken him to States -- as a sophomore and then was district champ at this weight last year. He had a wobbly state tournament, failing to place, but he's a finalist if the pairings tragically turn out having Grammes and Chandler meeting in the semi-finals. I like Tammerine's philosophy. He didn't worry about protecting his perfect record but moved up two weight classes to challenge Ovall at 152# -- losing narrowly 10-9. Bloomer was a sophomore state qualifier at 140# last year and won two state bouts. Grammes crushed him 11-3, however. McCullough also qualified last year as a sophomore winning the district title at 130#. He has very good potential. After this trio there is an enormous drop-off with Murphy, Boeding, Poling (Toledo Rogers), and Mamais (Dublin) as potential contenders. A dark horse is the rapidly improving Goldsmith (Grove City).

Dayton may have the most competitive district. Nobody here has previous state experience, but all of them have shown good ability. Their role is likely one of mopping up the lower district qualifiers from other areas, and then, themselves, becoming cannon fodder for the really top boys. I like Hinton the best here based on his impressive SWOCA title and a record which includes only one loss -- an upset 6-4 defeat to Hollo. Whitehead, Miller and Stackhouse are my other three choices here, but McDaniel is also good. Maybe one placer from this group.

145#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: <sup>(4)</sup> STEVE KOSARKO (MAPLE HTS.)

TOP CONTENDERS

- |         |                                  |                                       |
|---------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| (2)     | 2. Zinkan (Cincinnati Moeller)   | 13. Denholm (Akron Springfield)       |
| (3)     | 3. Anderson (Pickerington)       | 14. Mahaffey (Toledo Woodward)        |
| (6)     | 4. Shanklin (Fairfield)          | 15. Johnson (Akron Firestone)         |
|         | 5. Goodman (Dayton Wayne)        | (4) 16. Bennett (Elyria)              |
|         | 6. Periandri (Padua)             | 17. Guorno (Grove City)               |
| (3)     | 7. Sturghill (Mentor)            | 18. Grosz (Wadsworth)                 |
| (6) 140 | 8. Mohr (Delaware Hayes)         | 19. Gross (Clayton Northmont)         |
|         | 9. Harris (Uniontown Lake)       | 20. Overholt (Walsh Jesuit)           |
|         | 10. Evans (Dayton Colonel White) | 21. Williams (Lorain Southview)       |
|         | 11. Jardine (Strongsville)       | 22. Sneider (Toledo Central Catholic) |
|         | 12. Immel (Franklin Hts.)        | 23. Gorski (Westlake)                 |

It now appears certain that Billy LaCure will remain at 145# and, if so, the competition at this weight becomes wide open. LaCure would probably be a step above the rest of a good field, but with his absence there are now any number of participants who could be finalists. In fact, this will now be one of the most

competitive weight classes in Division I from the first round onward. While Zinkan is a defending state champ, I've selected another junior, Steve Kosarko. Call it a hunch or a premonition, I've gone with the long-shot here based simply on the fact that I believe he has the tools to win. I had Kosarko already pencilled in as a State champion next year, but now it seems to me, next year has come early. As a sophomore last year, he grabbed a strong 4th losing only to his old nemesis Chandler and Miller. This year he could probably make 140# easily, but the percentages with Chandler and Grammes there are not in his favor. Instead he will be far more conformable here. His only loss was to Division II favorite Tony Pariano at Brecksville where he trailed only 1-0 until a last second desperation takedown attempt expanded Pariano's margin of victory to three.

Defending state champion Zinkan is up three weight classes, but remains a formidable force at this weight. His physical style is intimidating and he remains undefeated at this point winning the SWOCA, GMVWA, and OCC tournaments. His only close bout was a 7-6 battle with the equally physical Periandri. Last year he blasted Nathanson in the first round at states, nipped Grant 9-8 in the semis, and then won an 8-7 overtime bout with Gron in the finals. He undoubtedly faces the choice of dropping to meet Chandler or Grammes or staying here to hook up with Kosarko, Anderson, and Shanklin. Shanklin will also be at Dayton with Zinkan and he was 4th at this weight last year. He has been at 152# where he seemed very shaky -- possibly the result of illness or injury. Again, not real spectacular, he is a wrestler who knows how to win in a variety of situations. Goodman is the dark horse here. He has had spells where he has wrestled like a potential finalist. Last year he had the misfortune to draw Chandler and Buck Miller back-to-back with poor results. Kosarko beat him handily earlier in the season for his only loss. Last year three Dayton qualifiers placed at this weight and it could happen again. Evans is also excellent and should be the fourth qualifier. Behind him are Gross, Pierce (Miamisburg), and Harrison (Dayton Meadowdale).

At Mentor there is a trio of proven performers leaving, perhaps, only one state berth for everyone else. Kosarko, of course, leads the way. State qualifier Periandri is very physical, and when healthy, can go with anyone here as attested by his one-point loss to Zinkan. Sturghill was a state quarter-finalists last year and showcases a wide variety of nice moves. However, Kosarko beat him by four points at Brecksville and LaCure pinned him at states last year. He may have trouble with real physical contenders. After that it's wide open. Bennett and Williams are both tough with Gorski another possibility.

Harris, a steady performer, was runner-up at Medina and is marginally best at Perry. A solid grinder he is excellent at converting opponent's mistakes into points. Jardine was a state alternate at this weight last year and won handily at Brunswick. At a less well-balanced weight he would have strong placement potential. Denholm wrestles a schedule peppered with Division II and III schools, but his fall over state place winner Wilson shows his mettle. He may be severely underrated here and may merit top ten consideration. Johnson was runner-up at Solon and Wadsworth losing to Denholm in the latter final. That's four state level performers, but both Grosz and Overholt have strong skills as well. Overholt, only a freshman, pinned the defending state champion from Michigan with as pretty a lateral drop as you'll ever see, and then took a strong 3rd at the OCC. Look for him to ponder a move down to 140#.

At Hilliard state qualifiers Anderson and Mohr head the field. Last year Anderson was about 20 seconds from placing when he crashed DeNova Wright to the mat and was disqualified when Wright was seriously injured. This year he won at Medina in fine fashion and has lost only at 152#. Mohr is undefeated including a narrow win over Mesenburg at Marion Harding and easier victories at Hamilton Township and Upper Arlington. He has wrestled some at 140#, but his district is much more difficult at that weight class than here. On reflection I believe he'll be back at 145#. Behind this duo are a solid group of candidates including Immel, Mahaffey, and Guorno with Sneider and Griffith (Hilliard) another step behind. Immel has been hot lately and may make a solid run at the two top boys in this district.

152#

*D145*  
PROJECTED CHAMPION: BILLY LaCURE (NORTH CANTON HOOVER)

TOP CONTENDERS

- |                                     |                                   |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ① 2. Lawless (Xenia Beavercreek)    | ⑥ 14. Sanders (Massillon Jackson) |
| 3. White (Mayfield)                 | 15. Cameron (Medina)              |
| ③ 4. Ovall (Holland Springfield)    | ④ 16. Nash (Sycamore)             |
| 5. Marx (Cincinnati Oak Hills)      | 17. Folk (Maple Hts.)             |
| 6. Miller (Valley Forge)            | 18. Stebleton (Lancaster)         |
| 7. Whalen (Cincinnati Moeller)      | 19. Kuhn (Padua)                  |
| 8. Anderson (Oregon Clay)           | 20. Van Gundy (Groveport)         |
| 9. Jarvis (Cloverleaf)              | 21. O'Neil (Walsh Jesuit)         |
| 10. Price (Fairfield)               | 22. Eddings (St. Ignatius)        |
| 11. Bouscher (East Liverpool)       | ⑤ 23. Gyongyosi (Akron Kenmore)   |
| 12. Carroll (Cincinnati St. Xavier) | 24. Matheou/Rock (Strongsville)   |
| 13. Carter (Toledo St. Francis)     | 25. Allen (Middletown)            |

A quartet of outstanding wrestlers -- two seniors and two juniors -- dominate this weight class. Since each will qualify from a different district the semi-final pairings will be tremendous. Let's first discuss each of the top four.

Lawless is exceptionally talented and has been a State caliber wrestler for the past three years. Last year at 145# he upset the top ranked Foston in the quarter-finals (after getting drilled in their dual meet), and then gave the eventual State champ Gron his only tough bout (he was unscored upon, otherwise) before losing 6-5 in overtime. He eventually captured a 5th place. This year he has crushed everyone -- including Shanklin and Wilson -- but was caught by LaCure in headlock for five points in a close match and was dealt a solid loss in the Brecksville finals.

You could tell LaCure was going to be something special when during his freshman year he won the North Canton Tourney. Then last year, he placed 5th in the toughest weight class in Division I. Grammes beat him 7-6 in district action to give you an idea of overall quality. This year he has been fabulous at 152#. At North Canton nobody was close, and at Medina he pinned the defending Louisiana state champion in the semis and, as mentioned, hit the big 5-point move to put away Lawless in the finals. Not a big 152 pounder, he still has that uncanny

balance, and woe to those who flurry with him. The only negative is that he seems to wrestle a very casual first period almost as if to set a fitting handicap for himself. That won't work well here on a consistent basis.

White has improved more quickly than just about any wrestler this year. Last year he put on an ending season spurt and became a State qualifier at 145#, but was knocked out in the first round at Wright State. This year he has been awesome. He crushed the angular Miller 14-6 at Solon, and Miller is undefeated and virtually unscored upon otherwise. At Kenston it was more of the same as White has become a scoring machine, running huge scores against good opposition. He is potentially a high school superstar by his senior season.

Ovall, twice a State qualifier and a State placer as a sophomore, is the fourth member of this all-star quartet. Undefeated the entire season he won the giant GMVWA -- pinning the probable West Virginia state champ in the first period of the finals. He has not faced the level of competition, however, that the other three have been hardened by.

The choice here is difficult and might, in part, be determined by the pairings. I believe LaCure's chances are maximized by meeting Lawless in the semi-finals rather than the finals -- when the size advantage would swing rapidly in Lawless' favor. In any case, after several days of agonizing I've decided to go with LaCure no matter what the situation based primarily on his ability -- not matched by any of the other contenders -- to score the big move. The last two rounds will be wonderful.

At Mentor, Miller will easily be second best behind White and his incredible length and his unorthodox style may cause real havoc with downstate boys who have never seen him before. They won't have an opportunity to figure him out. After this duo the competition is quite weak presenting an opportunity for almost anyone on a hot weekend to earn a ticket to Wright State. Besides the listed contenders Ware (Westlake), Bowers (Hudson), and Leitert (Madison) are possibilities.

Lawless will face much better competition at Dayton -- although none of them can perform at his level. Marx missed state qualification by two points last year and has been excellent at 160# all year. He won at St. Xavier and was the top Division I placer at the SWOCA. Behind him are state qualifier Whalen who lost two straight at Wright State after a District fourth. He has been erratic this year, looking excellent at times and not so good occasionally. He must still be factored into a possible placement spot. Carroll also was a state qualifier -- at 125# -- but has begun to adjust to this much higher weight class. He was 3rd at the OCC, 4th at the SWOCA, and 2nd at St. Xavier. Price and Nash are also possibilities in what promises to be a spirited fight for the last two spots. The unknown Allen could be a surprise.

Ovall will dominate at Hilliard with really only minimal competition to worry about. My guess is that no one is within eight points of him there. Anderson is probably next best, but after that chaos reigns. One person to watch for is Carter who was a state alternate at 160# last year and is now going at 152#. Other potential candidates in addition to those listed are Figliola (Reynoldsburg), Couch (Mansfield), and Landenburger (Groveport).

After LaCure, the cupboard is bare at Perry. While there are a number of good journeyman performers no one has distinguished himself to the point where we are talking about state placement. The two unknowns are Stebleton and Bousher who were bracketed in the Central District last year. Both came close to state qualification there, but do not, especially in Stebleton, face strong weekly competition. Bousher faces an interesting dilemma, OVAC champ at 145#, he is, in my mind, an almost sure state qualifier at 152# but, of course, his chances of placing are very small. At 145# the qualification may be tougher, but the ending rewards could be greater. A possible long-shot would be if O'Neil (Walsh Jesuit) dropped to 152# and performed well at this weight class.

160#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: <sup>1</sup>RODRICK FRANKLIN (LORAIN SOUTHVIEV)

TOP CONTENDERS

- |     |                               |     |                                 |
|-----|-------------------------------|-----|---------------------------------|
| 2.  | Olson (Holland Springfield)   | 13. | Drews (Brush)                   |
| 3.  | Sweet (Dayton Wayne)          | 14. | Shelton (Westerville North)     |
| 4.  | Neider (St. Edward)           | 15. | Farley (Solon)                  |
| 5.  | Boiani (Valley Forge)         | 16. | Brown (Elyria)                  |
| 6.  | Margloras (Xenia Beavercreek) | 17. | Jackson (Cincinnati St. Xavier) |
| 7.  | Fickes (Centerville)          | 18. | Johnson (Dayton Meadowdale)     |
| 8.  | Gizzi (St. Ignatius)          | 19. | Daily (Mount Vernon)            |
| 9.  | Martin (Walsh Jesuit)         | 20. | Green (Austintown Fitch)        |
| 10. | Wahoff (Pickerington)         | 21. | Stillwagon (Clayton Northmont)  |
| 11. | Leonard (Cloverleaf)          | 22. | Patterson (Barberton)           |
| 12. | Stahl (Defiance)              | 23. | Boros (Padua)                   |

Except for heavyweight, this may be the weakest weight class in Division I. The major exception to that generalization is the exceptional junior, Rodrick (Juggy) Franklin, who stands head and shoulders above everyone else. Last year as a sophomore he captured the Mentor District at 152# with his only loss at that time to Pennsylvania state champion in overtime. However, for whatever reason, he did not look himself at Wright State, losing two tough overtime bouts in a row. This year nobody has come close to him as he had devastated the field at both Dublin and Brunswick. For example, returning state qualifier Stahl lost 15-4 in the Dublin finale. Barring injury or incredibly bad misfortune Franklin should capture his first state title -- giving him a chance next year to surpass his cousin, G. T. Taylor, by one.

Below Franklin at Mentor there is a nice representative field vying for the last three spots. I particularly like the sophomore Neider who was 3rd at both Medina and the OCCs. He is still on the steep part of the learning curve and gaining confidence quickly. Physically he just can't go against Franklin at this time, but since they exit the same sectional he should be away from him at both the district and state level. Boiani won at both Solon and Brecksville and is a solid, dependable performer. His biggest accomplishment may have been moving up to 171# and trapping the excellent Caraffi with a cradle for the fall. A real unknown is Gizzi who always seems banged up with injuries. Neider pounded him 13-4 in the dual, but Gizzi has since won the OCC and finished a strong second at St. Xavier. He may well be second best at this district by tourney time.

Another contender is Brown who won three bouts at Mentor last year but failed to qualify. He has been at several weight classes, but I think he'll land here. He cannot be overlooked. Finally, Drews has dropped back to 160# after a great half season at 171#. He won big at Richmond Hts. and was a strong 3rd at Kenston at that weight. Other possibilities are Farley, Boros, and Vassar (Cleveland Hts.).

Olson failed to escape his sectional (albeit a very tough one) last year, so this second ranking may be something of a stretch. Still he has Oval as a sparring partner and an undefeated season including three major championships already in hand. Of course, the question still persists as to how well he'll perform in the state pressure cooker. Wahoff is the best the Central District has to offer and he has placement potential. He lost to Neider for 3rd at Medina. State qualifier Stahl is undefeated except for his loss to Franklin, while Shelton and Daily have put together solid seasons. Other possibilities are Mayes (Toledo Central Catholic), Schultz (Galloway Westland), and Timmons (Grove City).

I think the best district overall is at Dayton. There at least a half dozen solid contenders will vie for the four berths with two or three other reasonable dark horses. Sweet was one bout from states last year, but ran into the unlucky King who was coming back from a disqualification and lost. This year he has won big at Franklin Hts. over Ramsey, at Wayne over Zickafoose, and St. Johns over Mayes. He also has Joyce at the next weight class to work out with. Margioras was a state qualifier too who has not reached peak form as of yet. He was unimpressive at Medina failing to place and was 3rd at the SWOCA at 171#. Still he has the track record and the skills to place. Fickes missed that state spot 7-6 to Margioras and has had a curiously parallel season -- possibly because of Centerville's extended football schedule. He was drilled in the Kenston final 17-7 and at St. Xavier he finished 5th after losing to Gizzi and Jackson. Again the track record is there and it's way too early in the season to write him off. Jackson and Stillwagon have both been impressive while Monroe may show well at this weight class. Amos Johnson has dropped from 171# and he is a powerful competitor with real upset potential. He could be the factor that really stirs this weight class up. Stillwagon was a strong 3rd at the GMVWA losing only to Olsen. Behind this duo are Harden (Amelia) a state place winner last year in Kentucky, Vines (Winton Woods) the best product of a newly consolidated school, and Nuckols (Colerain).

The big question at Perry will be whether Andrae Martin will be able to return from knee surgery and, if so, at will be at 152# or 160#. My guess is that he'll not be asked to make a big cut so soon after surgery and thus end up here -- which somehow coincidentally turns out to be a relatively easy weight class. The real issue is whether this exceptional junior will have the same quickness and speed he exhibited last year as district runner-up and state qualifier, and whether reasonable conditioning has been possible. Jarvis is a solid competitor, but after that the field weakens appreciably. Again the smaller 171s may be eyeing this weight class as a desirable landing spot. Tickets to Wright State will come easiest from Perry.

171#

①  
PROJECTED CHAMPION: MIKE AUERBACH (BEDFORD)

TOP CONTENDERS

- |                                |                                      |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 2. Joyce (Dayton Wayne)        | 12. Pontius (Toledo Bowsher)         |
| 3. Caraffi (Strongsville)      | 13. Hammond (Fairborn Baker)         |
| ③ 4. DiMacchia (St. Edward)    | 14. Angione (Uniontown Lake)         |
| ⑤ 5. Calihan (Hamilton)        | 15. Parsons (Galloway Westland)      |
| 6. Wagner (Mayfield)           | 16. Gardner (Austintown Fitch)       |
| ④ 7. Williams (Walsh Jesuit)   | ② 17. Fucito (Cincinnati St. Xavier) |
| ⑥ 8. James (Lorain Southview)  | 18. Gary (Akron Springfield)         |
| 9. Long (West Carrollton)      | 19. Dubois (Watkins Memorial)        |
| ② 160 10. Montgomery (Madison) | 20. Miller (Oregon Clay)             |
| 11. Wilson (Mt. Healthy)       | 21. Shoupe (Holland Springfield)     |

This should be an exceptionally interesting and competitive weight class and it's one I'll watch with interest because my longest consecutive string of successes in Division I (six years) is here. Unfortunately, there is no overwhelming favorite, and, in fact, any of a half dozen competitors have close to equal probabilities of winning. Auerbach was 4th at 160# last year losing narrowly, 10-7, to Hepp in the quarter-finals, and then winning a succession of close bouts in the consolation bracket. He has been at 189# all year, but I'm confident he'll drop to 171# by tourney time. Not that he hasn't done well there (he's undefeated), but this will be the higher probability opportunity in this his senior season.

There are five very qualified candidates for the four state berths given to Mentor -- which means someone is going to be disappointed or that someone (perhaps Montgomery) will go to 160#. DiMacchia was a state qualifier last year with a district 3rd -- beating among others Wagner 6-1. It was two and out at states, but drawing Mollica in the opening round will never be construed as good fortune. This year he lost a one-pointer to Williams at Medina, but overwhelmed him later in the dual -- a bout, I believe, more in line with their relative rankings. He has finalist potential. Wagner also spent time at 189# losing to Auerbach there 5-3 at Solon. Only a junior he seems capable of a low to middle place. James surprised everyone last year. Only a freshman and weighing 158# he was a Mentor district finalist at 171# winning two overtime decisions and a 5-4 squeaker to get there. Then the bubble quickly burst at Wright State, but it was a fantastic run. The key was James' uncanny balance which made him extremely difficult to score against. There are major eligibility questions surrounding his move to Clearview High School and back during a levy failure and whether he will be able to compete is still problematical. Montgomery was 2nd at Kenston to the excellent Mims and has solid abilities, but if James shows up he'll be on the bubble at this weight class. Harteis (Hudson) and Lake (Euclid) are other possibilities here.

Joyce has one of those recurring nightmares wrestlers sometimes dream about actually happen to him. Ahead by a dozen points in his go-to-state bout he suddenly was put on his back and pinned with only 20 seconds left. It deprived him of a possible state place and I'm sure countless nights of sleep. Well, he's back and leads a strong Dayton contingent at this weight. A possible finalist he

has been troubled by injuries and to beat the top performers like Auerbach and DiMacchia he'll have to be at 100%. Right behind is state qualifier Calihan, a solid, dependable workman, who went 34-4 last year. He won both the SWOCA and Fairfield and has the ability for a high place. Long, Wilson and Hammond are all strong performers whose bouts could go either way. My guess is that the draw will make a large difference here. Fucito is also a possibility along with Cutarelli (Greenville) and Krollman (Cincinnati Oak Hills). Incidentally, Bahns (Xenia Beaver Creek) the other participant in Joyce's nightmare, has not yet wrestled this year.

Caraffi was a state qualifier as a sophomore, but then last year lost two one-point matches (the last one to Auerbach) that cut his season short by one week. This year -- except for a surprise fall by Boiani -- he has looked dominating; especially so at Brunswick where he cruised through his bracket. Williams was runner-up at Medina and has split two bouts with DiMacchia. He seems second-best here. Angione and Gardner are standard choices for the next two spots, but watch for Gary, who won at Wadsworth Doylestown, and Mogadore, this year and could be a real surprise. Other candidates are Braun (Massillon Jackson) and Bernhardt (Wooster).

I'll be really surprised if the Hilliard contingent wins two bouts overall at Wright State. There is not much to choose from with Pontius and Parsons the two best. Perhaps some of the journeyman 189s could find success here, but that's a big cut for almost everyone.

189#

①  
PROJECTED CHAMPION: SCOTT OSTHOLTHOFF (CINCINNATI MOELLER)

TOP CONTENDERS

- |                                     |                                |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ② 2. Lisco (St. Edward)             | 12. Hysell (Galloway Westland) |
| ③ 3. Myers (North Ridgeville)       | 13. Walk (Eastlake North)      |
| ④ 4. Mihacevich (Brunswick)         | 14. Csuris (Padua)             |
| 5. Randolph (Wadsworth)             | 15. Anderson (Newark)          |
| ③ 6. Materni (Holland Springfield)  | 16. Kolesar (Elyria)           |
| 7. Whitehead (Cincinnati Princeton) | 17. Rednour (Fairfield)        |
| ④ 8. Stephens (Hamilton)            | 18. Wood (Ashland)             |
| 9. Richardson (Toledo Start)        | 19. Inglis (Austintown Fitch)  |
| 10. Marshall (Strongsville)         | 20. Czerwinski (Maple Hts.)    |
| 11. Maloney (Cincinnati St. Xavier) | 21. Bizjak (Walsh Jesuit)      |

There is a major drop-off in quality after about the 5th place on this ranking. What that really means is that only those in the top five have any realistic chance of taking the title. My choice is Ostholthoff -- already a two-time state qualifier -- who is completely dominant in the Southwest district. Last year his three losses were to Daniels, Rivera, and Uphouse -- the top three placers in Ohio all of whom graduated. Rivera's matriculation was particularly good news to Ostholthoff who lost to him twice in the first round of states -- at least that cannot happen again. This year he was 14-0 with 14 falls entering the OCC as defending champ, but that was probably not a total positive. Meeting Lisco -- who he beat last year -- in the finals he appeared to tire badly in the



third period and suffered his first regular season loss in two years. The key was Lisco's dramatic improvement this year and Ostholthoff's lack of conditioning. Now the ball is in his court because it should now be clear what needs to be done to win the state title. My view is that by tourney time Ostholthoff will have made the conditioning improvements and mental adjustments to win -- but it is assuredly not going to come easily. One thing that will come easily is a district title since Ostholthoff has pinned everyone of consequence there.

At Mentor it would seem to be a two man battle between Lisco and Myers. Since they exit the same sectional they'll be apart at both the district and state level meaning Ostholthoff will have to defeat them both (or their conquerors) to win. Myers was district champ last year and parlayed 25 consecutive victories to a state semi-final berth, but then lost to Daniels, Uphouse and Caniglia to finish 6th. Last year he was clearly superior to Lisco. That may have changed. Myers lost his excellent workout partner Kocsis to graduation and wrestles a schedule that is far less testing than Lisco's. Meanwhile Lisco now has three-time NCAA placer John Heffernan to work out with alongside Terebieniec and DiMacchia and rapid improvement is apparent. Certainly a major plus will be which of the two draws away from Ostholthoff. Everyone else at Mentor is well behind this duo and the second pair that does qualify are very unlikely to place.

Back in the fall of 1989 it was duly noted in Medina County that two families with outstanding wrestling backgrounds both had freshmen -- entrants at the upper weight -- entering school, and there was speculation on the battles these two might have over the years with one another. Dan Mihacevich seemed to mature a little more quickly and last year as a sophomore he placed 4th at states including a 15-13 epic win over Uphouse (just about destroying Hilliard's team chances) and an overtime win over Bolden. Back again at 189# he now will face Rex Randolph who has had two older brothers make it to the state finals. I well remember his brother Tom commenting before his finals match with Rex Holman on the coincidence of having a younger brother with the same first name. Randolph has been devastating this year, but it's still too early to tell whether he's caught Mihacevich yet. Both these boys will be obstacles for the top trio -- Mihacevich with his unorthodox style and Randolph with his burgeoning strength. Marshall has almost improved as much losing by only a point to Mihacevich at Brunswick while Inglis and Bizjak fight for the last spot. Bizjak, the only senior on the Walsh Squad, has gotten tremendous mileage out of his talents already this year.

State qualifier Materni and state alternate Richardson head the Hilliard district. Materni is crushingly strong but Ostholthoff decked him at the GMVWA. Richardson, tall and lean, is unorthodox and could be an upset victim. Hysell is also good but Anderson may not be rated high enough since his schedule makes an accurate assessment difficult.

HVY.

PROJECTED CHAMPION: <sup>1</sup>STEPHEN TEREBIENIEC (ST. EDWARD)

TOP CONTENDERS

- |                                    |                                    |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 2. Kinard (Kettering Fairmount)    | 12. Crampton (Toledo Start)        |
| 3. Turley (Massillon)              | 13. Wojciechowski (Toledo Bowsher) |
| 4. Brookins (Cincinnati Princeton) | 14. Valentino (Galloway Westland)  |
| 5. Allan (Wooster)                 | 15. Cogar (Uniontown Lake)         |
| 6. Soika (Padua)                   | 16. Altman (Holland Springfield)   |
| 7. McGuire (Brunswick)             | 17. Williams (Austintown Fitch)    |
| 8. Dodson (Springfield North)      | 18. Favors (Eastlake North)        |
| 9. Hudson (Delaware Hayes)         | 19. Thompson (Euclid)              |
| 10. Wise (Massillon Perry)         | 20. Studt (Cincinnati Elder)       |
| 11. Glaser (Vandalia Butler)       | 21. Jarina (Garfield Hts.)         |

How many ways are there to say "I don't know?" This essay may provide the definitive answer to that question because nothing seems certain at heavyweight -- except, maybe, that it is the weakest weight class in Division I competition. Only three underclassmen reached state qualification last year and Vitantonio (Walsh Jesuit) suffered a horrible knee injury prematurely ending his season and Slone is now in Division II at 189#. That leaves Kinard as the only returning qualifier -- although Terebieniec did qualify as a sophomore. That means for the second consecutive year that the real depth at heavyweight is in Division II.

My choice is Terebieniec who seems finally to be cashing in on the promise he showed two years ago. He appears to be in great shape and he has become more aggressive -- a trait that deserted him last season. As long as he doesn't let his annual exercise in humility (with Fickell) put him back into a shell he has a good a chance as anyone of winning. Possibly the second best heavyweight in Division I is Louis Santiago (St. Edward) who defeated Terebieniec in their preview bout and has crushed everybody while wrestling a varsity schedule on their Green team. He has already won tournaments at Licking Hts., Ledgemont, Alliance, and Howland. Watch for him next year.

At Mentor the pin-or-be-pinned Soika would seem to be Terebieniec's principal obstacle. He won at Brecksville and was 3rd at both Avon Lake and the OCCs. One big advantage is that he gains a lot of quick falls reducing mat time and the vagaries of officiating. After that who can say. I've listed Favors and Thompson who have split two bouts while garnering 3rds and 4ths at major tourneys. Jarina was a district qualifier at heavyweight as a freshman last year, but doesn't appear to be making the anticipated improvement. Other possibilities are Foy (Painesville Riverside), Green (Shaker Hts.), and Banks (Cleveland Hts.).

Kinard may be the only returning state qualifier at Dayton, but I think Brookins may be better. However, Kinard has far more experience and is adept at the tactics required to win close heavyweight bouts. He was 3rd at the GMVWA losing only to Division II competitor, Anders. He is difficult to score against and can take advantage of mistakes and therefore, will probably be wrestling on the last Saturday of the season. Agananda Brookins was behind district champion Miree last year so he lacks varsity experience, but his talent is undeniable. He

was 3rd at the SWOCA (his only loss by disqualification for an illegal slam) and then won at both St. Xavier and Fairfield. By season's end he may well be ahead of Kinard. I like the pin-happy Dodson for his aggressiveness. At Troy he had four falls to the title in 6:42, and most of this bouts end in less than 60 seconds. He could send any of the favorites home in a hurry. Glaser and Studt have the inside track on the last qualifying medal, but Finkes (Piqua), Olinger (Cincinnati Moeller), and Hoffman (Centerville) are all possibilities.

The one district with good depth is at Perry, but the final outcome is still uncertain because there are at least six contenders of about equal ability. The most impressive competitor so far has been Brandon Turley -- up from 189# last year. He has posted a sensational skein of victories -- including the Wadsworth title -- mostly on quick falls.

My reservation here is that he has looked good against basically inferior competition. He has yet to go head-to-head with the other, more experienced contenders. Allen, Cogar, and Wise are very familiar with one another with no one gaining a real obvious upper hand. They finished 3-4-5 at Medina. McGuire yet another district qualifier did pin Cogar last year and falls right into the main stream of this group. The other unknown besides Turley is Williams, who won handily at North Canton, as another top candidate. His coach, Brett Powell, knows a lot about heavyweight wrestling and he may make a difference if things are tight. Thompson (Chillicothe) has little chance here.

At Hilliard, Hudson has performed consistently well including a 1st at Upper Arlington, a 2nd at Marion Harding (losing to Podraski) and a 3rd at Hamilton Township (losing to Anders). Relatively quick he can score points in bunches, but may be susceptible to the really big heavies having been at 189# last year. Crampton, Wojciechowski and Altman all hail from the Toledo area, and must be rated as narrow favorites for the last three spots. I've always liked Crampton and it may finally be his turn to do well at states. He and Altman both were two and out in district competition while Wojciechowski was the state alternate.

Valentino is not that different than any of the four rated ahead of him while Wauford (Findlay), Foust (Elida), and Slaughter (Newark) are only possibilities.

TEAMS

1. St. Edward -- They look ready to make one last, all-out effort to take the state title away from Walsh. It seems clear that if they don't win it this year it might be a long time before they'll be able to get it back. Two keys to victory seem evident -- first, Terebieniec has got to score strongly at the weak heavyweight class and, second, the other seniors like Chandler, Lisco, DiMacchia, and Friedle need to put points on the board. If Neider, Clement, and one of the junior middle weights contribute it could be a runaway.
2. Walsh Jesuit -- This team was dealt a double barreled blow when State qualifier Vitantonio and Martin went down with major injuries. Still they have impressive firepower in the sophomores Johnson, Musser, and Owens in combination with juniors Williams and Ford. Again two key factors -- that Ford wrestles up to his true ability and that someone like an Overholt or one of the two O'Neils catches fire at just the right moment.
3. Mayfield -- There is a major gap between the top two teams and everyone else. Mayfield has a quartet of stars all of whom must contribute if they are to reach this lofty level. White has been sensational and Kaleal very solid, but Ranallo has never made it to States and Wagner may have a difficult district weight class. They have to do it because there doesn't seem to be anyone else to help.
4. Strongsville -- A wonderful dual meet team that may lack scoring punch at the State level. Two who can score there are Grammes and Caraffi, but they'll need help from Marshall, Jardine, Ramsey or Kotlyn. If everything went just right they could be third.
5. Dayton Wayne -- A long-shot choice, but one worth considering. The trio of Joyce, Sweet, and Goodman all look to be State placement potential -- scoring possibly 50 to 60 points. If Morvatz or Anderson can help they'll solidify this position.
6. Cincinnati Moeller -- Ostholthoff and Zinkan look to be finalists and that's a boatload of points. If, somehow, Whalen or Gatto pitch in they might even move up a place.
7. St. Ignatius -- A surprise team that needs a good break along the way. Vaughn looks like 25 points, while Gizzi and Wahl have placement potential. If Thompson or Eddings can help, things will be a lot easier.
8. Fairfield -- Always a good team in their area, they don't have as much up-top firepower as usual. Wineberg is, of course, great, but Shanklin has not yet been at full efficiency. If Mays and Price at the middleweights or Estep and Wright at the lower weights can contribute, they'll move up quickly.
9. Holland Springfield -- Olson and Oval are the big guns, but neither has been really tested this year. There are other possibilities like Materni, Shoupe, Perry, and Altman, but they are problematical at best. Still they're the best the Toledo area has to offer.

10. Massillon Perry -- This is a team with some real upside potential. Fichter and Franklin look to be the big State scorers, but, if Wise, at the weak heavyweight class, can come through or Blake, Ramos, or Hull help they could move up real quickly.
11. Uniontown Lake -- This is next year's team just getting ready for the future. They have lots of possibilities, but no proven State scorers at this time. I like Minick and Whitmer the best, but Herbert (with that big cut), Angione, Harris, and Cogar are all good. Wait until next year when they're all back.
12. Marion Harding -- Strictly a two-man team, but both Rizer and Ratliff are excellent. Murphy looks like the only other possibility.
13. Hilliard -- A better dual meet team, but one with some potential State scoring as well. The two Camerons are solid and the little Campbell has been a great addition. However, Davis probably has the best chance at scoring heavily -- although his district is tough at 135#. Clingman has an outside chance to help -- if he can get healthy.
14. Lorain Southview -- An unsettled team that could move up quickly. Franklin is outstanding, but they need James eligible for support. Otherwise it's up to Mendez, Quimbaya, and the two Williams.
15. Valley Forge -- A five-man team that might not qualify enough to score heavily at Wright State. Bentley may be their best hope, but he seems inconsistent. Boiani has had a fabulous year, and could surprise at the weak 160# class. If Carver, the steady Finding, and Miller chip in this team could easily be in the top ten.
16. Maple Hts. -- A team that needs a huge performance from Kosarko and Pluhar, and then back-up support from Mayes, Buemi, Deubel, and Folk. That may be asking too much.