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RAY STEELY

1983

HIGH SCHOOL WRESTLING

FORECAST

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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 the entire state. Naturally, accuracy is also a primary concern; and while last year was not an outstanding success, 32 of my 39 choices finished third or better with 22 winning--not near the record of 28 champs several years ago. In "AA", I had my greatest success with my 13 choices racking up 9 titles, 2 seconds, and 2 thirds.

In terms of the caliber of wrestling, this is just not a strong year in Ohio. This is particularly evident when compared with the carload of outstanding college prospects that graduated last year. You'll read time and again in this report about "weak weight class" or "lack of outstanding prospects" and that pretty much exemplifies the situation this year. Of course, as always, there are a few superstars like Davies, Adkins, Jordan, and Ghezzi, but the depth is just not there. One thing that has impressed me is the quantity of outstanding sophomores that I've seen--particularly at the upper weights. Usually seniors dominate above 155#, but wrestlers like Potokar, Inderlied, Ginley, and Sullivan show that two years from now the heavier weight classes will be devastating.

Two important changes that need to be made in the way we wrestle in Ohio revolve around the point system and the "A" classification. If we must have a point system (which I surely doubt) then let's count everything above a dual meet as two points. It will surely make for a better mixture of duals, quads, and tourneys. Secondly, the "A" classification as it is now constituted is very inadequate. More schools need to be brought into the small school class, while "AA" is overcrowded. Several proposals have been put forth to correct this problem, and I hope they will be seriously considered.

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. That is a good way to get this report mailed to you when it is first prepared. My address is:

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"AAA"

Unlike "A" and "AA", the concentration of power for "AAA" lies securely within the Northeast District. This chart shows how this district fared in each school classification:

	<u>1st</u>	<u>2nd</u>	<u>3rd</u>
"AAA"	10	9	9
"AA"	5	3	4
"A"	5	5	4

In fact, 1982 was the poorest year for state champs since 1978 when 9 were crowned. What this means is that in the past, we have not seen a good geographic dispersal in this classification. I do not expect that to change significantly in 1983 although the rest of the state is getting strong once again (especially in Columbus).

A major controversy last year was the Mentor District's loss of one qualifier to the Akron District. As predicted, the change was essentially meaningless as this chart shows:

<u>4th Place Results</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>Placers</u>
Mentor - 1981	7	17	29.2%	2
Akron - 1982	4	17	19.0%	2

Anyway, several Akron schools have been switched back to the Mentor District making for the more traditional 4-3 alignment.

98#

PROJECTED CHAMP: CHIP KILLIUS (BAY)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 2. Hartman (St. Ignatius) | 10. Lallo (Fitch) |
| 3. Black (Avon Lake) | 11. Sanfilippo (North Olmsted) |
| 4. <u>Henry (Maumee)</u> | 12. Hart (Worthington) |
| 5. McComas (Groveport) | 13. Bruno (Dayton Meadowdale) |
| 6. Bogdan (Medina) | 14. Nekić (Glen Oak) |
| 7. Biggs/Macko (St. Edward) | 15. Ratchet (Lebanon) |
| 8. Johnson (Upper Arlington) | 16. <u>Wilson (Toledo St. Francis)</u> |
| 9. Pergram (Middletown) | 17. Shuler (Fairfield) |

This is a weight class that will essentially be dominated by Cleveland District representatives. My top three picks and 6 of my top 11 come from this four-man qualifying area. In fact, the eight team Southwest Conference includes four of these selections. I've gone with Killius, 4th last year, even though there are substantial misgivings on my part. Killius just has not been himself, lately. Maybe it's injury, weight problems, or simply a slump; but whatever the reasons, he has not performed well as of late. My feeling is that it will turn around for Killius and if that happens, he'll win the first state title for Bay since Mike DeAnna.

Hartman and Black will be tremendously tough challengers. Hartman was the MVP at the big St. Xavier Tourney in Cincinnati recording all first period falls. Black has also improved partly due to hard work in the summer. Bogdan and the St. Edward's representative, Biggs or Macko, will vie for that fourth spot. However, Sanfilippo, who tied Killius, cannot be overlooked.

There is good material in Columbus with McComas, Johnson, and Hart all contending for two spots. The battle should be close and may be further complicated by Edwards (Franklin Hts.). Look for a Columbus representative to place.

Henry stands above everyone in the Toledo area and should place. His problems may stem from a lack of significant opposition until the States. Wilson, son of the all-time great from Toledo, has made rapid advancement, and could be the second qualifier.

The Akron District doesn't look strong, but Lallo could be a fooler. Nekic, 2nd at the Medina Invitational, looks like a qualifier, but will be hard pressed to win a bout.

Both the East and the Southwest are weak. Starner (Vincent Warren) or Hilberry (East Liverpool) look like the two best for that one spot. Pergram may be the surprise champ at the Southwest District, but that may not portend much. Bruno, Ratchet, and Shuler are my choices for the other three spots.

105#

PROJECTED CHAMP: PAUL KAPPER (GREEN)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2. Simmermeyer (Cincy Northwest) | 10. Croghan (Akron Springfield) |
| 3. Shire (Toledo St. Francis) | 11. Rickey (Chillicothe) |
| 4. Scholtz (North Royalton) | 12. Haube (Anthony Wayne) |
| 5. Fausnight (North Canton) | 13. Tipp (Westlake) |
| 6. Reilly (Upper Arlington) | 14. Danko (Mentor) |
| 7. DeCamp (Centerville) | 15. Wise (Xenia) |
| 8. Rocco (Parma) | 16. Eblin (Troy) |
| 9. DeWitt (Worthington) | 17. Hartley (Westerville North) |
| | 18. Goempel (East Liverpool) |

Despite seven returning state qualifiers, this weight is not particularly strong. The "flashy" Kapper, 2nd last year at 98#, should win several close matches to gain the title. His problem is that he comes from a weak wrestling school with limited workout partners. However, his quickness is his greatest asset along with a fighting heart. The Akron District also has two other fine 105's. Fausnight, down from 112#, will be a very large 105, and his record at 112# was most impressive. He may do better than his 5th place ranking now suggests. Croghan, a state qualifier in 1982, should gain the third spot, and this time win a bout at Columbus.

Simmermeyer lost a narrow 8-6 decision to Kapper last year, and could well be his closest rival this year. This year, his only loss was to my "AA" choice at 98#, Pat Cash, early in the year. Since then he has dominated the Southwest District. Right behind him is the rapidly improving DeCamp who could well grab a place in Columbus. There is a big gap between these two and those that follow such as Wise and Eblin. Noble (Franklin), a precocious freshman, has an outside chance of qualifying.

Shire has shown great improvement during the past year and will dominate the Toledo District. He should easily place and certainly has a chance of upsetting Kapper and taking the title. Others in his district like Haube or Behringer (Defiance) won't come close to him.

The Cleveland District was weak at 105# last year, and is not that rugged this year. Jeff Scholtz, brother of several state place winners, has dominated his opposition this year, and can place. In fact, any of my top five could win the state title with Kapper only the most probable choice. Scholtz will be joined by Rocco in Columbus, but the other two spots are wide open. Danko and Tipp are shown on the sheet, but they are only marginally better than a half dozen other district challengers.

State qualifier Goempel will have trouble returning to Columbus with Scott Rickey to contend against. In fact, Rickey should cruise through that District, and be a handful for anyone he meets.

112#

PROJECTED CHAMP: SCOTT HINKLE (FAIRFIELD)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 2. Willaman (North Canton) | 10. Lorence (Crestwood) |
| 3. Rowan (Madison) | 11. Mendicino (Fairview Park) |
| 4. Benz (Oak Hills) | 12. Lewis (Tecumseh) |
| 5. Weaver (Worthington) | 13. Carlin (St. Edward) |
| 6. <u>Monaghan (Sylvania Southview)</u> | 14. Salemme (Cincy St. Xavier) |
| 7. Jones (Galloway Westland) | 15. Shaw (Carrollton) |
| 8. McMillion (Akron Springfield) | 16. Howell (Sidney) |
| 9. Marsico (Cuyahoga Falls) | 17. McKay (New Philadelphia) |
| | 18. Siske (Pickerington) |

This will be a fascinating weight class with 15 returning state qualifiers competing for the state crown. However, except for state champion Hinkle, only one other in this group has placed in "AAA". What we have here is a weight class loaded with good, but not outstanding, wrestlers.

Hinkle won last year at 105#--one of the few weak classes in 1982. This year, I expect him to repeat even though the opposition is somewhat stronger. Old rival Benz should join him in Columbus. After that, state qualifiers Lewis and Howell will have to fight for those last two spots with Salemme and Picolo (Springfield North). I think Lewis will make it, but Howell will likely fail to beat Salemme. His only salvation would be pairings that got most of his opposition on the other side of the bracket.

Willaman is a super junior who impressed me mightily last year in Columbus. He may well defeat Hinkle and claim the crown for his own. His only defeat was to the excellent Smith when he was at 119#. That leaves two spots open and three state qualifiers--Marsico, Lorence, and McMillion--to vie for them. This is one time when Akronites will wish for the four qualifying spots they had last year.

I placed Rowan in the 3rd slot ahead of 13 former state qualifiers, because of his strength and toughness. Upset in the first round of last year's District, he, nonetheless, should be a potent force in this year's tourney. Mendicino, 3rd in "AA", is difficult to beat and should also qualify. After that, we have a lot of journeymen with high hopes. I'd rate Carlin, Fiorenza (Mayfield), Cook (Mentor), and Rivera (Lorain Southview) as the top choices for the last two spots.

Weaver and Jones are both tough in the Columbus District, and both could place. Siske and Daniels (Hilliard) both good wrestlers, will fall by the wayside here. Except for Monaghan, the Toledo District is quite weak. Their second qualifier will be a first round "goodie" for others in the field.

The Eastern District has some solid wrestlers. State qualifiers Shaw and McKay are favorites to grab that one spot. However, Sturbois (Athens) might well spring an upset here.

119#

PROJECTED CHAMP: DAVE SINGLETARY (LORAIN SOUTHVIEW)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 2. Strauss (St. Edward) | 10. Richards (Vincent Warren) |
| 3. J. Smith (Fitch) | 11. Borgemenke (Oak Hills) |
| 4. Hoess (Upper Arlington) | 12. S. Smith (Xenia) |
| 5. Pinzone (Solon) | 13. Gundling (Worthington) |
| 6. D. Smith (Nordonia) | 14. Boone (Lancaster) |
| 7. <u>F. Smith (Anthony Wayne)</u> | 15. Long (West Geauga) |
| 8. <u>Bowyer (Grove City)</u> | 16. <u>Seabolt (Toledo Rogers)</u> |
| 9. Tusick (North Olmsted) | 17. <u>Guzik (Normandy)</u> |

It's quite likely that fully one-quarter of the bracket sheet will be filled with the name of Smith. That has to be a state record, and it wouldn't surprise me if three of these contestants placed. However, the big prize will go not to a Smith, but to a Singletary.

David is a huge 119# with incredible speed and strength but he'll still have to be in top form to make it through this rugged weight class. Frankly, though, I think this is one of the most recruitable wrestlers in the state, and despite the strong opposition will win rather easily. The brilliant sophomore, Jeff (Bubba) Strauss will be his principal competition in sectional, district, and state. Strauss has already defeated John Smith, ranked third, and he'll have the advantage of being away from Singletary in both District and State. Pinzone, the Brecksville champ, should also qualify leaving one spot open for excellent wrestlers like Long, Guzik, Testen (Mentor), and the flashy sophomore Tusick. Both Strauss and Tusick come from the same community, and both will win state titles before their through-- but not this year.

Two Smiths, John and Dave, should dominate the Akron District. As mentioned, John Smith's only loss was to Strauss 7-5. He has the solid skills to go a long way. Dave Smith, a former age group world champion, has tremendous skills, but a volatile approach to the sport. He looked awfully good at 132#, and he could be positively awesome at this weight. On a hot weekend, he could beat everybody but Singletary. His problem is getting out from the bottom position. Kelly (Uniontown Lake) and Vogel (Stow) are other possibilities.

Columbus also has a number of excellent 119's. State qualifier Hoess won a bout in Columbus last year and he should do better than that this year. Bowyer, state qualifier Gundling, state qualifier Cogan, and state qualifier Walburn will battle for the one remaining open. It will be a fascinating struggle.

The Southwest does not have the caliber of wrestlers to meet the competition from other areas of the state. Their best are Borgemenke, Skip Smith and Perrino. State qualifier Roark (West Carrollton) will not qualify, but Price (Fairfield) or Tran (Talawanda) have a shot to do so.

There'll be an interesting little drama played out in the Eastern District. Richards has 13 straight falls, but will face a real challenge from Boone just to qualify. Daugherty (Cambridge) will be a long-shot.

In Toledo, Seabolt upset Smith in the Perrysburg Invitational, but I don't see it happening again. I think weight fluctuation may have played a part in it. Except for these two, I don't see Toledo having too much.

126#

PROJECTED CHAMP: BOB HELDERMAN (ST. EDWARD)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2. Randall (Akron North) | 9. Betsch (Cincy LaSalle) |
| 3. Klumb (Cincy Elder) | 10. Roberts (Gaherma Lincoln) |
| 4. Mineo (Chardon) | 11. Beardmore (Cambridge) |
| 5. Coghill (Nordonia) | 12. Samborsky (Pickerington) |
| 6. Mulhall (St. Joseph) | 13. Lis (North Olmsted) |
| 7. <u>Shadler (Toledo Rogers)</u> | 14. Fleisch (Sycamore) |
| 8. Bogdan (Medina) | 15. Scharrer (Ursuline) |
| | 16. Hoy (Fairview) |

This is probably one of the best weight classes in "AAA", and one of the most exciting, too. This level of competition will be high since virtually everyone in my top ten is a senior with lots of varsity experience.

Helderman is not the flashiest of the contenders, but he is rock solid fundamentally, and is enormously strong. He really hasn't had a close match this year, and was MVP at the prestigious Top Hat Tourney in Pennsylvania. It will take a fabulous effort to defeat him.

Randall, the tall, angular senior, may be the best choice to topple Helderman. Enormously talented, he is exceptionally good with the legs, but is solid on his feet, too. I believe that had he not been injured much of last year, he would have won--as it was he lost in OT to my choice Chris Greer.

Klumb is a tremendous physical specimen who probably equals or even surpasses Helderman in strength. Last year, Helderman beat him in the first round in a close 4-2 bout. He has dominated the Southwest.

Mineo is kind of an unknown quantity beset by numerous injuries. When he is healthy, he can be awesome--as, for example, when pinning Brecksville champ Mike MacLellan. A four-year varsity wrestler, Mineo is a fine athlete and starting quarterback on the Chardon team.

Coghill and Mulhall both had outstanding sophomore years, including state qualification, and great things were expected from both. However, last year neither made it to Columbus, and neither has had a real sparkling senior campaign-- Coghill, having lost three or four times including a 15-3 pasting by Helderman and a fall by MacLellan. However, in something of a surprise, he wrestled a rock-solid conservative match and beat Mulhall, 3-0.

Come tournament time and the competitive juices start flowing, these two cannot be overlooked.

After this group, the quality level drops although Bogdan is very good and may be rated too low. Betsch has been injured all of his junior year and much of this year, too. He is very good and very flashy when healthy.

132#

PROJECTED CHAMP: CRAIG PETERJOHN (ST. EDWARD)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 2. Gintert (Howland) | 9. Geiger (Logan) |
| 3. Felton (Elyria) | 10. Georges (Westerville South) |
| 4. Furnas (Worthington) | 11. Garland (Vandalia Butler) |
| 5. Auker (North Canton) | 12. Specht (Cincy LaSalle) |
| 6. Drew (Toledo Rogers) | 13. Pitten (Brecksville) |
| 7. Whitmore (Ravenna) | 14. Johnson (Mentor) |
| 8. Marzano (Lake Catholic) | 15. Sell (Carrollton) |
| | 16. Shumaker (West Chester Lakota) |

Peterjohn is one of my real long-shop choices. Never a state qualifier in four varsity years, he has nonetheless had an outstanding career including over 100 varsity victories. I suspect that he is tired of wandering around St. John's Arena in his St. Ed's jacket watching his teammates win a state title. This year, I believe he'll play a big role in that team triumph. Felton is the other Cleveland area wrestler I would rate as outstanding. His only loss was to an out-of-state competitor. Marzano looks like a solid third choice in this District, but Pitten, Johnson, and Beal (Lorain) will battle with each other and a host of others for that fourth spot. The district pairings would well be a problem since Peterjohn, Felton, and Beal exit from the same Sectional. Thus 2nd and 3rd will be in with two other sectional champs.

The person most people see winning the title is state runner-up at this weight, junior Brad Gintert. I'm not in agreement. Gintert was extremely fortunate in Columbus winning his first round match due to atrocious refereeing, and squeaking by Meridieth in the semis by a point. Good fortune doesn't generally happen two years in a row. Besides, Ghezzi beat him by 10 points in the MIT--not that that is a disgrace. He should be joined by Auker and Whitmore in that district, and that's a strong combination. Robinson (Firestone) has a small chance of breaking that line-up

Furnas leads the Columbus District that should also include Georges. However, Stallard (Galloway Westland) and Kolly (Upper Arlington) are also good. Only Furnas should place.

The Southwest District is very weak. State qualifier Garland is the best they have, but he won't be able to place. The other three qualifiers will be bracket fillers.

Again, the Eastern District has two returning state qualifiers at this weight, but I see Geiger dominating Sell in that contest.

138#

PROJECTED CHAMP: DAVE ZAHORANSKY (SOLON)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 2. Merk (Oakhills) | 8. Hannah (Amherst) |
| 3. Fee (St. Edward) | 9. Lamancusa (Beloit West Branch) |
| 4. Zele (St. Joseph) | 10. Bukovec (Lake Catholic) |
| 5. Kuhr (Sycamore) | 11. Thomas (Clayton Northmont) |
| 6. Saunders (Greenhills) | 12. Hall (Toledo Rogers) |
| 7. Schneider (Canton South) | 13. Rachlow (Dayton Patterson) |

This is the weakest and least defined weight class in "AAA". No one stands out as even a 20% choice so that much of the above listing is simply based on guesswork.

I've chosen Zahoransky because so far he's the best I've seen. He is undefeated at both 145# and 138#, and is solid and dependable. The district, if not strong, is at least well balanced. Fee and Zele stand out a little more than the others and thus have better odds of a Columbus qualification. Hannah, Bukovic, Kasler (North Olmsted), and Yerse (Willoughby South) are at the next tier which is so narrow as to allow only one to pass.

The other deep area is the Southwest. Kuhr and Rachlow are state qualifiers, but Thomas and Rachlow may be every bit as good. This foursome could place two at the state level. The big unknown, of course, is Merk. Nursing a damaged elbow, he has not wrestled this year. Should he come back in form, he could be a finalist.

Toledo is weak with Hall, Meister (Toledo St. John), and Weaver (Elida). The pair they eventually send may not win a bout in Columbus.

The Eastern District favorite has to be Hammond (Marietta), but it's hard to see him being a dominant force. His only loss was to Koch from St. Edward.

I also listed no Columbus entrants at this weight because they just don't seem that good. Duffy (Galloway Westland) and Kottensette (Upper Arlington) are the two I expect to see survive the District, but Engel (Beechcroft) and Borrer (Groveport) certainly can't be dismissed easily.

State qualifier Schneider should lead the Akron contingent, and he has been kind of a forgotten man because of Canton South's schedule. Lamancusa, also a state qualifier, won a bout in Columbus, but is up two weight classes. It'll be interesting to see how he fares.

PROJECTED CHAMP: RANDY ARVIN (FAIRFIELD)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 2. Bonacci (St. Edward) | 10. <u>Adams (Lima Shawnee)</u> |
| 3. <u>Rhonehouse (Holland Springfield)</u> | 11. Davidson (Salem) |
| 4. Shipley (Mentor) | 12. Miller (Kent Roosevelt) |
| 5. Miller (Oak Hills) | 13. <u>Babson (Vermillion)</u> |
| 6. Brown (Mass. Perry) | 14. <u>Hamilton (Worthington)</u> |
| 7. Brown (Gaherna Lincoln) | 15. Bell (Cloverleaf) |
| 8. Cannon (Elyria) | 16. Magliano (Cincy Moeller) |
| 9. White (Mass. Jackson) | 17. Pencarinah (Grove City) |
| | 18. Fetzer (Sycamore) |

Like 138#, this is another weak weight class that features a lot of boys relatively equal in ability. That will mean a lot of exciting wrestling sprinkled with more than the usual number of upsets. However, the champ will not be able to compare with recent past winners--like Heffernan (1982), Elinsky (1981), Bartalone (1980), and Coffing (1979).

Randy Arvin will be an absolutely huge 145# since he has campaigned at 167# most of the year--and done so without defeat. A state qualifier last year, he has the size to dominate most opponents, and win a succession of close, low-scoring bouts for the title. His closest competition will come from the trio listed right behind him--but each has a weakness. Bonacci, very good on his feet (but then what St. Ed's wrestler isn't), has a weakness underneath and can be ridden. This will hurt him against Arvin if he fails on the first takedown. Besides Bonacci has had trouble stringing a series of good bouts together. Rhonehouse, the "AA" champ last year, has been plagued by injury and a lack of good competition. He may not find "AAA" competition quite as congenial as last year. Shipley is a terrific mat wrestler, but is suspect on his feet. However, he is an outstanding athlete with a gymnast's build.

The way I see it, Shipley and Bonacci will easily qualify out of Cleveland--being joined most likely by Cannon and possibly Bell. There are, however, several other solid 145's like Lafyatis (Bay), Chambers (Lakewood), and Kocak (Lorain Southview) The Cleveland District wrestler drawing away from Arvin will then most likely be the other finalist. If it's Shipley, it'll be a match-up of similar wrestlers, while a Bonacci-Arvin bout would be a study in contrasts.

Rhonehouse, if healthy, should clinch a state spot out of Toledo with Adams and Babson his main competition. This is a solid trio and Heidleberg (Fremont Ross) is not too bad either. That will be a strong competition.

The Akron District also has some competent wrestlers. Brown missed a state berth by one point and Miller by two last year, and they both have improved. State qualifier Davidson is blind, but that rarely hampers him while while White has been real solid. Again this will be a tense, nailbiting competition, and the survivors will be battle hardened for Columbus.

There's good depth in the Cincinnati area with, of course, Arvin leading. However, Miller could well place and Magliano could cause a little trouble. Both of these boys are just down from 155#. Fetzner (Sycamore) will be a very solid fourth qualifier.

The Columbus area is led by Brown, but I expect Hamilton to pull a couple upsets and grab that second spot. Pencarinah would be my alternate should Hamilton stumble.

Last year Wintersville's 145# surprised almost everyone by grabbing a place at this weight. Tom Simone (Wintersville) should be the Eastern representative, and will try and duplicate that feat. No way. An outside shot in that District is Rininger (Carrollton) if he returns from injury duty.

155#

PROJECTED CHAMP: BRAD WRIGHT (ST. EDWARD)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2. DeLeon (Lorain Southview) | 8. DeCarlo (St. Joseph) |
| 3. Bontempo (North Ridgeville) | 9. Saccogna (Kent Roosevelt) |
| 4. Gray (Lima Shawnee) | 10. Jarvis (Lorain) |
| 5. Gharbo (Worthington) | 11. Craig (Groveport) |
| 6. Mickley (Louisville) | 12. <u>Smith (Bowsher)</u> |
| 7. Beardsley (West Carrollton) | 13. Senuta (Hudson) |

This would seem to be a two-man struggle with Wright and DeLeon a cut above everyone else. However, three titanic weekend struggles in row may be short circuited if weight proves to be too much of a problem for DeLeon and he returns to 167#. I'm choosing Wright to win for St. Ed's because I think DeLeon will be upset early at the States when you have to make weight three days in a row. He, however, is an awesome physical specimen, and if he makes it to the finals, Wright may find himself in the same situation as Joe Silvestro did last year.

Bontempo, a third Cleveland District contestant, is also excellent and will give Wright more trouble than he does DeLeon. He will exit from that same sectional, too. Likewise with Jarvis, my fourth pick in the Cleveland District and it's going to be a crowded field over at Avon Lake. Let's hope the pairings are developed so that there are two on each side of the bracket. DeCarlo, Kurak (Normandy) and Kaminski are the other challengers, but watch out for the unknowns. One is Kenya Hardrick (Collinwood) who occasionally explodes on the mat, and Pat Renz (Brecksville) up from 145# who has legitimate talent. He beat Shipley last year, for example.

Mickley is excellent in the Akron District; but Senuta and Saccogna are not upset-proof. Look for one or both to fall in District competition. Mickley, though, is very rugged, and may well place.

Gray will be, I predict, the surprise of the tourney at this weight and grab a place. Smith should be his running mate, but the improving Batt (Defiance) and Tammerrine (Perrysburg) are potential contenders, too.

Gharbo and Craig should dominate the Columbus area with no one being within five points of them. In the southern areas, there is not much solid wrestling going on at this weight. Beardsley may be the one exception.

PROJECTED CHAMP: DAN FUNK (MASSILLON JACKSON)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 2. <u>Mayse</u> (Marion Harding) | 11. Karlak (Padua) |
| 3. <u>Hunter</u> (Kent Roosevelt) | 12. Haimerl (Worthington) |
| 4. Heffernan (St. Edward) | 13. <u>Ginley</u> (St. Ignatius) |
| 5. Caldwell (Louisville) | 14. McCoy (Beaver Local) |
| 6. Dennis (Fairfield) | 15. Szalai (Grove City) |
| 7. Booth (Cambridge) | 16. Holman (Upper Arlington) |
| 8. Rosendale (Centerville) | 17. <u>Dodson</u> (Holland Springfield) |
| 9. <u>Sorell</u> (Vermillion) | 18. <u>Napier</u> (Roger Bacon) |
| 10. Cavassini (St. Joseph) | 19. Brigham (Shaw) |

Dan Funk had an awesome state tourney last year hammering everyone but Darbyshire to finish third. This year, while at 175#, he was every bit as awesome pining everyone, then he dropped to 167#. Since then he has kept winning, but now the scores are closer. I'm wondering whether he has settled in at this weight yet. When he does, he'll defeat a wide and varied field of contenders at one of the deeper weights in "AAA".

Besides Funk, the Akron District will send Hunter and Caldwell which makes for a "dynamite" team. All three could place. It also shuts out of the competition people like McCoy, Korleski (Fitch), Rodriguez (Nordia), and Sigelmeier (Stow). Really a fine group at this weight in the Akron District.

Cleveland also has fine depth. Heffernan is very light for this weight, but he has outstanding ability. He'll be state champ next year--but not before. Cavassini, Karlak, and Ginley are the next three contestants which give the Catholic schools a virtual monopoly at this weight. However, Brigham, who beat Haimerl, is immensely powerful and could move into the top four. Flack (Maple Hts.) is another possible contender.

King Mayse is tremendously experienced and should prove to be runner-up. Sorrell and Dodson are light years behind him. Booth dominates the Eastern District and could place.

In Columbus, there are a lot of names, but not much in the way of outstanding wrestling. It's difficult to see how any of the three I've listed could place.

However, that is not true in the Southwest. I really like both Dennis and Rosendale--once we get Rosendale into better condition. Both could gain low places. In addition, Napier, Perkins (Trotwood Madison), and Wildermuth (Cincy St. Xavier) provide reasonable depth.

All in all, this is one of the better "AAA" weight classes, and I anticipate seeing a lot of strong competition. This would be further augmented if DeLeon moves up to 167# where he has wrestled most of the year. He would have to be rated in the top four which would even further complicate the situation.

PROJECTED CHAMP: LEO CAITO (SOLON)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2. Kohler (Fairview) | 9. Held (St. Edward) |
| 3. <u>Green (Tiffin Columbian)</u> | 10. Freson (Roger Bacon) |
| 4. French (Ravenna) | 11. Finnan (St. Ignatius) |
| 5. Inderlied (Chardon) | 12. <u>Gray (Celina)</u> |
| 6. Kaup (Cincy St. Xavier) | 13. Simonton (Lancaster) |
| 7. Roebel (Cincy Purcell) | 14. Rohe (Oak Hills) |
| 8. McNabb (Westerville South) | 15. <u>Hannon (Defiance)</u> |

The Cleveland District has a number of good 175's, but the best is Leo Caito, 5th at this weight last year. If he wrestled intensely for six full minutes, he would be virtually unbeatable. However, he seems to wrestle in spurts. Kohler and the excellent sophomore Inderlied are close behind Caito and could defeat him given the right conditions. Held defeated Finnan in a dual, and a repeat performance might decide who goes to Columbus. Both of these boys are down from 155. This is by far the strongest District in the state at this weight.

The powerful Green leads a surprisingly good Toledo group. Gray and Hannon will be in the struggle for the second spot, but Rosemond (Rogers) should also be a factor. No one drawing a Toledo opponent will have an easy bout.

French is the only real threat for a state place out of the Akron District while Simonton is pretty much in the same situation in the Eastern District. French, the Kenston champ, is still pretty much of an unknown quantity, but I think he'll place.

The Southwest also has a number of fine 175's. Unfortunately most are a notch lower than their Cleveland counterparts so they're long-shots to place. Kaup and Roebel are the best and they have the largest chance of springing an upset. Freson and Rohe are next in line from this area. Roebel and Freson are both over 80% pinnners--at least in their area--so that they must be handled with some care.

McNabb leads a subpar Columbus area with Jones (Marion-Franklin) and Hamilton (Upper Arlington) a respectful step behind. A number of the good 175's moved down while Scowden (Groveport) an initial favorite of mine has slumped.

PROJECTED CHAMP: MIKE DAVIES (CHARDON)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2. Dopler (Glen Oak) | 8. Suren (Normandy) |
| 3. Rhodes (North Canton) | 9. Schehr (Sycamore) |
| 4. Walczak (Maumee) | 10. Wendt (Fremont Ross) |
| 5. Ashenbrenner (Fairburn Baker) | 11. Sullivan (Lake Catholic) |
| 6. Stacey (Lisbon Beaver Local) | 12. Bateman (Worthington) |
| 7. Wittsberger (Upper Arlington) | 13. House (Fairfield) |
| | 14. Pahl (Vincent Warren) |

Mike Davies is probably the best senior prospect in the state. Defending champion at this weight, he has tremendous technique, lightning moves, and great determination. He'll win easily. The rest of the Cleveland District is mediocre at best. Suren is a journeyman senior while Sullivan is a promising sophomore. Neither of them are within ten points of Davies.

The Akron District is loaded at this weight. Dopler has had a sensational year, and would be a favorite most years. He'll finish second or third depending on the draw. Rhodes and Stacey are state qualifiers who have done well in the past. This trio will be dominant after Davies.

Walczak stands head and shoulders above his Toledo area competition. He may sneak into the finals with a super good draw (away from Davies and Dopler). Wendt is my favorite for the second spot.

Ashenbrenner is likewise the class of the Southwest although that occurs because Matt Bradley, the junior from Centerville is sitting out the season. Bradley is an outstanding prospect with sure placement potential, had he wrestled. Schehr and House rate a ways behind Ashenbrenner.

The Columbus area is weak although state qualifier Thornton (Northland) won't make it through this year. Look for Wittsberger and Bateman, though, to be challenged by Jones (Marion-Franklin).

HVY.

PROJECTED CHAMP: MATT SMITH (GAHENNA LINCOLN)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2. Hessel (Massillon Jackson) | 8. McCully (Maple Hts.) |
| 3. Waite (St. Edward) | 9. Capehart (Franklin Hts.) |
| 4. Hicks (Trotwood Madison) | 10. Leszcz (St. Ignatius) |
| 5. Moyer (<u>Tiffin Columbian</u>) | 11. Price (Cambridge) |
| 6. Traub (Sycamore) | 12. Grant (Mt Healthy) |
| 7. Schaffer (Boardman) | 13. Blakeslee (Elyria) |
| | 14. Walmsley (Buchtel) |

There are seven good heavyweights in "AAA" and they're scattered around the entire state. Because heavyweight is such a volatile class, upsets are common (ask Mike Foor), it's always difficult to predict a winner. However, my choice is Matt Smith, the tremendously strong, mobile heavyweight from the Central District. A state qualifier last year, Smith lost to Foor and didn't get a chance to place. This year, he won't have to worry about consolation bouts.

Hessel was 5th last year, but has not competed up to now because of thumb problems. The longer he delays the less chance he has of being in top form for Columbus. In fact, it may happen that he may not compete. Schaffer, in the same Akron District, also placed last year, but he is clearly a notch below the very best heavyweights.

Waite is the standout in the Cleveland District even though he weighs only about 200#. However, his guile, skill, and strength are unsurpassed at this weight. He lost in OT to state champ Chesbrough last year, and good pairings could make him a finalist. He stands well ahead of other Cleveland area heavies like Leszcz and McCully.

Hicks has been described as a Broadnax look-alike, and he gave Foor a tough 8-5 battle before losing last year. His only loss has been to my "AA" choice Ridder. Traub--smaller and a better wrestler--should be the second entrant out of the Southwest. Grant is well behind these two, but slightly ahead of the rest of the pack.

Moyer leads the Toledo contingent and should place at Columbus. The competition in the rest of his District is relatively weak. Gilbert (Whitmer) and Townsend (DeVilbiss) will probably battle for the second spot. Look out for Giesey (Defiance) since he'll match up well with either of the two boys mentioned above.

Finally, the 280# Price should represent the Eastern area. He could win at least one bout since he will probably meet a low placer from one of the other districts.

TEAMS

1. St. Edward -- St. Ed's returns fewer points from last year's state meet than at any time in nearly a decade. This lack of state experience means they'll have to win their sixth consecutive title with people who have never been to Columbus before. The key to the team is the five seniors in the middle of the lineup (126# to 155#). When they came in as freshman, they were touted as the greatest class ever. They have, however, consistently disappointed with only one state qualification during their first three years. This is the last chance for Fee, Bonacci, Wright, Peterjohn, and Helderman. If they fail, it is unlikely that the crown can be defended.
2. Fairfield -- This would be the highest finish ever for a Southwest District "AAA" team. Arvin and Hinkle are my favorites for individual titles and that would provide a heavy point total immediately. In addition, the larger Dennis, House, Shuler, and Disney have the potential for state qualification. This is a fine well-balanced squad that in the pre-St. Edward's era would have had a fine chance to be state titlists.
3. Worthington -- They have not wrestled as well this year as I had anticipated. Still, they could again qualify as many as nine boys for Columbus, but this time finish better than 10th. I'm impressed with the little men--Hart, DeWitt, and Weaver--even though Weaver has slumped somewhat this year. However, the key are Furnas, Gharbo, Haimerl, and Bateman who must qualify and score at Columbus.
4. North Canton -- Last year's team would be favored to win this year, but a strong nucleus still exists. The most important elements are Fausnight, Willaman, Auker, and Rhodes. If one or two others can get to Columbus, they could reach 2nd.

5. Solon -- They will qualify only three for Columbus, but all should place. The key is Zahoransky who must do very well at what is a weak weight class. Caito is a solid choice to win at 175# while Pinzone has the credentials to score at 119#.
6. Upper Arlington -- Another team that could make the top ten by sheer weight of numbers. Johnson, Reilly, Hoess, Kolly, Kottenstette, Holman, and Wittsberger could all qualify. That's seven people and what they'll need then is somebody like Hoess or Johnson to take charge and roll into the finals.
7. Massillon Jackson -- This placement is predicated on Hessel's successful return at heavyweight. He and Funk have the look of two finalists, and if White, Bostrom, McKee, or Schaeffer could do well, this team might make the top five.
8. Toledo Rogers -- This is kind of a dark horse choice. That district is not particularly strong so Rogers should qualify quite a few. Then, as is so often the case, some of them have to start winning in state competition. Their stars are Shadler, Drew, Hall, Rosemond, LaPlante, and Seabolt.
9. Chardon -- This is a team that will do well because it can count on a ton of points from Davies who could earn from 25 to 30 alone. Should Mineo and/or Inderlied come through, they would be in the top five very comfortably.
10. Lorain Southview -- As I see it, DeLeon and Singletary should get at least 40 points. After that, there isn't much help unless Rivera or Kocak pull some district stunners. The real key is DeLeon and his ability to withstand pressure.
11. St. Joseph -- A team that could be foolers. On the surface they have no sure qualifiers. However, St. John, Hunter, Milhall, Hawley, Zele, DeCarlo, and Cavassini all are possibilities. Give them a 50% success ratio and they are in clover.

"AA"

During the past half-dozen years, the most exciting team races have been in the "AA" classification. That's because there are a great many fine wrestlers scattered over a large number of schools. This fragmentation leads to close, exciting team competitions; and this year should be no exception. As will be discussed, three teams are the early favorites and they each present a different competitive profile, which should make for real fan excitement. Also, no one geographical area dominates this competition, giving it much more of a statewide flavor. For example, the past two years have seen the Northeast -- the dominant force in "AAA" -- capture five state titles in each tourney, with the other eight being divided by every segment of the state.

98#

PROJECTED CHAMP: ROD CASH (MORROW LITTLE MIAMI)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2. <u>Rosen (Clyde)</u> | 9. Cockley (Lexington) |
| 3. Tatonetti (Kenston) | 10. Silver (Eaton) |
| 4. <u>Hatfield (Willard)</u> | 11. Olberding (Twinsburg) |
| 5. Donovan/Govang (Chanel) | 12. <u>McCumber (Rossford)</u> |
| 6. Focht (St. Paris Graham) | 13. Theriot (Olmsted Falls) |
| 7. Leonard (Highland) | 14. Carskadden (Marion Pleasant) |
| 8. Goolsby (Hillsboro) | 15. Mullett (Marysville) |

Last year three boys dominated this weight class, and it was just a question of putting them into the proper order. This year it won't be nearly as easy, as nobody really stands out, and many of the better boys are just now dropping to 98#.

I've gone with the junior state qualifier Cash, believing that his impressive record this year will translate into a state title. He has outstanding competition in the "room", and defeated "AAA" threat Simmermeyer at 105# in a big early-season tourney. I anticipate he will defeat strong contenders from nearly every other part of the state.

For example, in the Southwest, both Focht and Silver have had fine years founded on district performances of a year ago. Focht, in particular, is a senior, and that should give him some advantage at this weight. Other threats will come from Kingrey (Versailles), Armstrong (Urbana), and possibly Williams (Casstown Miami East).

Rosen has been wrestling 98# at Clyde for seemingly a decade -- he's that experienced. Last year this senior lost in the first round and was eliminated, but should do much better in 1983. There is a flock of entrants for the other two qualifying spots, but I see Hatfield and possibly Cockley or McCumber as the prime contenders. It's interesting that Rosen's sub, Steve Thurn, was ranked second in the Toledo area until Rosen dropped down. Sungki Lemaster (Bloomdale Elmwood) is also a long-shot at this weight.

The Northeast is quite confusing. I like the freshman Tatonetti, but he will face plenty of challenges. Either Donovan or Govang will represent Chanel, and either will do well. It is reminiscent of the situation two years ago when Jaeger narrowly beat out Ryba for sectional wrestling, and then wound up third in the state. Ryba, of

course, coming back last year to win a state crown. Another former Chanel wrestler, Olberding, will also be in the competition for a state spot representing Twinsburg. It's gone pretty much unnoticed, but senior district qualifier Bobby Leonard has also dropped to 98#, and he will be difficult to beat at this weight. Theriot is another experienced performer who could qualify for Columbus.

I see the Central District very weak with their qualifiers (like Carskadden or Mullett) as easy first round "cannon fodder". The same is true in the two-man Eastern District where people like Mathews (Ridgewood), Craft (Uhrichsville Claymont), and Kasper (St. Clairsville) are the top contenders.

However, in the Southeast, Greg Goolsby stands out as a top competitor with a real chance of placing; look for Snyder (Meigs) and Lynd (South Point) to finish some distance behind Goolsby and fail to qualify.

105#

PROJECTED CHAMP: SCOTT GREGG (SYCAMORE MOHAWK)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2. <u>Reindel (Cardinal Stritch)</u> | 9. Outward (Martins Ferry) |
| 3. Lynch (Loveland) | 10. Patsolic (Chanel) |
| 4. Duermit (Morrow Little Miami) | 11. Sturtz (Warsaw River View) |
| 5. <u>Persons (Clyde)</u> | 12. <u>Roth (Willard)</u> |
| 6. Baum (Urbana) | 13. Adams (South Point) |
| 7. Kosco (Canal Fulton Northwest) | 14. Cardaman (Kenston) |
| 8. Mulligan (Utica) | 15. Polinsky (St. Clairsville) |

I was all set to pick two-time state champ Rob Huston at this weight, until I was assured that he had certified at 112#. Then came instant confusion as no wrestler stands out at this weight class. Besides, I've correctly picked the winner at this weight only once in the past six years (and that was Jeff Jordan).

I've gone with Scott Gregg from unheralded Sycamore Mohawk because of the power and speed this senior showed last year in finishing 4th at 98#. I hope my choice isn't the traditional kiss of death it has so often been at this weight. His district (along with the Southwest) should dominate this competition as Reindel and Persons should place with Roth unfortunately left behind. Reindel could well win it if Stritch gains momentum in Columbus.

The Southwest is the other dominant area with Lynch, Duermit, and Baum all looking good. Last year Duermit compiled a terrific record at 98#, only to see Cash take his spot just before District. This year we'll see what he can do.

The Northeastern District is very weak. It's difficult to see any contestant from that District placing as the talent just doesn't seem to be there. Kosco and the freshman Patsolic have done reasonably well, but there must be better people than this somewhere.

Mulligan should dominate the Central District, while Adams does the same in the Southeast. However, in the East some intriguing match-ups should take place. Sturtz, Outward, and Polinsky all were District qualifiers last year, and all have had winning seasons this year. They will be the favorites for the two open spots, although Young (Steubenville) and Heavlin (Cadiz) will make strong challenges.

PROJECTED CHAMP: JOHN RYBA (CHANEL)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 2. <u>Mossing (Swanton)</u> | 11. Lambert (St. Paris Graham) |
| 3. Fitzgerald (Morrow Little Miami) | 12. Beck (Navarre Fairless) |
| 4. <u>Huston (Oak Harbor)</u> | 13. Williams (Marion Pleasant) |
| 5. Bunch (Steubenville) | 14. <u>Wlodarz (Cardinal Stritch)</u> |
| 6. McIntire (Marion River Valley) | 15. <u>Leibee (South Point)</u> |
| 7. <u>Piper (Ottawa Glandorf)</u> | 16. Studer (Aurora) |
| 8. <u>Menchaca (Wauseon)</u> | 17. Helton (Middletown Madison) |
| 9. McKinney (Cadiz) | 18. Lancaster (Grand Valley) |
| 10. <u>Herren (Lima Bath)</u> | 19. Doyle (Bellaire) |
| | 20. Pryor (Barnesville) |

This is a most imposing weight class. It includes at least 10 former state qualifiers, a state champ, a two-time state champ, and five other state place winners. Virtually every district will be stocked with a number of excellent 112's making state qualification a real burden even for the highest rated.

My top three -- Ryba, Mossing, and Fitzgerald -- finished in that precise order last year at 105#. They are of about equal ability in that Fitzgerald lost to Mossing in overtime, while Mossing lost a narrow decision to Ryba. Still, I felt Ryba was not at his best last year in Columbus even though he won. He was, perhaps, a shade too cautious and consequently endured a succession of close matches. With more confidence I anticipate seeing the wrestler who pins over 80% of his opponents in the regular season. Mossing and Fitzgerald are both excellent and easily deserve state championship rating. Unfortunately, that will probably not happen this year. Two-time 98# state champ Huston falls behind this trio, as he appears too light to go with my Big Three. However, Huston does have real fighting spirit, and could well spring at least one upset. What puzzles me is his failure to certify at 105# -- especially after being beaten by Mossing.

In the Northeast District, Ryba should have a fairly easy time. Former state place winner Becks, Studer, and maybe Lancaster have the best shots at the other qualifying places. Actually, only Ryba is safe, and we can probably expect a whole host of upsets at the other spots.

The Northwest District, however, will be a real donnybrook. Mossing and Huston have to be favorites, but Piper, state place winner Menchaca, Herren, and Wlodarz are all excellent. Piper beat Menchaca last year and Herren this year, but that should offer him no guarantees. It should be super wrestling, and I have a "gut" feeling that Menchaca will qualify, and that Huston need be careful or one of the others will, too.

McIntire heads the Central District, and a broken arm last year is all that denied state qualification last year. He could place. Williams and the rest are a step or two behind him. Cooper (Circleville), a recent addition at this weight, could threaten Williams.

In the Eastern District we have "A" state runner-up McKinney, "AAA" state qualifier Bunch, and "AA" state qualifiers Pryor and Doyle battling for two spots. I really like Bunch, and I expect him to capture a low place. Doyle and Pryor both have had

shaky seasons, so I look for McKinney to squeeze into that second qualifying spot. One problem will be Bunch's shoulder, which has been giving substantial problems in January.

Leibeé should gain the one Southeast spot, although McComas (Proctorville Fairland) is a definite threat. In the Southeast, Fitzgerald towers over the competition with Lambert (St. Paris Graham) a distant second. The other two spots should be wide open.

119#

PROJECTED CHAMP: RICH DiCOLA (AKRON HOBAN)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 2. Friedl (Brooklyn) | 11. <u>Day (Wauseon)</u> |
| 3. Hanson (Loveland) | 12. Richardson (Ironton) |
| 4. Mazur (Chanel) | 13. Green (Minerva) |
| 5. <u>Penager (Lexington)</u> | 14. Ward (Berkshire) |
| 6. Hebert (Delaware Olentangy) | 15. Reel (Blanchester) |
| 7. S. Peters (Beachwood) | 16. <u>McCrary (Cardinal Stritch)</u> |
| 8. Howe (Ashtabula Harbor) | 17. Scheall (Streetsboro) |
| 9. Mulligan (Columbus DeSales) | 18. Mills (Steubenville) |
| 10. Thuma (Tipp City) | 19. <u>Clair (Archbold)</u> |
| | 20. Carter (Cadiz) |

This is another dynamite weight featuring a minimum of 11 state qualifiers and eight former placewinners. Like we saw at 112#, the action should be fast and furious.

The real contest will begin at the Northeast District. Here we have eight outstanding contentants including former state placewinners DiCola (1st and 4th), Friedl (5th), Ward (3rd), and Green (3rd). The sorting out process should see DiCola and Friedl power their way to the finals with super quickness and slickness. Mazur, a two-time qualifier, will work his usual magic to place, leaving the other five to fight for one spot. I think it will go to Peters, although Howe and Ward have wrestled well this year. Green, 3rd at 105# two years ago, seems mired in a deep slump, and probably will lose early -- a fate likely to befall the outgunned, but game, Scheall.

The Northwest is not that strong with Penager a clear favorite, and Day and McCrary most likely to qualify. Clair, 2nd in "A" several years ago, could mount a real threat for one of the lower qualifying spots. Only Penager has state placement chances.

In the Southwest, Hanson (5th at 105#) leads a strong contingent with Thuma and Reel solid colleagues. The fourth spot is wide open. Hebert and Mulligan should dominate in the Columbus area with nobody else there to really challenge them.

In the East, state placewinner Carter and state qualifier Mills have met many times in the past, and will likely do so again in the District finals. Richardson has looked best in the Southeast.

Statewide, I've gone with Rick DiCola because I've admired his wide-open, "let's wrestle" style for four years. It took him to a state title as a sophomore, and probably two seconds from an upset victory over Jeff Jordan last year. Friedl holds several high scoring victories over DiCola, but maybe three will be the magic number for Rick.

PROJECTED CHAMP: JEFF JORDAN (ST. PARIS GRAHAM)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2. Jaeger (Chanel) | 10. Radtke (Bellbrook) |
| 3. Laws (Sandusky St. Mary) | 11. Huffman (New Lexington) |
| 4. Peters (Cardinal Stritch) | 12. J. Tackett (Willard) |
| 5. DeLisio (Olmsted Falls) | 13. D. Tackett (Milton Union) |
| 6. Diss (Morrow Little Miami) | 14. Pryor (Barnesville) |
| 7. Milhoff (Kenston) | 15. Welch (Norwalk) |
| 8. Kresnye (Kirtland) | 16. Inks (Briggs) |
| 9. Ornouski (Cadiz) | 17. Sheehe (Ontario) |

Eight state titles by a pair of brothers is a feat I never expected to see accomplished. The Jordans exemplify all that is good about wrestling, and Jeff deserves tremendous respect for following right behind his brother with win after win, without any attempt to humiliate or embarrass.

Jeff should win quite easily with only Jaeger having the remotest shot at beating him. Karl, only junior has two state thirds to his credit, and is an outstanding wrestler. I hope the pairings have these two meet in the finals so Jordan can finish his astounding career against the best his weight class has to offer.

Jordan will be joined out of his District by Diss, Radtke, and Tackett. It's a talented group with Diss, in particular, having an outstanding year. His points could make Little Miami a top five team, and, perhaps, if things went very well, garner them a runner-up trophy.

Jaeger leads a reasonably good Cleveland contingent. Milhoff, DeLisio, and Kresnye have good skills and lots of experience. They will be challenged by the Ken Friedl (Brooklyn) and Andes (Akron St. Vincent).

Inks heads a weak Columbus contingent that has no chance of placing anybody at the state level. Cunningham (Watterson) is likely to be the other qualifier.

In the Southeast, state qualifier Huffman should defeat state qualifier Butcher (South Point) for the one available opening. Neither boy is likely to win a bout in Columbus.

Again, the Eastern District has some solid talent. State "A" fourth place Ornouski is stocky and hard to defeat, while Pryor is an experienced senior. However, Weyer (Philo) and especially Byrd (Uhrichsville Claymont) could pull an upset.

PROJECTED CHAMP: JOE GHEZZI (WATTERSON)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 2. Talbott (Cardinal Stritch) | 8. McIntosh (Harrison) |
| 3. Florian (Medina Highland) | 9. Kaiser (Coldwater) |
| 4. French (Olmsted Falls) | 10. Bosson (Coshocton) |
| 5. Jones (Grand Valley) | 11. McLaughlin (Trenton Edgewood) |
| 6. Miller (Barnesville) | 12. Bush (Springfield Shawnee) |
| 7. McCormick (Columbus DeSales) | 13. Sowry (Jefferson) |
| | 14. Gibson (Kansas Lakota) |

Ghezzi is far and away the best 132 pounder in the state. He should dominate this weight class and win as he pleases. Ghezzi has had trouble with close bouts in the past, and so he will solve that problem by not having any.

The Cleveland District features three fine performers in state placewinners Florian and French and the rapidly improving Jones. Sowry, who I would rank fourth, is far behind them. Florian knows how to win the close bouts, but he has too many of them and eventually you lose one on a mistake or the refereeing. He and French seem to be the eternal warriors meeting at every opportunity. Both are excellent, but Jones may break into that set-up. He has been devastating this year, although against suspect opposition. Look for Mileski (Akron St. Vincent) as a possible dark horse.

Besides Ghezzi, the Central District offers the outstanding freshman McCormick. He was very impressive at the Brecksville Tourney and could capture a low place. Lilly (Whitehall) will be waiting in the wings should he stumble.

I rated Talbott ahead of the Cleveland trio, but it only by a "silly millimeter". He faces weak competition in his district with Gibson, a reformed 126#, and Kaiser the seemingly next best.

The Eastern District has a possible placewinner in Miller, who has compiled an outstanding record in that area during the past three years. He was MVP at the huge OVAC Tourney. Bosson is my choice for the second qualifying spot, but Adams (Steubenville) and Nemeth (Cadiz) are threats.

In the Southwest, state qualifier McIntosh should do well, but unknowns like McLaughlin and Bush could be big surprises.

138#

PROJECTED CHAMP: FRED ACKERMAN (CARDINAL STRITCH)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 2. <u>Schneider (Wauseon)</u> | 10. Blangor (Steubenville) |
| 3. Burns (Youngstown Liberty) | 11. Rininger (Highland) |
| 4. Wood (Columbus DeSales) | 12. Bogomolny (Orange) |
| 5. <u>Sonnenberg (Napoleon)</u> | 13. Marlow (South Point) |
| 6. Grilliot (Milton Union) | 14. <u>Veler (Oak Harbor)</u> |
| 7. <u>Galvan (Archbold)</u> | 15. Stadvec (Coventry) |
| 8. Schuck (New Richmond) | 16. Gilkison (Clermont Northeastern) |
| 9. Funk (Olmsted Falls) | 17. Cole (Loveland) |
| | 18. Barnhart (Wellsville) |

I have a real interest in this weight since I have chosen the champion every time from the inception of "AA" -- from Ralph Graham to Scott Duncan. That's why I was so distressed to learn that Joe Ghezzi had dropped to 132# since he was a sure winner here, too. What remains is, perhaps, one of the weakest weights in the "AA" classification.

My theory has always been that when completely mystified, pick a wrestler that comes from a strong tradition with an excellent coach. That's how Fred Ackerman got selected, and if he wins, I'll gladly buy his coach and him a steak dinner. Actually, Ackerman has more going for him than just tradition or coaching. He has solid skills, long experience, and real mental toughness. He'll need it all because his district far outshines all the others. In fact, four of my top seven comes from that area -- and

only three can qualify. Schneider, brother of last year's 132# pick, is actually rated ahead of Ackerman in that area after a so far undefeated season including a 13-10 win over the number one "AAA" wrestler. Sonnenberg and Galvan are both down from 145# and have vast experience. Even Veler, if he's not at 132#, and Neff (Lexington) can pull that one big upset.

Burns, a state placewinner, leads a very weak Cleveland contingent. The field is really wide open for those four spots with Funk, Bogomolny, and Stadvec three possibilities. A real good dark horse candidate for even a state place would be Todd Ringer who has shown real flashes of brilliance finishing third at North Canton and fourth at Medina (losing to Funk 7-4).

Wood should dominate in Columbus now that Ghezzi has dropped and this two-time state qualifier should place for the second time. Quillen (Hartley) leads a wild chase for the second qualifying spot.

The Southwest is also weak with state qualifier Grilliot, Shuck, and Gilkison leading the way. One of this trio could garner a low place. Stickley (St. Paris Graham) could be the fourth qualifier.

Blangor and Marlow head the field in the Eastern and Southeastern Districts respectively. Blangor would appear to have the potential to win at least one bout in Columbus. Kurth (Bellair) or Bernert (Steubenville Central Catholic) are two possibilities for that second Eastern qualifying spot, but look for Barnhart of tiny Wellsville to snap up that second spot.

145#

PROJECTED CHAMP: TIM CORRIGAN (NORWALK)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 2. <u>Goad (Swanton)</u> | 8. Joeright (Garrettsville Garfield) |
| 3. <u>Brown (Cardinal Stritch)</u> | 9. Ward (Middletown Madison) |
| 4. * <u>Peters (Uhrichsville Claymont)</u> | 10. Farr (Wellington) |
| 5. Hoberty (Springfield Northwestern) | 11. Manns (Kenton) |
| 6. Porter (Sandusky St. Mary) | 12. Yang (Whitehall) |
| 7. Messner (Millersburg West Holmes) | 13. Brockway (Berkshire) |

There are four outstanding wrestlers at this weight, and then a wide chasm that separates them from all the rest. Three are from the Toledo area, while the fourth comes out of the Eastern District. Corrigan and the sophomore Goad were both second last year, while Peters and Brown placed fourth. It would be super if they all fell in different brackets because the semis and final would be great.

My choice is Corrigan -- with the feeling that this senior is just too strong and quick for the others. I rate Goad just slightly over Brown, and their battles could go either way. Peters, son of the Claymont coach, has been untouchable in his area, but does not profit from strong and unyielding competition. Clearly, in a situation such as this, the pairings are crucial and that means the Northwest District placements are all important, since the champ will be away from the other two. If there is a factor, it might be that Goad will no longer be able to "sneak" up on his competition. This year they'll know who he is, and be better prepared.

Behind that Northwest trio are Porter and Manns who in many years would be good enough to qualify. The Eastern District has Peters and state qualifier Messner leaving Dalbenz (Steubenville) and Kreichbaum (Barnesville) in a difficult position. The difference here is that Messner is beatable, and could well be upset by either of the two above.

The Southwest is weak with state qualifier Hoberty and Ward the two best. Shroyer (W. Milton Union) looks to be the best choice for one of the other openings. The Southeast representative should be Chapman (South Point), but he does not appear to be any threat to the better boys.

In Columbus I rate Yang on top, with Blessing (Marysville) and Borghese (Columbus DeSales) right behind. Borghese could boost DeSales team chances with a big qualifying victory since he could win a bout or two at Columbus, given the right pairings.

The Northwest District is really weak. Unless some high quality people are hiding in the bushes it could well happen that none of the four qualifiers will place at Columbus. Joeright and Farr did the best of the available competitors at last year's District, but Brockway, Grattaduria (Orange), and Csonka (Navarre Fairless) all have chances to surpass them this year. In any event, this weight is way below the norm for the Northeast District.

155#

PROJECTED CHAMP: DAVE MARIOLA (CHANEL)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 2. <u>Bergman (Cardinal Stritch)</u> | 10. Kingrey (Versailles) |
| 3. Fetty (Plain City Jonathan Alder) | 11. Caldwell (Hannibal River) |
| 4. Price (Tipp City) | 12. Blasiolo (Streetsboro) |
| 5. Massie (Washington Court House) | 13. Adkinson (Teays Valley) |
| 6. Williams (Brookside) | 14. Clarke (Uhrichsville Claymont) |
| 7. Maynard (Marion Pleasant) | 15. <u>Celek (Port Clinton)</u> |
| 8. Thorpe (Trenton Edgewood) | 16. Zody (Wooster Triway) |
| 9. Amato (Akron St. Vincent) | 17. Profitt (Middletown Madison) |
| | 18. Moore (Philo) |

This is a wide-open weight class, so I've decided to go with a long-shot in Dave Mariola. He has placed at the state level twice -- at 98# and 105# -- and has gone up seven weight classes in just two years. He reminds me of three-time state champion Ed Potokar in that he still uses small guy's moves even though he is at an upper weight. This is what makes him so tough in that people at 155# aren't used to wrestling in that manner. He leads a Cleveland District full of journeyman contenders like the four listed above and others such as Riggs (Wellington), Rini (Aurora), Kaplow (Orange), and Smith (Columbia Station).

Chris Bergman, another in a long line of brothers at Stritch, should be a tremendous challenge for Mariola. He is substantially bigger and stronger than Dave, but lacks the skills Mariola possesses. Their match will be a real battle of contrasts. The rest of the Northwest District is uncharacteristically weak with no potential place-winners.

A trio of Columbus grapplers will vie for their two qualifying spots. I like state qualifier Fetty and Maynard over the improving Adkinson. You can bet Coach Lou Vito will have Maynard "pumped up" at state qualification time.

State placewinner Massie will dominate in the Southeast, while Caldwell and Clarke should do the same in the Eastern District. Caldwell won the prestigious OVAC Tourney. Williamson (Dresden Tri-Valley) and Moore will likely be their most severe challengers.

The Southwest is loaded with good wrestlers at this weight. State qualifier Price and Thorpe lead the charge, but I think Kingrey could be a real "sleeper". Profitt and Yeager (Springboro) will have problems qualifying from this area.

. 167#

PROJECTEC CHAMP: KEN SANGER (HOLY NAME)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2. Moore (Chanel) | 6. <u>Jackson (Van Wert)</u> |
| 3. Hord (Columbus DeSales) | 7. Underhill (Ironton) |
| 4. <u>Stover (Willard)</u> | 8. Coulter (Whitehall) |
| 5. Calderone (Akron St. Vincent) | 9. <u>Brown (Swanton)</u> |
| | 10. Blair (Berkshire) |
| | 11. Miller (Philo) |

Well, if Mariola is a long-shot at 155#, then Sanger is really "a shot in the dark". At least Mariola is a former state placewinner and undefeated this year. Sanger has lost three or four times -- including a decision to Moore. What I do like is his tenaciousness and desire to win, along with raw power that is difficult to defense.

This weight isn't strong anywhere but Cleveland. Moore, a junior, has had an undefeated year, even defeating "AAA" DeLeon of Southview. Logically, he should be my choice, but I just don't see him winning the big match. Last year after a great season, he failed to reach the sectional semi-finals. Calderone, a state qualifier, has a good chance to place.

Blair is up from "A" competition and has won a number of tournaments already this year. Behind this group are state qualifier Huber (West Salem Northwestern), Pozderac (Trinity), Peyton (Sandy Valley), and Boehmke (Olmsted Falls). They are several levels below my top four in this district.

Brecksville champion Hord would also be a more logical choice to win than Sanger. However, I don't think that will occur. Instead look for Hord on the consolation mats on Saturday night. Coulter should be his colleague from that district.

The Northwest is weak with Stover, Jackson, and Brown my choices to qualify. Yackee (Wauseon) and the #1 ranked DeMilio (Stritch) will fall short in their attempts to get to Columbus. Watch for Jackson. He is something of a mystery man to me, wrestling in kind of a neglected corner of the state. He could be a placewinner.

In the East there has been some weight changes that have muddied the picture. Miller still looks best, but Cummings (Uhrichsville Claymont) now looms as the second qualifier.

There is literally no wrestler I can point to in the Southwest and label as state material. Clearly, by the rules, four will qualify; but I will be astounded if any of them cause any damage in Columbus.

175#

PROJECTED CHAMP: JOHN ISHMAEL (OAK HARBOR)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2. Baker (Ravenna Southeast) | 7. Linville (Ironton) |
| 3. <u>Fox (Cardinal Stritch)</u> | 8. Shepherd (Dayton Northridge) |
| 4. <u>MacLellan (Kenston)</u> | 9. Calvert (Coventry) |
| 5. Keenan (Steubenville) | 10. Litzinger (Columbus DeSales) |
| 6. Smith (Springboro) | 11. <u>Goad (Swanton)</u> |
| | 12. Unger (Coshocton) |

A very interesting weight. Ishmael clearly tired of losing to Whetsel made the great effort and got down to 175#. Assuming he can hold that weight and still wrestle, he has to be the favorite at this weight class. Fox, also out of the Northwest District, is an excellent wrestler who could win it all. He'll give Ishmael fits three straight weekends. Goad is my choice for the third spot, but he'll have to work very hard to get it with all kinds of competition out that way.

Baker, MacLellan, and Calvert stand out in the Northeast, but the fourth qualifying spot is wide open. Hooper (Manchester) and Hess (Berkshire) should lead the struggle, but I wouldn't be surprised to see a virtual unknown slip into that spot. If Ishmael falters or returns to 185#, look for Baker and Fox to fight it out for the top spot. Baker was fifth at this weight last year, and he'll be very difficult to handle this year.

Litzinger leads a weak Central District contingent with possibly Toy (Bishop Hartley) grabbing second place. This is not an imposing duo. Neither will place.

Keenan is a fabulous, almost legendary, sophomore out of the Eastern District. He owns a 17-0 record at 175# -- almost all by fall -- and easily won the 37-team OVAC Tourney with four falls and a 12-0 decision. I anxiously await watching him. Unger and Edgell (Bellaire) will duel for that second qualifying spot. Linville, like Keenan, will dominate his district and possibly win a bout at Columbus. He is in the vanguard of an improving Ironton program.

Again, the Southwest is relatively weak with state qualifiers Smith and Shepherd leading the way. After that, it's pretty much chaos with Jones (Goshen) my one dark-horse for state qualification.

185#

PROJECTED CHAMP: RICH WHETSEL (SWANTON)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 2. <u>Hoehn (Ottawa-Glandorf)</u> | 9. Bauserman (New Concord John Glenn) |
| 3. Dague (Uhrichsville Claymont) | 10. Sanborn (Whitehall) |
| 4. <u>Meyers (Ontario)</u> | 11. Gareau (Olmsted Falls) |
| 5. Gephart (Middletown Madison) | 12. Gaier (Versailles) |
| 6. <u>Stephens (Willard)</u> | 13. Hastings (South Point) |
| 7. Battaglia (???) | 14. Copfer (Tipp City) |
| 8. Graf (Watterson) | 15. Bird (New Richmond) |

There's a lot of firepower at this weight, and we can expect a lot of scoring and large numbers of falls. You've got to go with the huge, blond Whetsel even though he never does well in a close match. He gets cautious, tires, and loses. Generally, however, he avoids this by pinning in the first period. He has transferred from Metamora Evergreen to Swanton, and will be of enormous aid in the team struggle.

He will emerge from an extraordinarily tough district replete with pinners of all sorts. The way I see it, the hugely physical Hoehn and the talented Meyers will qualify while state qualifier Stephens will fall just short. That's assuming Hoehn can stay off his back, and Meyers quits giving up the "big move". It really will be a dandy district.

Contrast that to the Northeast where 185's are scarce as hen's teeth. Battaglia, a 220# heavyweight, dieted to 185#, but now rumors abound that he has left Kenston for another school. Whether he will even compete is problematical. That leaves Gareau as the only wrestler at this weight with credentials. Never have I seen such a weak weight in this area.

In the often weak East, state qualifiers Dague and Bauserman return with somewhat loftier ambitions. Dague has been pinning everyone in sight, and I think he'll be a threat in Columbus a la Mark Litts of that same general area several years ago. Smolira (Belmont Union) looks like about third best.

Gephart has had a great season and he leads a Southwest contingent which will include state qualifier Copfer, Gaier, and possibly Bird. Only Gephart has a chance to place.

Hastings looks like a clear favorite in the Southeast, but the Central District is more complex. State qualifier Graf has yet to wrestle this year due to injury, but I look for him to return in time for sectionals. Along with Sanborn this twosome should win a bout or two in Columbus.

HVY.

PROJECTED CHAMP: FRED RIDDER (EATON)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2. <u>M. Baker</u> (Millbury Lake) | 10. Moxley (Barnesville) |
| 3. Long (Kenston) | 11. Michael (Marysville) |
| 4. Howell (Coshocton) | 12. Johnson (Carlisle) |
| 5. <u>Puehler</u> (Delta) | 13. <u>Blum</u> (Upper Sandusky) |
| 6. Smith (Brookside) | 14. Ullery (Brookville) |
| 7. B. Baker (Brooklyn) | 15. Ferguson (Ironton) |
| 8. Wilson (Byesville Meadowbrook) | 16. Davis (Ravenna Southeast) |
| 9. <u>Ward</u> (Huron) | 17. Williams (Trinity) |

Probably the best heavyweight in "AA" has chosen not to compete during his senior season. About 6'1", 270# Todd Salyer had quick feet and enormous strength, and depending on his season's work could well have been the favorite at this weight. Instead, a nearby competitor, Fred Ridder, inherits the mantle of success. A 185#er last year, Ridder has picked up some notable wins this year, including a 7-5 defeat of huge Jeff Hicks from "AAA" Trotwood Madison.

However, the list of challengers he'll face is long, indeed. In the Northwest District state qualifier Mike Baker will lead a trio of tough heavies into St. John's Arena. Baker has consistently hammered "AAA" competition in his area, and could

well take the "AA" crown. Puehler has been on the fringes of real success, and I believe the Delta senior will cash in this year. Watch for him to place. Ward and Blum should battle for that third spot. Blum is the only wrestler to defeat my "A" choice Keith Risner.

The Northeast District is rich in quality heavyweights. Long, a sleek 205 pounder, who lost only to Waite of powerful St. Ed's, and that by just a point, is excellent. If he gets more aggressive he'll have a good chance of winning it all. The mammoth Bubba Baker and the lightning quick state qualifier Smith should get two of the qualifying spots. However, that fourth spot is open. Davis would appear to be the favorite, but Williams has just been "destroying" everybody this year. How that will translate itself when the quality of competition improves is unclear. Still, Williams has got to be recognized as a force to be reckoned with -- at least until he proves otherwise.

Ridder, state qualifier Johnson, and Ullery stand out in the southwest. The absence of Salyer does leave a void, though, that is difficult to fill. Look for the fourth qualifier to be a real unknown.

The Columbus area is very weak with no standouts of any type. Michael and possibly Rowe (Columbus DeSales) could qualify, but they'll lose immediately in Columbus. The same is true in the Southeast where Ferguson and Boggs (South Point) will battle for one spot.

However, the Eastern District is positively teeming with good heavies. Howell appears to be the best and he has definite placement potential. Wilson, another state qualifier and second to Howell many times, will probably finish in that spot again. However, Hiles (Warsaw River View) and Maxwell (Uhrichsville Claymont) are tough. The boy to watch for is Tim Moxley. This huge (6'5") sophomore has a world of potential, and his third place finish at the OVAC portends a great future ahead. He will be dynamite some day.

T E A M S

1. Cardinal Stritch -- Initially I had intended to choose Chanel as champs, but it's hard to overlook this beautifully balanced team that Coach Tom Talbott has put together. If we were in a dual meet format, Stritch would win "AA" going away, and, I believe, they could beat most good "AAA" teams. Besides, the reason I like them is not that they'll have a lot of state champs, but that they'll have many placewinners. They have a much larger margin of error than most teams, and will be able to withstand an upset. Look for Reindel, Peters, Talbott, Ackerman, Brown, Bergman, and Fox to place, and they have several other boys who could score at Columbus. That should generate more than enough points to vault this team from a perpetual top five situation to their first state team championship.
2. Chanel -- A new powerhouse in "AA" that Graham Coghill has fashioned from stars of his YMCA programs. Five boys stand out -- state champ Ryba, former state placewinners Jaeger and Mariola, and Mazur and Moore. Unlike Stritch, Chanel has a number of boys who could be finalists, but not the team depth. The keys will be Moore, who has never been to States, Mazur, at a difficult district weight, and Mariola, who must come through at 155#. If one of the 98's can come through and either Patsolic or Jackson qualify, this team could overtake Stritch. Big match ups between the two schools could occur at 126 and 155 pounds.

3. Swanton -- Returning three state finalists gives a school a "leg up" on almost everyone. Unfortunately, I see only Whetsel winning and Mossing and Goad both have tremendous competition at the district level, let alone Columbus. Beyond this, there just doesn't seem to be that much other help waiting in the background. Brown and Gerry Goad might possibly qualify, but there are just too many ifs from people like Crow or Korn. Third place looks like their best hope, and an upset could drop them out of the top five.
4. Columbus DeSales -- The Central District is very weak, and so DeSales will send many qualifiers to the state meet. Their best are Mulligan, McCormack, Wood, and Hord, but they have plenty of backups. People like Marinelli, Borghese, Litzinger, and Rowe could certainly qualify and with a good draw win a match or two.
5. Morrow Little Miami -- It's all got to happen in the lower weights for Little Miami, and I think it will. Cash should win and Fitzgerald and Diss may well place. Even Duermit has the potential to do well. Four stars can take a team a long way in this competition, but only if they all do reasonably well.
6. Kenston -- Long, MacLellan, Milhoff, and Tatonetti are the key performers. Still each has a weakness -- Long is small, Tatonetti young, Milhoff inexperienced, and MacLellan erratic. If Battaglia competes at the weak 185# class in Cleveland, that will get them another qualifier and a Cardaman or Hammond would sure be helpful. This is a team where bad breaks could plummet them out of the Top Ten.
7. Olmsted Falls -- This is a team with a lot of "ifs" and "maybes". French is solid and Gareau, at 185#, is in a weak weight class. However, Theriot, DeFraine, Funk, and Boehmke are all question marks. A hidden resource may be Scott DeLisio who has not done much the past several years, but whose upset of Bogdan indicates a readiness to help.
8. Steubenville -- A surprise pick since Eastern District schools never do well at Columbus. Still, I'm convinced that a healthy Bunch, Mills, Blangor, and Keenan can win bouts at the state level. In addition, there are a lot of possibilities like Young, Dalbenzio, and Current so that this team could make the Top Ten. What has to happen, though, is that at least one of their stars make the top three.
9. Wauseon -- A real dark-horse team. They'll need some breaks to make the Top Ten, but it could happen. Menchaca and Day can score at the state level if they can get through that difficult district. Schneider had Ghezzi go down and Goad and Corrigan stay up so he could be a finalist. Then people like Lane, Yackee, or Fruth have to help. Remember this team beat Swanton in a dual meet 30-29 with a fall at heavyweight with eight seconds left.
10. St. Paris Graham -- They haven't all disappeared yet. Jeff Jordan is still around and that's a sure title and a bundle of points. Focht, Lambert, and Stickley could all help and that should be enough for Top Ten status.
11. Uhrichsville Claymont -- Peters was fourth last year and should do as well, while state qualifier Dague should place. Byrd, Clarke, and Cummings all have a chance of exiting the relatively weak Eastern District, while Maxwell could really help if he'd sneak by all the good heavies there.
12. Brooklyn -- This team is a real long shot. Still, Kevin Friedl and Bubba Baker should place high, and if Ken Friedl can get through his difficult district at 126#, he could score in Columbus. Ron Friedl is at the weak 105# level, and that might help, and maybe somebody else could pull some upsets.

"A"

As I mentioned in the introduction, the entire concept of the "A" category needs to be reevaluated. There are too few schools in this classification that field wrestling teams to make for a really significant state tournament. In addition, areas like the Southwest are isolated and unappreciated because of the lack of real competition within the current framework. While there are many fine wrestlers in "A", some weight classes have champions who would be fortunate to reach the district level in the other classifications. What this does is cheapen those individual titles, and take away from the accomplishments of the fine wrestlers who are involved at this level.

98#

PROJECTED CHAMP: ERIC WOODLAND (BISHOP READY)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2. <u>McFadden (Norwalk St. Paul)</u> | 7. <u>McCullough (McComb)</u> |
| 3. Neikirk (Cardinal) | 8. Duncan (Dayton Christian) |
| 4. Stewart (Bridgeport) | 9. Bowman (Bellaire St. John) |
| 5. <u>Thiel (Edgerton)</u> | 10. Stopar (Cuyahoga Hts.) |
| 6. Hartshorn (Ledgemont) | 11. <u>Bockey (Spencerville)</u> |

Woodland, the fine senior from Bishop Ready should dominate this weight class and win the state crown with relative ease. For example, he defeated McFadden, the second rated wrestler, 6-0 last year in Columbus and nobody should get any closer than that this year. With the tough schedule Ready wrestles and the great competition he gets in the "room," Woodland appears to be better than last year, and far too strong for any "A" 98-pounder

McFadden, another senior, heads the three-man Northwestern contingent, and he should do very well. Thiel, the "A" Classic champ, should also qualify easily, but the third spot is up for grabs. My choice is McCullough, but Bockey and Graham (Tiffin Calvert) will be strong challengers. Graham, in particular, seems to be showing strong improvement.

In the Northeast, all the 98's breathed a major sigh of relief when Adkins went to 105#. That left Alan Neikirk, champion of both the South Point and Cardinal Tournaments, in a strong position to lead the district contingent. Hartshorn and Stopar should fight it out for the other spot, with the winner having at least a small chance for a low place in Columbus.

The Southwest is very weak, but Damon Stewart has a chance to place out of the Eastern District. This junior had a fine season last year and is undefeated at 98# so far in 1982-83. He may be capable of surprising anyone but Woodland. Lang (Waterford) and Porter (Caldwell) are other possibilities in that area.

PROJECTED CHAMP: MARK ADKINS (RICHMOND HTS.)

TOP CONTENDERS:

None

OTHER CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2. O'Connell (Ready) | 7. Loza (Cardinal) |
| 3. Mack (Norwalk St. Paul) | 8. Kern (Waterford) |
| 4. Haywood (Licking Hts.) | 9. Westrick (Ayersville) |
| 5. Frank (Stryker) | 10. Maloon (Mississinawa Valley) |
| 6. Dingers (Ledgemont) | 11. Fugate (West Jefferson) |

Adkins is quite simply the best "A" wrestler in the state, and one of the best in any classification. He would win at 98# (which he could make) or 105# in either "A", "AA", or "AAA". He is that good. In the Brecksville Tourney, he pinned Killius, 4th in "AAA" last year, leading 8-0 at the time. Dingers and state qualifier Loza should battle it out for the second qualifying spot with Dingers a strong favorite based on his 12-2 victory in December. Bester (Cuyahoga Hts.) and Canfield (Mapleton) are solid wrestlers with no real hopes of qualifying.

O'Connell, another senior lightweight from Ready, should qualify out of the very tough Central District, but it won't be easy. Both Haywood and Fugate are very rugged, and I particularly like the sophomore Haywood. He would place if he could only get to St. John's Arena. As is so often the case, there are two or three outstanding wrestlers in the Columbus area, and only one can qualify.

Mack and the youngster Trevor Frank will dominate in the Northwest and both could place. Frank, in particular, is a real pinner whose only loss is to "AAA" Behringer. I've chosen Westrick as the third qualifier, but Fuller (Liberty-Benton) has been coming on strong. In either case, that third qualifier will be cannon fodder for the Adkins and O'Connell types.

In the one-man districts (East and Southwest) there is very little real talent. I look for Kern and Maloon to gain tickets to Columbus, but foresee first round defeats. They are just not ready for the caliber of competition they will see there.

PROJECTED CHAMP: FRED NOEL (ARCADIA)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2. Herman (Edgerton) | 8. Kardules (New Albany) |
| 3. Border (Caldwell) | 9. Putnam (Columbiana) |
| 4. Rader (McComb) | 10. Prentice (Ledgemont) |
| 5. Varian (Newbury) | 11. Flores (Fremont St. Joseph) |
| 6. Longwell (Bishop Wehrle) | 12. Block (Academy) |
| 7. DiSabato (Bishop Ready) | 13. Mitchell (New London) |

This should be one of the most competitive weight classes in Columbus. Any of at least a half-dozen boys could win and because of contrasting styles, the pairings will play a big role in determining who wins. I look at this weight with extreme interest since I've chosen the winner every time but once since the inception of the "A" tournament.

My choice is senior state runner-up Fred Noel, and to many, it will seem a nonsensical selection. After all, Ricky Herman slaughtered Noel at the "A" classic 14-0, and the junior from Edgerton was a state place-winner as a freshman. However, I think it will be different in Columbus. First, Noel is on a team with only six wrestlers and thus wrestles few duals, and has no one to work with during practice. The Sectionals and Districts will serve to get him in better shape and develop his competitive edge. Second, Noel was at 112# for the first time at the "A" Classic, and it takes time to adjust to a new weight. And, third, Noel will change strategies with Herman and go strictly on his feet. Herman is a hellacious mat wrestler, but may be in trouble when Noel goes "takedowns." Remember, Noel defeated Herman 13-6 last year.

If you characterize Noel as flashy and Herman as a mat wrestler, Brian Rader, the third Northwest wrestler in my top five, could be described as careful and mistake-free. He slows down the tempo and waits for opponent's mistake. His problem might be the quicker stalling calls he is likely to see in Columbus. Other possibilities in that area are Flores and Mitchell. Mitchell was only one point from Columbus last year, but he is probably overmatched by the "big three" from this area.

The one-man Columbus District is also teeming with state contenders--there are at least four. Initially, Watts from Bishop Ready, a shrunk down 119#, was my favorite but he has elected to return to 119#. That leaves DiSabato, his very capable freshman substitute, state qualifier Kardules, the experienced Longwell, and Block. I think pairings will play a big role in the final outcome with Longwell barely edging out the other three. The one real wild card is Mike DiSabato, who can go to that district with absolutely nothing to lose, and wrestle free and easy. However, inexperience could conversely prove to be a real hurdle. Needless to say, he does come from a great heritage with brothers and cousins winning countless tourneys and awards. Whoever triumphs will cause problems for the Northwest trio.

Every year, little Caldwell in southeastern Ohio, has several outstanding wrestlers, and this year is no exception. Border ranks behind his state champion teammate Parrish, but he was 4th last year at 105#. He should dominate that District although freshman Britton (Bridgeport) and Cunningham (Newcomerstown) might cause a few problems.

It's unusual to have no one from the Northeast rated in the top four, but 112# seems weak in the Cleveland area this year. Yarian, Putnam, and Prentice seem to be the best three in this area although it's difficult to see any of them placing. Yarian, though, might be the best chance as he finished third in the district last year at 119#. This year, he fits in much better at 112.

PROJECTED CHAMP: JEFF HAMMOND (BISHOP WEHRLE)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 2. Gettig (Hawken) | 10. Sucher (Columbiana) |
| 3. <u>Bonifas (Delphos St. John)</u> | 11. Fletcher (Smithville) |
| 4. Arrigoni (Newbury) | 12. <u>Fasig (McComb)</u> |
| 5. <u>Karnes/Kitchen (Edgerton)</u> | 13. Hellyer (Bergholz Springfield) |
| 6. <u>Watts (Bishop Ready)</u> | 14. <u>Tappel (New London)</u> |
| 7. Foston (Bridgeport) | 15. <u>Lang (Waterford)</u> |
| 8. Dernlan (W. Liberty Salem) | 16. <u>Siesel (Seneca East)</u> |
| 9. Gischler (Licking Hts.) | 17. <u>Little (Williamsburg)</u> |

Hammond placed 4th in "AA" two years ago, but did not get to Columbus last year. This year, with Bishop Wehrle back in "A", Hammond should be rated the slight favorite at another very competitive weight class. The field is wide and varied and features defending state champion Scott Arrigoni--up two weight classes this year.

In the Central District, Hammond has to be rated as the favorite although the reappearance of Watts could cause problems. Hammond was outstanding in the 1981 tournaments in "AA" until upset by Ron Leonard, and has not done as well since then. Watts, of course, has bounced around weightwise but does not have the firepower to consistently beat a Jeff Hammond. However, in their district, that one upset will get him a state berth. The other competition in that area is most unique. It consists of Gischler (Licking Hts.), Gashler (Academy), and Grashel (New Albany)--a trio that has been a nightmare to keep straight.

In the Northeast, defending champ Arrigoni has had a difficult year. Most of his losses have been to "AA" and "AAA", but he no longer has the huge size advantage that he enjoyed at 105#. I see Gettig as Hammond's main competition with Arrigoni fighting off Fletcher and Sucher for the second qualifying spot. Watch out for Gettig if he catches Hammond in an early round because I feel he has his best chance for an upset then. Gettig was 3rd at this weight last year.

The Northwest is not as strong, but it does feature some solid talent. I like Bonifas to place at Columbus, although his record in the past has been erratic. Edgerton has state qualifier Kitchen and "A" Classic champ Karnes at this weight. I expect one of this duo--probably Karnes--to reach Columbus. State qualifier Tappel, Fasig and Siesel should scrap for that last spot.

The Eastern District has a number of good performers. I like the undefeated junior Reggie Foston as the qualifier, but Hellyer and Lang could pull the upset. This weight has good depth in this district and most of these folks will be back next year.

The freshman Dernlan will be an unknown quantity if he makes it to Columbus. A product of the famous Jordan garage in St. Paris, he will be an interesting contestant in "A" competition. Little may be his major roadblock to Columbus.

PROJECTED CHAMP IVAN PARRISH (CALDWELL)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2. MacLellan (Richmond Hts.) | 7. Ward (Beallsville) |
| 3. <u>Grubb (McComb)</u> | 8. <u>Ziessler (Blufton)</u> |
| 4. <u>Parsons (New London)</u> | 9. Fenton (Licking Hts.) |
| 5. Weldon (Bishop Wehrle) | 10. <u>Graziani (Tinora)</u> |
| 6. Holy (Ledgemont) | 11. <u>Herman (Edgerton)</u> |

This would appear to be strictly a two-man struggle. Defending state champ Ivan Parrish against the star junior Make MacLellan. I've chosen Parrish because of his experience and consistency, and his ability to control the flow of a match. However, MacLellan is explosive---as he proved in pinning Nordon's Jeff Coghill-- and he is dangerous for the full six minutes. His problem is inexperience (essentially his first varsity season) and some down periods where he does not wrestle at the top of his potential.

Most of the challenge for these two should come from the Northwest. Grubb has had an outstanding season and state qualifier Parson is rugged. Right now, he is recuperating from a broken arm sustained in a bout he completed, but he should be ready by sectionals. Ziessler, Herman, and Graziani should be the principal contenders for that third spot although Elchert (Tiffin Cal.), a district fourth, and Kieffer (Fostoria St. Wendelin) are also strong. Look for Ziessler to sneak through, and perhaps even win a bout at Columbus.

MacLellan and state qualifier Holy lead the Cleveland delegation, and I don't see them challenged. Parrish, too, will brush off minimal threats from Ward and Kosky (Bellaire St. John) in his district.

Up until now, the Central District has been a top contender at every weight, but at 126, that may not be true. Weldon, down from 132, is the best shot although Fenton or Mosca (Bishop Ready) have a chance.

PROJECTED CHAMP: DON VAN HORN (LICKING HTS.)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 2. <u>Johnson (Elmore Woodmore)</u> | 7. Kerr (Lutheran West) |
| 3. Cardaman (Ledgemont) | 8. <u>Barger (Liberty-Benton)</u> |
| 4. <u>Agerter (Hopewell-Loudon)</u> | 9. Boing (Cuyahoga Hts.) |
| 5. <u>Carabin (Norwalk St. Paul)</u> | 10. <u>Messner (Pioneer North Central)</u> |
| 6. Ratcliff (Williamsburg) | |

This should be a weight that features a real clash in styles. Van Horn, my favorite, has been one match away from Columbus for two years now, and should be ready to take charge now that he is a senior. He was 3rd at the prestigious Medina Invitational. However, the title will not come easily.

Johnson, my choice last year at 119#, is an erratic, somewhat tempermental competitor, but he does possess real talent. If he can channel his efforts in March, he will be difficult to beat. He faces tough competition in his own district with Carabin, Agerter, and Barger, all possible place-winners. That district will be a dog-eat-dog affair.

Cardaman, last year's state runner-up at this weight, probably does not want to lose to yet another Licking Hts. competitor. Only a junior now, his best days are still ahead. He stands well ahead of his district competition like Kerr, Boing, and perhaps Pawlowski (Richmond Hts.). Look for Kerr to cop that second qualifying spot.

State qualifier Ratcliff should emerge from the Southwest District with his main opposition coming from Kuntz (St. Bernard). The Eastern area is very weak with no standouts of any kind. That qualifier will be very popular in Columbus-- everyone will want to meet him in the first round.

138#

PROJECTED CHAMP: NED HEMINGER (VAN BUREN)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 2. <u>Briseno (Ayersville)</u> | 8. Eckel (Bishop Wehrle) |
| 3. Schmitz (Mississinawa Valley) | 9. Armstrong (Cardinal) |
| 4. <u>Jaworski (Norwalk St. Paul)</u> | 10. <u>Wise (Hopewell-Loudon)</u> |
| 5. Bonnay (Richmond Hts.) | 11. <u>Stashke (New London)</u> |
| 6. Twiss (Bishop Ready) | 12. <u>Wicklos (Caldwell)</u> |
| 7. Baker (Jeromesville Hillsdale) | 13. <u>Putnam (Carey)</u> |

Just as we saw last year, this is a very weak weight class. There just doesn't seem to be anyone who has the look of a state champion. My choice is state qualifier Ned Heminger, who until recently, has successfully campaigned at 145#. He's my choice because he'll come out of the one area with solid wrestlers at this weight, and he should dominate that field. He also has a fine workout partner in Gorrill which should give him the edge he'll need at the States.

Challenging from the Northwest will be former state qualifier Scott Jaworski, state alternate Paul Briseno and a whole host of other contenders. Jaworski-- after a brilliant sophomore season--appeared to be a rising superstar, but has so far failed to improve or impress. Briseno, the "A" Classic champ, has the steadiness to score well at this type of weight class. Along with Heminger, they form my qualifying trio, but look for at least one upset by someone like Wise or Stashke, principally because the leaders will be challenged in virtually every round by good wrestlers.

Columbus is really weak at this weight with Eckel and Twiss having split two matches earlier in the year. Accountius (Licking Hts.) looked like a good possibility here, but could not hold the weight and is rumored to be going at 155#. The winner here is unlikely to place.

The competition in Cleveland is not strong. Bonnay is erratic, but on a hot weekend, could place high in Columbus--especially with the generally lower level of competition. However, a bad weekend during Districts might well put Armstrong and Baker in Columbus. Baker defeated state qualifier Knorr in OT at the Hillsdale Invitation, and must be evaluated as a threat in the Northeast District.

Schmitz, 3rd last year, is one of the few genuine threats from the Southwest. If he is at 138#, he should capture a place. On the other hand, the Eastern District is very weak and anyone who emerges there is probably in big trouble the second weekend in March.

145#

PROJECTED CHAMP: BRIAN SCHELL (BISHOP READY)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 2. <u>Lora (McComb)</u> | 7. Wright (Cardinal) |
| 3. Dalessandro (Richmond Hts.) | 8. Bendle (Bergholz Springfield) |
| 4. <u>Weickert (Fremont St. Joe)</u> | 9. Teeple (Jeromesville Hillsdale) |
| 5. Lang (Waterford) | 10. <u>Haunhorst (Delphos St. John)</u> |
| 6. Lemaster (Jamestown Greenview) | 11. Lance (Apple Creek Waynedale) |
| | 12. <u>Lewis (Spencerville)</u> |

This is a relatively weak weight class dominated by one outstanding contestant. I anticipate Schell having absolutely no problems in cruising to his first state crown. A dominant mat wrestler, he'll do well enough on his feet at this "A" level to win going away.

Lora and Weickert are both former state qualifiers and will lead the Northwest District. Lora, now a junior, has great potential, but has had trouble channeling all of his energy into wrestling. He, if properly motivated, could do very well, and that motivation may well come from McComb's hopes of making the top five. The third spot is wide open with no real outstanding possibilities.

In Cleveland, Dalessandro should defeat competitors like Wright and Teeple. Even those two will be challenged for that second spot by Poloha (Lutheran West), Chatal (Independence), and Palinkas (Ledgemont). This group isn't going to terrify Schell.

I often maintain that the Eastern District is weak at various weights. At 145#, they have two fine contenders. Damian Lang is another in the endless line of Langs and Kerns that populate the Waterford team--and one of the best. Spencer Bendle is nearly his equal and it should be a solid two-man battle. It will be interesting to see a Spencer and Damian square-off for that title.

State qualifier Lemaster looks in sole charge of the Southwest. He was "bombed" 11-3 and 9-0 at Columbus last year, and that same fate may well await him once again.

PROJECTED CHAMP: ROBERT SUSZEK (RICHMOND HTS.)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 2. <u>Gorrill (Van Buren)</u> | 7. <u>Guyer (Fremont St. Joseph)</u> |
| 3. <u>Beary (Columbiana)</u> | 8. <u>Queck (Academy)</u> |
| 4. <u>King (Bishop Wehrle)</u> | 9. <u>Scheid (Bridgeport)</u> |
| 5. <u>Lisy (Cuyahoga Hts.)</u> | 10. <u>Osterland (New London)</u> |
| 6. <u>Muntz (Hamler Patrick Henry)</u> | 11. <u>Giessler (Elmore Woodmore)</u> |

This is a top heavy weight with a few strong contenders and not much beneath them. Once we reach the semi-finals, assuming the draw is good, we should see outstanding competition.

Suszek is just an outstanding junior who has won virtually everything in sight except, ironically, his own Richmond Hts. Tourney. He has good talent, fine technique, and mental toughness, and that should carry him to the title. The Cleveland District is unbelievably tough with Beary, 3rd at this weight last year, returning for one last time after being one point from the state champ last year. Tough challengers to this duo will be made by Lisy, McKeon (Ledgemont) and possibly Bowersock (Mapleton). This is a talented group and Lisy, in particular, probably deserves a chance at state competition--but he'll have to pull a major upset to do so.

Suszek's main competition, though, should come from the Van Buren strongman, Todd Gorrill. Enormously powerful and experienced, he could well dominate the smaller Suszek on the mat. Two years ago, Gorrill--representing Elmwood--lost to John Potokar, and Suszek will be his chance to get even. Behind lurk a group of mediocre 155's led by Muntz and Guyer. They may not do badly since they look like the best of the rest after my top four. Stacklin (Attica Seneca East) may be a long shot at this weight along with Kieffer (Fostoria St. Wendelin).

In Columbus, King should dominate, but both the East and Southwest are very weak. Again, the power is right at the top of my list--and after that, it falls off sharply.

PROJECTED CHAMP: BOB POTOKAR (RICHMOND HTS.)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 2. <u>Smith (Attica Seneca East)</u> | 7. <u>Dowling (Bridgeport)</u> |
| 3. <u>Sowell (Bishop Wehrle)</u> | 8. <u>Dunlop (Woodmore)</u> |
| 4. <u>Kikume (Apple Creek Waynedale)</u> | 9. <u>Holtsberry (Ayersville)</u> |
| 5. <u>McCullough (Edgerton)</u> | 10. <u>A. Porter (Waterford)</u> |
| 6. <u>Lukas (Cardinal)</u> | 11. <u>Edgington (Ledgemont)</u> |

Ed Potokar and Ron Suszek won five state titles for Richmond Hts., and I wouldn't be surprised if Bob Suszek and Bob Potokar win five more. This is the last and by far the largest of the four Potokars that I've seen wrestle, and I was tremendously impressed with this sophomore at Brecksville. He does have

the advantage of great workout partners--unusual at most "A" schools--and the fact that the upper weights have traditionally been weaker in "A". He will also be at a weight class that I would describe as mediocre at best. In the Cleveland District, his biggest challenge will come from the junior Kikume, a "AA" state qualifier last year. In addition, Lukas and Edgington lurk in the background hoping to garner a spot. Look for Lukas, perhaps, to move to 175# in order to improve his chances for state qualification.

In the Northwest, state qualifier Smith comes off a 35-6 year, but has not faced anywhere near the competition of Potokar. Last year, Loushin soundly defeated him, and I would expect Potokar to do the same. McCullough, the Findley "A" champ, is something of an unknown quantity, having--as I understand it--wrestled in Michigan last year. He probably cannot challenge Smith in that area, but may be marginally better than a host of competitors like Dunlop, Holtsberry, and Boff (Tinora).

There is an interesting story in the Central District. Eric Sowell wrestled heavyweight last year for Bishop Wehrle and compiled a 35-13 record and a District third. This year, he started as a heavyweight and then moved down to 185#. Defeated 12-11 by Jeff Happ, he has since certified at 167#. If he can hold that weight, he will be a threat--especially on the second day of tourneys. Behind him is Langston (New Albany) and Lombardi (Bishop Ready).

The undefeated Dowling leads the Eastern contingent, but either Taylor (Beallsville) or Porter could challenge for that one spot. Again, though, that winner will have a tough time in Columbus.

175#

PROJECTED CHAMP: RICH WISENER (LICKING HTS.)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2. Howe (Galion Northmor) | 8. Kelly (Richmond Hts.) |
| 3. Lukas (Cardinal) | 9. <u>Ruggley (Bluffton)</u> |
| 4. <u>Sousa (New London)</u> | 10. <u>Dillon (McComb)</u> |
| 5. Prentice (Ledgemont) | 11. Porter (Caldwell) |
| 6. <u>Hoskins (Liberty Center)</u> | 12. <u>Kitchen (Edgerton)</u> |
| 7. Nice (Berghold Springfield) | 13. Karr (Lockland) |

In the past, this weight class and the next one have followed form as I've only missed once since the inception of "A". If that continues, Rich Wisener should end up in the winner's circle this coming March. Wisener is not built along the classic lines of many state champs, but he knows how to win. He probably will win the state title one week earlier than everyone else when he defeats another state qualifier, Darren Howe, for the one state spot awarded that district. That win should be his biggest hurdle on his way to the championship. That's because everywhere else, this weight class is very, very weak.

I anticipate Lukas will move up from 167# to avoid the crush at that weight, and he should do well. He defeated Prentice in overtime and those two should be the favorites for a trip to St. John's Arena. However, watch out for Kelly who has been stuck behind all those great Richmond Hts. wrestlers. With a weight class as weak as this one, he might do quite well.

Nice leads the Southeast District with Nolan Porter looking to be his principal competition. With a weight class looking this weak, Nice may do nicely in Columbus.

Finally, the Northwest is complete confusion. I've listed five contenders for three spots and there are several other possibilities like Kepus (Elmore Woodmere), or Hill (Van Buren) who could gain a qualifying spot. Sousa finished a horrible sixth at the "A" Classic, but that has to be some kind of aberration. He was undefeated up to that point, and had defeated Ruggley who finished a close third by a convincing 9-3 count just two weeks previously. Look for him to rebound. New London has had a tradition of fine big men, and Sousa has the look of one more in that sequence. Kitchen and Dillon could help their teams immensely in the struggle for state placement by qualifying, and that little incentive might help vault them up a spot or two.

185#

PROJECTED CHAMP: MARK COLEMAN (FREMONT ST. JOSEPH)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 2. Loushin (Richmond Hts.) | 8. <u>Damschroeder (Elmore Woodmore)</u> |
| 3. Happ (Bishop Ready) | 9. <u>Vance (Mechanicsburg)</u> |
| 4. Peters (Cardinal) | 10. <u>Shaw (McComb)</u> |
| 5. <u>Leppelmeier (Edgeton)</u> | 11. <u>Timcho (Mingo)</u> |
| 6. <u>Harrington (Newbury)</u> | 12. Criss (Ledgemont) |
| 7. <u>Vonderwell (Delphos St. John)</u> | 13. Philiphs (Waterford) |
| | 14. Smith (Leetonia) |

Coleman was state champ as a sophomore and was in the finals last year when forced to default because of injury. He has not been challenged this year, but that will end when he goes against Loushin and Happ. However, I anticipate him defeating both opponents and copping his second state crown.

The other two spots in the Northwest are wide open. Again Leppelmeier and Dillon could help their team with qualifying performances, but they face stiff fights from Vonderwell and Damschroeder. All four of these wrestlers are several giant steps behind Coleman. The best any could hope for in Columbus is a fourth.

Loushin leads a Cleveland contingent that will provide tough matches for whomever they meet. Peters and Harrington will battle for that one spot and the outcome will probably be in doubt until the last few seconds. Smith failed to qualify for district at 167#, but has done well at this weight this year. However, it would take several upsets of startling magnitude for him to reach Columbus. A real unknown quantity will be Criss--down from heavyweight--who has had a checkered career in the past.

Now that Sowell has moved down to 167#, Happ should have clear sailing at 185. He will have trouble only with Loushin and Coleman. The Eastern District is very weak and their entrant will serve only as a bracket filler. Philiphs and Timcho will vie for that position. Vance should qualify from the Southwest, but the weak schedule wrestled in that area makes it difficult for their entrant to meet the competition faced in Columbus.

PROJECTED CHAMP: KEITH RISNER (CORY-RAWSON)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 2. DeMeo (Richmond Hts.) | 7. <u>Steele (Columbus Grove)</u> |
| 3.- <u>Chapin (Liberty Benton)</u> | 8. <u>Yockey (Mansfield St. Peters)</u> |
| 4. McCombs (Galion Northmor) | 9. Christman (Sarahsville Shenendoah) |
| 5. Jeffries (St. Bernard) | 10. Tatonetti (Cardinal) |
| 6. McGovern (Ledgemont) | 11. Macioce (Bishop Wehrle) |

I've had very poor luck picking winners at this weight class, and I have the uneasy feeling that it may happen again this year. My choice, Keith (Rhino) Risner, is a 290# behemoth who defeated eventual state champ Paul Sanchez in the District Finals, but lost in the first round at Columbus. That defeat was pinned on him by a small, mobile heavyweight with better wrestling skills. This year, Risner has done well (only one loss), but his toughest bouts have been with the much lighter Steele.

This means that Risner will probably have serious problems with DeMeo. He will be the most skilled wrestler at the weight, but he must avoid the big mistake or Risner, or the even larger (over 300 pounds) Chapin, will crunch him. It should be fascinating theatre.

In the Northwest, Risner defends his District title versus Chapin (4th at Columbus), but a 3-0 victim of Risner earlier in the year. It will be one of the few times the 290# Risner will be outweighed as Chapin checks in at about 320#. Other contenders are the much smaller, but tenacious, Steele and Yockey, 4th in the District last year. Felter (Tiffin Calvert) is also undefeated at this weight, but may not be ready for this caliber of competition.

In the Northeast, DeMeo will be a strong favorite with McGovern and Tatonetti vying for the second spot. McGovern, 20-3 and a state qualifier last year as a freshman, has had to battle the effects of mononucleosis. His readiness will be a question mark.

Jeffries dominates the Southwest and could be one of their rare place-winners, while Christman does the same in the Eastern District. In Columbus, the volatile McCombs should qualify, but Macioce (Bishop Ready) and Morely (Grandview) could challenge. McCombs is the only one with placement potential.

TEAMS

1. Richmond Hts. -- They should qualify eight for Columbus and all of them have the potential to place. Adkins is a sure winner, and at least four could be finalists. What is frightening is that most of them will be back next year. It's strange--the faces keep changing but the names are ever the same--Adkins, Potokar, Suszek, Loushin, etc.

2. Bishop Ready -- Woodland should win easily, and Shell certainly has been the favorite at 145#. O'Connell, Watts, and Happ could all place and that might be enough points in most years. However, the district warfare will cut down many other potential state scorers dooming Bishop Ready to a most respectable 2nd.
3. Bishop Wehrle -- Another Columbus team victimized by that one-man district. They'll take Hammond, Weldon, King, and Sowell to St. John's Arena, but the rest will probably stay home.
4. Edgerton -- A team with no superstars, but plenty of potential for state qualification. Thiel, Herman, and Karnes/Kitchen give them a good start in the lower weights, but it's up to McCullough and Leppelmeier to ignite the upper weights. People like the other Hermans, Whitman, and Kitchen need to help.
5. Ledgemont -- A team that could well challenge for second next year. With Cardaman as their leader, they may also get points from Dingers, Holy and Hartshorn. If McGovern regains his health and can help at heavyweight, they could move as high as third.
6. McComb -- A team that could go as high as fourth or fall out of the top fifteen. The team divides into two classes--the four lower weight stars led by Grubb, Rader, McCullough, and Fasig, and the big men led by Lora, Dillon and Shaw. Dillon and Shaw could be the keys if they can get to Columbus.
7. Licking Hts. -- Two state champs score a lot of points and Van Horn and Wisener have to be the favorites. People like Gischler, Haywood, and Fenton could do well at the State, if they would only get there.
8. Cardinal -- A team that needs good fortune and better draws to make the Top Ten-- and I think that will happen. Neikirk is the highest rated wrestler, but Armstrong, Wright, and Lukas are at relatively weak weight classes. State qualifier Loza will have to be sharp to make Columbus again as will Peters and Tatonetti, but it could happen.
9. Newbury -- Every year, Newbury shocks me by placing much higher than anticipated. This time, state champion Arrigoni looks overmatched at 119, and Harrington is something of a long shot at 185. Yarian could help and who knows what surprises are up Cliff Radie's sleeve.
10. Norwalk St. Paul -- This team features four fine wrestlers. Jaworski looked like an emerging superstar two years ago, but nothing has happened since. Mack and McFadden should do well and Carabin has a chance. They could move up higher if all goes well.
11. Elmore Woodmore -- The volatile Andy Johnson is the star, but there are many other possibilities. Giesler, Dunlap, Kepus, and Damschroeder all face uphill fights, though.
12. New London -- A team that so far has not wrestled up to its potential. Of course, Parsons' broken arm has been a hindrance, but they need more production out of Sousa, Osterland, Mitchell and Tappel.

13. Fremont St. Joseph -- Coleman is close to a sure champ and Weickert and Guyer could place. However, there is not much help anywhere else with the possible exception of Flores.
14. Caldwell -- Just about everything revolves around Parrish and Border. After that, it would take help from people like Philipps or Porter, which is not real likely.