

DAY STEELY

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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, 31 of my 39 choices finished third or better with 21 winning -- not near the record of 28 champs several years ago.

The new weight certification rule (or is it non-rule) hampers the fulfillment of all my objectives for this report. Clearly, I can no longer know where each participant will wrestle since they, themselves, may not decide until right before sectionals. Therefore, in many cases I have used the lowest weight that they've made or tried to guess their optimal placement. Throughout the report, in fact, I have made mention of opportunities in certain districts that might be fulfilled by the switching of weight classes. Based on today's rules, such maneuvering is the only intelligent response to competitive pressures.

That is particularly true this year when the quality of wrestling is so high in Ohio. This is the best year for "blue chip" seniors in some time. One of the reasons for this evaluation is that not only are there the half-dozen or so senior superstars, but right behind them are another dozen or so absolutely outstanding prospects. On my list of superstars are Heffernan, Elinsky, Jordan, Duncan, Vance, and Johnson -- all of whom should develop into outstanding collegiate wrestlers. While I will not list the approximately 15 seniors who I judge to be just a small step behind this group, I would cite as examples people like Robusto, Mears, and Foor.

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"

After two slightly sub-par years, "AAA" wrestling in Ohio is very strong this year. Collegiate coaches will happily make off with at least a dozen blue-chip seniors, while leaving behind a strong junior class for next year. While the team competition will not be close, there will be fierce battles fought for individual honors. Most weights have good depth, and many feature two or three absolutely outstanding wrestlers.

Last year we noted the trend toward dominance by the Northeast District (Cleveland and Akron sites) which saw 11 champs and 21 finalists emerge from that area in 1980. Last year this trend continued with 12 champs (only Arthur at 98# was an outsider), and again 21 finalists. Another 9 boys from those sites captured third place. Now there has been a major change in the qualifying procedure from the Northeast District. Cleveland, traditionally stronger, has lost a qualifier -- only the top three making Columbus -- while the Akron site will now send four. This, to my mind, is not going to be a crucial determinant at the State Tourney. Of Cleveland's 13 fourth place qualifiers, only two got trophies (a fourth and a sixth), and 9 didn't win a match at Columbus. They had a combined record of 7-17 -- certainly not an overwhelming figure. In fact, this is a year where Cleveland lacks depth at many weights, while the Akron site is very close to an all-time strength peak. It is hoped, however, that a more equitable procedure will be adopted in 1983. Also, I hope that wrestle-offs for a true second in those two-man districts will continue.

98#

PROJECTED CHAMP: JOE BELFIORE (MAPLE HTS.)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2. Hoskins (Xenia) | 9. Carlin (St. Edward) |
| 3. Thomas (Mayfield) | 10. Killius (Bay) |
| 4. Simmermeyer (Northwest) | 11. Shire (Toledo St. Francis) |
| 5. Matos (Lorain Southview) | 12. Hartman (St. Ignatius) |
| 6. Scholtz (North Royalton) | 13. Greer (Tiffin) |
| 7. Kapper (Green) | 14. Salemme (St. Xavier) |
| 8. Wegman (Galloway Westland) | 15. Rocco (Parma) |
| | 16. Goempel (East Liverpool) |

One of the few weight classes where the Cleveland District could use more than 3 qualifiers is at 98#. This area has 7 of my top 15 choices, and this does not exhaust the list of talented 98's. Clearly the best at this writing is the sparkling senior from Maple Hts., Joe Belfiore. This rugged blonde was upset in the state quarter-finals last year when he couldn't handle the legs. This year he has improved on that aspect, while retaining his lightning quick takedown touch. He has the size, speed, and experience to take the title.

Close behind in the Cleveland area are a pair of rugged seniors in Thomas and Matos. They will be favored for the other two state spots, but they are certainly not upset-proof. That is especially true of Matos who has survived a number of close matches this year. One of his other obstacles is a sectional that is loaded at his weight class. Killius, Carlin, and the tenacious freshman Hartman are also there along with solid wrestlers like Black (Avon Lake) and Thrall (Westlake). One mis-step there could doom even district chances. Scholtz, sophomore brother of state runner-up John, should come in as a sectional champ, and he has fine potential to break that senior monopoly. Two dark horses for honors are Killius and Carlin. Earlier in the year, Killius would have made my top 5, but he has not done as well as anticipated. Carlin

has just begun wrestling at 98#, but his sub, Sal Carrao, has been most impressive and that augurs well for Carlin. Other Cleveland area potentials are Aquila (Riverside) and DeFelice (Chardon).

The one district with enough firepower to challenge the Cleveland boys is at Cincy/Dayton. Hoskins has been awesome and Simmermeyer is still undefeated. Backed up by Salemme and possibly Ringo (Wayne) or Brewer (West Chester Lakota) they will fight for at least 2 places. They have, however, not been hardened by the withering pressure faced by the Cleveland boys, and may not be able to wrestle two or three tough matches in a row.

The Akron District is not strong with Kapper leading a weak contingent that may also include Crowe (Wadsworth) and Baughman (Norton). One real possibility would be Willaman (North Canton), if he could get down to 101#. This sophomore could well have placing potential at that weight.

Shire and Greer lead a weak Toledo contingent that should be bloodied and bowed after the first round. Wegman is strong in the Columbus area, but after him there are just names -- like McComas (Groveport). All in all, it looks like the Cleveland District could well have greater depth than the state bracket at this weight.

105#

PROJECTED CHAMP: RICK FRANKS (TALLMADGE)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 2. Renner (Troy) | 9. Prophet (Sandusky) |
| 3. Harmon (Cahenna) | 10. Thompkins (Brecksville) |
| 4. Pizzino (Field) | 11. Coghill (Nordonia) |
| 5. Von Allman (Oak Hills) | 12. Bunch (Steubenville) |
| 6. Hinkle (Fairfield) | 13. Wegman (Galloway Westland) |
| 7. Robinson (St. Edward) | 14. Monaghan (Sylvania Northview) |
| 8. Bennett (North Canton) | 15. Rowan (Madison) |

This is the toughest weight in "AAA" to forecast. There are just so many possibilities and combinations that no one can foresee how it will all work out. There are 8 former state qualifiers here, but I've put the highest ranking one -- a state runner-up -- in the eighth spot. Three of the seemingly best wrestlers have been in long slumps while another 3 of my top 15 are little known. There is a high probability that actual competition will make a complete shambles of this forecast.

What we can say is that the Akron District at this weight is dynamite. Franks (3rd), Bennett (2nd), Pizzino (qualifier), and Coghill (qualifier) all went to Columbus last year and 3 of them won at least one match. However, Bennett has been erratic at best while suffering through an arm injury, while Coghill has wrestled few good matches. Hence, their low placement although Bennett, if right, could even take the title. Pizzino is extremely big and strong and qualified at 105# last year. Franks, my choice, was third last year losing by only a point to Bennett. He needs a lot of luck and good draws to win, but he certainly has the required talent. This is one weight class where it's good that Akron will take four.

The Southwest is another site of nearly comparable quality. Renner, Von Allman, and Hinkle all are former state qualifiers--the latter two years ago. So far, Hinkle has gone at 112#, but has been "handled" several times. Von Allman beat his old nemesis Harmon in overtime, and has remained undefeated. Both these boys may be harmed by the elimination of the figure four which they use so well. Renner, the district champ

at this weight last year, could be a key figure in Troy's chances for a team trophy. I favor Thomas (Mt. Healthy) for that fourth qualifying spot.

I've liked Harmon for two years picking him 3rd both times. I think a combination of first round jitters and Belfiore's speed cost him his only loss in 1981, but with his OT loss to Von Allman out of the way, he should be ready for a high place. Wegman and Weaver (Worthington) should be his back-ups in that district.

There is good depth in the Eastern District, too. I'm picking Bunch to reverse his 1-0 loss to state qualifier McKay (New Philadelphia) and represent that district. Sturbois (Athens) will again be left out.

In Toledo Prophet, if he can hold the weight, will be the #1 man. Monaghan, Smith (Anthony Wayne), and Correll (Marion Harding) will vie for the second spot.

The Cleveland District is -- for the second year -- rather weak at this weight. Robinson and Thompkins look to be the two best, but the latter is still in a cast with a broken ankle. How he will bounce back is a crucial question. Rowan is one of my dark horse picks while Wood (Berea) and DeMattie (North Royalton) also have a shot at that third spot. Netzbard (Maple Hts.), a first year varsity senior, is also a possibility.

112#

PROJECTED CHAMP: RICH ROBUSTO (WALSH)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2. Mulhall (St. Joseph) | 8. Woods (Toledo Rogers) |
| 3. McCarty (Sandusky) | 9. Auletta (Mayfield) |
| 4. Farber (West Chester Lakota) | 10. Strauss (St. Edward) |
| 5. McFarland (North Olmsted) | 11. Taylor (Steubenville) |
| 6. Marsico (Cuyahoga Falls) | 12. Guzik (Normandy) |
| 7. Begley (Dayton Stebbins) | 13. Mancini (Boardman) |

The gap between defending state champ Robusto and the rest of the field is fairly wide -- about 5 or 6 points as a guess. An outstanding college prospect Robusto hasn't always looked real motivated this year, but he'll be ready for the tournaments. Tall and wiry he'll need to be a little more physical in college, but he has all the tools. He should cruise to the title.

The battle for second place, though, is wide open. Any of the people listed from second through seventh has the ability to be a finalist with Robusto. Mulhall was only fourth at the Brecksville Tourney losing by a point to both McCarty and McFarland. However, he was just coming into top-notch form at the time and I believe he can reverse those defeats. McCarty has had a long and successful career at Sandusky, but has all too often failed to win the big bout. Very strong he could out-muscle anyone in the field. Farber has lost to Hinkle once this year, but he is good in close, pressure situations. He also beat Mulhall -- last year. Begley and McFarland are state veterans who may be just a little small for this weight. Begley, in particular, might go at 105#.

The Cleveland District should feature Mulhall and McFarland with perhaps three others fighting for that last spot. State runner-up Auletta has not done well this year, and may not even get back to Columbus. Guzik is a big 112# who beat McCarty this year, and then collapsed against McFarland. The freshman Strauss is a sensational wrestler with a host of aggressive moves. I do believe, however, that one of the seniors will "catch him" in an aggressive mistake and put him out of the tourney. Pinzone (Solon),

Coates (Brush), and Rossborough (St. Ignatius) are real long-shots.

Robusto and Marsico stand out in Akron with Mancini a very strong possibility for a qualifying spot. The erratic Porter (Akron East) could well spring one big upset, but is unlikely to wrestle a consistently good tourney. Scharrer (Ursuline), Pauley (Massillon Perry), and Bogdan (Medina) are probably better choices for that fourth qualifying spot.

The Columbus area is very weak at this weight, and qualifiers like Nichols (Upper Arlington) or Jones (Galloway Westland) will not get out of the Thursday afternoon session at St. Johns. In Toledo, McCarty and state sixth Woods should dominate though Kilker (Vermillion) and Hulse (Tiffin) might challenge Woods. Watch out for Frank Smith (Anthony Wayne) if he does go 119#. Taylor should dominate the Southeast.

One interesting district is the Southwest. Farber and Begley have had a succession of tough matches. However, both Montgomery (Forest Park) who has always given Hinkle trouble, Perrino (St. Xavier), and Suter (Vandalia Butler) are solid. If Hinkle should be at this weight it will be a real donny brook. What would have made it even better would have been the inclusion of the state qualifier Jim Betsch (LaSalle) who is unfortunately out for the season with an injury.

119#

PROJECTED CHAMP: CHRIS GREER (TIFFIN)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2. Randall (Akron North) | 10. J. Smith (Fitch) |
| 3. Gonzalez (Lorain Southview) | 11. F. Smith (Anthony Wayne) |
| 4. Zuccaro (Nordonia) | 12. Gundling (Worthington) |
| 5. Masica (Valley Forge) | 13. DeVilbiss (Mansfield) |
| 6. Peterjohn (St. Edward) | 14. Hoess (Upper Arlington) |
| 7. Hennessey (Elder) | 15. Peterson (Howland) |
| 8. Pierson (Elyria) | 16. Gray (Kent Roosevelt) |
| 9. Bell (West Chester Lakota) | 17. Milligan (Gahenna) |

This should be one of the most fascinating weight classes for the wrestling spectator. It contains elements from almost every segment of the wrestling firmament and will almost surely be decided by the luck of the draw -- at both the district and the state level.

My choice is Tim Greer, third at 105# last year. He looked exceptional throughout the entire tourney even during his 15-8 loss to Robusto. This year he has been virtually flawless. Two other strong contenders from his Toledo district are district champ Frank Smith and long-time state hopeful Gary DeVilbiss. Both are good, but only one will get to Columbus to challenge for a place.

I really like the talented junior Todd Randall. He is an excellent performer, but his recent 6-week absence made me back away from choosing him. Nonetheless, if he is healthy he will be a contending force at Columbus. His Akron District is really strong. Zuccardo is a powerhouse performer, and John Smith and Peterson will form a most impressive quartet. Gray and Theis (Glen Oak) will also challenge for a state spot. Anyone drawing an Akron District performer will have his hands full.

The Cleveland area is much the same. Gonzalez is extremely good, but he is bouncing around weight-wise each week, and I think that takes away from a wrestler's concentration. In addition, the Southview Senior Syndrome has struck so many times (Velez,

Comacho, Romero, etc.) that it makes me wonder if its reached epidemic proportions there. Masica has been a sensational dual meet performer, but has floundered in the tournament atmosphere. That may have been cured by his exciting 7-6 win over Zuccaro at the Brecks-ville Tourney. Peterjohn once he got down to 119#, has suddenly become much more ag- gressive. If he keeps that attitude he'll make Columbus this year. If so, that would leave out state qualifier Pierson.

Gundling, Hoess, and Milligan are a talented trio from the Columbus area. I wouldn't be surprised to see Milligan drop to the much weaker 112# class by tourney time. Gundling with a good draw and a "hot hand" could possibly grab a place. Bell placed at 112# last year, but Henessey has looked better this year. Spelman (Turpin), Pantano (Greenhills), and Bockerstette (Fairfield) will be contenders for the other two spots, but will be "eaten" alive at states.

126#

PROJECTED CHAMP: LARRY VANCE (NORDONIA)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2. Johnson (Watkins Memorial) | 7. Brooks (Reynoldsburg) |
| 3. Laurio (Hudson) | 8. Mossing (Toledo St. Francis) |
| 4. Rice (Hilliard) | 9. Specht (LaSalle) |
| 5. Bonacci (St. Edward) | 10. Darson (Mansfield) |
| 6. Scott (Elida) | 11. Pitten (Brecksville) |

This should be one of the best and most exciting weights at Columbus. It features two high scoring stars -- defending state champ Vance and defending runner-up, Johnson. Vance soundly beat Johnson last year and has been simply awesome this year. He has been a point scoring machine, Johnson with his marvelous win over 3-time state champ Jim Jordan is every bit as quick and strong as Vance, but may lack his technique. Johnson has almost unlimited potential. He has the ability to get sky-high for a bout and with his physical gifts can be devastating. He'll have to watch his conditioning, though. One would have to hope that the pairings would have these two meet in the finals. If so, Vance will win again.

Laurio and Rice are about a step behind these two -- even though Rice did upset Johnson in overtime. Laurio lost to Mears by one point last year in Districts and is physically bruising. If the two leaders start looking too far ahead, both of these boys have the potential for a monumental upset.

After the top four the quality declines sharply. Bonacci leads an uncharacteristically weak Cleveland delegation that will have, at best, one place-winner in Columbus. Pitten, Rini (North Royalton), Palisin (Rocky River), and state-qualifier Morrell (Padua) will be shooting for the other qualifying spots. Hannah (Amherst) has been at a number of weight classes this year, but if he is at 126# he could vault up to second in this district. Another dark-horse is the tournament-shy Doctor (Westlake) who if he relaxes could make real trouble for the other contenders.

Russo (Glen Oak) and Cline (Barberton) would probably have to rate as favorites for the other two Akron qualifying spots, but Lamancusa (West Branch) and Bostrom (Jackson) will certainly provide a stiff challenge. The Southwest District is very weak and that entire delegation could fail to snatch even one individual victory at Columbus. Beside Specht, Klumb (Elder) and Moore (Princeton) have good chances of making Columbus.

Surprisingly, both the Columbus and Toledo areas have good depth at this weight. Both send two competitors and in each case someone good will fail to qualify. Columbus

will send Rice and Johnson, but the excellent Brooks (Reynoldsburg) will be left out, and Martin (Northland) has no chance. Look for a possible weight switch there. In Toledo state qualifier Scott, Mossing, and Darson should battle for two spots. Anderson (Clay) and Hall (Rogers) are outside threats. This weight has good depth here, but they'll not be able to compete against the top four at the State.

132#

PROJECTED CHAMP: CHRIS MEARS (NORTH CANTON)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2. Keller (Reynoldsburg) | 7. Matteo (Lake Catholoc) |
| 3. Ramsey (Westlake) | 8. Johnson (Elida) |
| 4. Lapchynski (Nordononia) | 9. Burke (E. Liverpool) |
| 5. Wright (St. Edward) | 10. Perri (Strongsville) |
| 6. Picolo (Springfield North) | 11. Fullerton (Centerville) |
| | 12. Boston (Toledo Bowsher) |

This weight class features a bevy of solid performers -- each of whom seems to have one problem or flaw that will make winning the state title difficult. For Mears, though, that problem is strictly one of outlook, and that's why he should win. He just has become a little too conservative in his outlook. He isn't shooting as much as he should, it's almost like he's trying to avoid losses rather than notch victories. If he gets just a little more aggressive, his great skills should see him through. After all, he has only lost one bout in the last two years, and has been to state twice already.

Keller has been superb this year, but I wonder about the relatively weak competition he has faced. He really stands out in the Columbus "AAA" competition, and I wouldn't be surprised to see their second qualifier be a 126#er that moved up.

Ramsey missed virtually all of last year after being the most exciting sophomore at the state two years ago. He finished third that year (losing only to Tussel), and if he has regained form after his lengthy illness of last year he will be a real threat. Wright and Matteo should be the other two qualifiers out of Cleveland, but Perri, Smith (Elyria), Budnar (Euclid), and Zele (St. Joseph) will certainly challenge. One step below this group is Robertson (Lakewood) and Wirfel (Madison).

Lapchynski should be Mears' toughest competition out of Akron, but after that the quality drops off rapidly. Nunns (Crestwood), Gintert (Howland), and a number of others will fight for the last two spots. Only Lapchynski will be able to score at the state level.

State place-winner Burke will be the Eastern District representative, but don't look for him to place this year. The Toledo area is weak unless Meridieth is at this weight, which I don't anticipate. State qualifier Picolo leads a punchless Southwest district quartet that will probably include Fullerton, Rednour (Fairfield), and Ruffing (Elder). The drop-off after my top 7 selection is wide, and should be a clear demarcation between possible place-winners and also-rans.

PROJECTED CHAMP: JOHN CVETIC (ST. EDWARD)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 2. King (Tallmadge) | 9. Gross (North Canton) |
| 3. Finfrock (Troy) | 10. Kelleher (Reynoldsburg) |
| 4. Bentivegna (Jackson) | 11. Heldman (Fairfield) |
| 5. Bryson (Medina) | 12. Nicklos (Midpark) |
| 6. Meredieth (Whitmer) | 13. Montoney (Stow) |
| 7. Murphy (Nordia) | 14. McGillvray (Clayton Northmont) |
| 8. DeLong (Toledo St. Francis) | 15. Dubray (St. Ignatius) |
| | 16. Kidnocker (Chillicothe) |

It's difficult to call any St. Ed's wrestler a long-shot, but in this case John Cvetic would have to qualify. He has lost five times already this year (and been tied twice), he has never wrestled in a sectional or district before, and he has been in a mid-season slump since Christmas. Besides, he faces some awesome competition, so why choose him? Well, it's clear he's a fine wrestler who is just excellent on his feet and he seems to ignite St. Ed's and that helps him, too, and he emerges from a relatively easy district escaping the epic struggles taking place elsewhere. Besides, I've never seen him wrestle a bad match, and I'll be at both his district and the states.

The rest of the Cleveland District is mediocre. Nicklos and Dubray seem to have a slight edge, but I really like Schwertner (Chardon) for one of those other qualifying spots. Skapes (Strongsville), Weber (Padua), and, maybe, Rossi (Euclid) will be in the hunt, too.

The Akron District will be magnificent. It contains eight outstanding performers who will contend for just four spots. King, third at this weight last year, is still my favorite, but he has already been upset twice by Bentivegna. On the other hand, Montoney has beaten Bentivegna and lost to King. They are all solid. Bryson, of course, went to Columbus last year and has twice won the prestigious MIT. Murphy, a state "A" champ as a freshman, transferred to Nordonia for his senior year and he has shown rapid improvement having to battle with Vance and Lapchynski every day. He shut-out Cvetic last week. Gross lost only to Bryson at the MIT although he has been handled roughly by Cvetic. Behind this sextet lurks Vick (Louisville) and Heverly (West Branch) who in a normal year would have a good chance of qualifying. I would not be surprised to see several of these opt for either 132# or 145# where qualifying would be easier. The way I sort it out is King, Bentivegna, Bryson, and Murphy going to Columbus while the rest stay home. Gross, however, might try at 145#, but that still leaves Montoney out. Brown (Mass. Perry) is another long-shot who has shown rapid improvement.

The Southwest will also be strong with state qualifiers Finfrock and McGillvray leading the way. Heldman has shown rapid improvement, but the fourth spot is wide open. Perhaps Merk (Oak Hills) or Wallace (Glen Este) can claim it. While this is a strong group I question their ability to go with the boys out of Akron.

Toledo features three solid performers. Both DeLong and Meridieth are excellent, and, I believe, they could easily move into the top two of three. Meridieth is very strong and moves well, while DeLong is smooth and sharp. Both will give Cvetic plenty of problems. Hertzfield (Anthony Wayne) looks like he'll be eliminated unless the draw puts Meridieth and DeLong together -- which would be a real shame. He might be better placed at 132# or 145#.

Kelleher and Melfe (Hilliard) lead the Columbus group which will have trouble surviving the first round. Potts (Westerville South) has been winning a lot of bouts down there, but off his MIT performance he can't compete with qualifiers from other areas.

145#

PROJECTED CHAMP: JIM HEFFERNAN (ST. EDWARD)

TOP CONTENDERS:

None

OTHER CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 2. Lee (Medina) | 7. Reep (Ashland) |
| 3. Lomelo (Tallmadge) | 8. McElroy (Wadsworth) |
| 4. Bryner (Hilliard) | 9. Ignash (Groveport) |
| 5. Barker (Franklin) | 10. Bartels (Solon) |
| 6. Stumph (Valley Forge) | 11. Wenzel (Marietta) |

It's been pretty well recognized that Jim Heffernan is one of the very top recruits in the country. He is a mistake-free wrestler with absolutely no weaknesses, and when he matures physically he will be an awesome collegiate wrestler. As it is, no one really has any chance of upsetting him in this year's tourney. Unless something absolutely freakish happens, nobody will be within 8 or 10 points of him.

After Heffernan, look for the Akron District to get real tough. Lee and Lomelo are state veterans with excellent scoring potential and McElroy has been very solid this year. The fourth qualifier could well be the blind Davidson (Salem) who has excellent skills. They all have potential placement outlooks.

Bryner and Ignash lead a relatively solid Columbus contingent, and Bryner, in particular, could gain a middle place. Again the lack of good "AAA" competition may hurt him. Most of the good 145's in Toledo are "AA", but state veteran Reep should do better at Columbus this year. His partner from that area will be weak -- maybe Torti (Toledo St. Francis) or Adams (Lima Shawnee).

The Southeast District should send Wenzel, but Mitchell (Steubenville) could challenge there. In either case they won't intimidate the state opposition. The Southwest is also weak with Barker a notable exception. He along with Freson (Roger Bacon), Cuntz (West Chester Lakota) and Caperna (Centerville) should be the best bets to be representatives of that area.

Heffernan so dominates the Cleveland area that it's hard to see others at this weight. Stumph, however, is particularly good, though he has a history of losing at the most inopportune times in tournaments. I was really impressed with Bartels although he is pretty much an unknown quantity. Kogovsek (St. Joseph) is a more orthodox contender.

155#

PROJECTED CHAMP: GREG ELINSKY (ST. EDWARD)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 2. Jones (Sandusky) | 9. Garner (St. Xavier) |
| 3. Wilkerson (Centerville) | 10. Lindow (Brecksville) |
| 4. Mayse (Marion Harding) | 11. Nichols (Crestwood) |
| 5. Wright (Louisville) | 12. Craig (Groveport) |
| 6. Browning (Hilliard) | 13. Walker (Marietta) |
| 7. Sandella (Conneaut) | 14. Gibbons (Padua) |
| 8. Palmisano (Lake Catholic) | 15. Nichols (Indian Hills) |

This is really an interesting weight class once you get by the fact that Elinsky will dominate it. Greg upset the #1 high school wrestler in the country, John Laviolette from Midwest City, Oklahoma, 8-6 to avenge his one loss of last year. He is wrestling with much greater precision than ever before, and he'll win his second title easily -- unless some hulk gets lucky and sticks him.

Two potential hulks are Jones and Wilkerson -- although both could probably "kill" themselves and make 145#. Still, they're better off with a miniscule chance against Elinsky as opposed to none with Heffernan. Like many real strongmen both Wilkerson and Jones are erratic so there's no certainty they'll ever get to Elinsky and that's what makes this weight so interesting. There is a true diversity of style that makes for really competitive wrestling.

In Cleveland, Elinsky will take one spot, and Palmisano probably will get the second. The third qualifier should be either Lindow or Gibbons although they are both pretty much one-dimensional wrestlers. Bright (Collinwood) or Corcoran (St. Joseph) might be a long-shot.

Another interesting competition will be in Akron where state qualifier Sandella will be challenged by the very good Wright and Nichols. I like Wright, and foresee definite placement potential for him. In the Southwest another Nichols will challenge along with Garner to get that top district spot, while Walker will dominate the Southeast.

Toledo has real depth at this weight as former state qualifiers Jones and Mayse must contend with Dickson (Anthony Wayne), Pomeroy (Maumee), Gray (Lima Shawnee), and Heater (Findlay). My guess is that some of those quality boys will look for another easier weight -- perhaps 145#. Browning, another state qualifier, and Craig should represent the Central District.

Overall, it should be an outstanding battle for second through sixth place with a large number of wrestlers having a crack at it. What they shouldn't expect is the top honor.

167#

PROJECTED CHAMP: JOE SILVESTRO (ST. EDWARD)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 2. Darbyshire (Troy) | 9. Boettcher (Springfield North) |
| 3. Tluchowski (Steubenville) | 10. Wollam (Westerville North) |
| 4. Parker (Copley) | 11. Funk (Jackson) |
| 5. Fleming (Lakewood) | 12. Wells (North Canton) |
| 6. Vadini (Valley Forge) | 13. Knopf (Milford) |
| 7. Von Valkenburg (Sylvania Southview) | 14. Ockington (Mentor) |
| 8. Turnbull (Madison) | |

This is probably the best and deepest weight in the state. We have a number of the place winners from last year returning, and have added some real depth in almost every district. There are 8 returning state qualifiers, and 2 others who missed Columbus by but one match.

Heading my list is last year's surprise champ Joe Silvestro. Really a 155#, he won three 1-point decisions to take the crown -- including a 7-6 win over last year's choice Todd Darbyshire. Well, Joe is still a little small for the weight, but he still has that fighting heart and the great take-downs. That should be just barely enough. Both Darbyshire, the Resident Destroyer, and Tluchowski (fifth last year) will be enormous at this weight and one mistake by Silvestro will vault them into the throne room. The

problem that both these contenders have is a lack of real good competition. Darbyshire has waltzed to a 61-1 record over the past two years, but has not really been challenged by most foes. Tluchowski faces much the same problem.

As good as Silvestro is, he does not even have a clear pathway out of his own district. Vadini, Fleming, and state qualifier Turnbull are all excellent and there is only room for three to qualify. Right behind them are Ockington (Mentor), Stadnicar (Avon Lake), and Thomas (Berea). It will not be a district for the faint of heart. The pairings will play a big role in the final outcome since Fleming and Silvestro exit from the same sectional.

Von Valkenburg, a state qualifier at 155#, heads the Toledo area with Hall (Rogers), Budka (Vermillion), or Lubinski (Toledo St. Francis) as his most likely colleague. State qualifier Wollam should do well in Columbus with Miller (Reynoldsburg) or Baumann (Worthington) as his running mate. They'll be lucky to escape the first round with their lives.

The huge and talented Darbyshire is unchallenged in the Southwest, but Boettcher, Fernandez (Fairmount East), and Napier (Roger Bacon) should go along for the ride. Boettcher is about the only kid down there that can "go" with Darbyshire. The blind Jewell (Fairfield) also has an outside chance of qualifying.

Akron should have a solid group of qualifiers. Parker was sixth last year, and Funk and Wells have shown that they can compete with him. Right now that new, fourth qualifying spot is up for grabs.

You can expect real strong competition from the first round on at this weight class. There are no real standouts, but a number of very fine wrestlers from all parts of the state. Silvestro will have to be at peak form to defend his title since he faces threats from so many directions.

175#

PROJECTED CHAMP: JEFF SIMPSON (SYLVANIA SOUTHVIEW)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2. Cessna (North Canton) | 9. Menninger (Oak Hills) |
| 3. Washington (Upper Arlington) | 10. Linville (Galloway Westland) |
| 4. Salm (St. Edward) | 11. Gross (Fairborn Baker) |
| 5. Riley (Troy) | 12. Doppler (Glen Oak) |
| 6. Grube (Brush) | 13. Kennedy (West Geauga) |
| 7. Caito (Solon) | 14. Kelly (Hubbard) |
| 8. Curley (Sandusky) | 15. Arcuragi (East Liverpool) |

This is a weight class that is very similar to 167# except it isn't quite as deep, and the top people aren't quite as good. It's also the first time for awhile that a St. Edward's wrestler hasn't been the projected champ.

Jeff Simpson, fourth last year, should win the title on a succession of close, relatively high-scoring matches. Very good on his feet, Simpson will have to defeat a good wrestler in every round because of the parity in this weight class. As was the case last year, Curley should join him as the second representative from the Toledo area. Rogers (Vermillion) could be their chief challenger, unless he chooses to go at 185# where I have rated him.

It appears that Cessna is doomed to a second, consecutive runner-up award. His one hope is to keep "pushing" his opponents until they drop. To win, he'll have to "outgut" some of his more talented competitors. Both Doppler and Kelly are pinners with a 70% fall ratio. This suggests that they are capable of pulling the big upset.

I see four solid competitors at this weight in Cleveland looking for three places. Since they have not wrestled each other and have few common opponents, it's difficult to sort out their chances. Salm was at heavyweight last year, and just missed a state spot. Grube was a 185# who also came up one match short of Columbus. Caito has had an overnight transformation from mediocre to outstanding while Kennedy wrestles a strictly dual meet schedule. Right now I would say Kennedy is the odd man out because of his lack of this tourney experience.

In Columbus, Washington has had a sensational season and is a real threat while state qualifier Linville might grab a low place. Arcuřagi will be your best shot as the Eastern District qualifier.

185#

PROJECTED CHAMP: MIKE DAVIES (CHARDON)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2. Heropoulos (Glen Oak) | 8. Brunot (Conneaut) |
| 3. Villanucci (Lorain) | 9. Lindsey (Oak Hills) |
| 4. Finnan (St. Ignatius) | 10. Byrne (St. Joseph) |
| 5. Rodhe (Crestwood) | 11. Bradley (Centerville) |
| 6. McClellan (Worthington) | 12. Rogers (Vermillion) |
| 7. Estes (Marietta) | 13. Baker (Tiffin) |

This is a weight class that I believe will be dominated by Cleveland competitors. Davies, Villanucci, and Finnan all have the potential to be state champ. I've gone with the junior from Chardon because he has superior technique along with quickness and size. He has the failings of one who was a "phenom" in that he seems to lose his concentration on occasion. Still he should win most of his matches on his feet and hold off the tremendously strong Villanucci and the vastly improved Finnan, Byrne, and the tall Boysko (Padua) wait in the wings for a mistake by my top three.

Heropoulos has had a grand year, and richly deserves his high ranking. Both he and Rodhe were one match from State last year and along with Brunot form a trio nearly as formidable as the Cleveland bunch. That fourth spot might be just right for Bahl (Howland) or Staats (Norton).

McClellan has won some big tourneys this year and he should be in the hunt for a low place at Columbus. The people behind him don't seem that good with Hunt (Newark) having the best credentials.

I also like the huge, but still untested Estes of the Eastern District. He may well spring a surprise. Another surprise is my rating of Rogers at 185#. I suspect that he will see Curley and Simpson ahead of him at his present 175# class, and jump up to the much weaker 185#. Kaucher (St. John) and Baker (Tiffin) could also be first round fodder at Columbus.

The Southwest District is weak with Bradley, Lindsey, and Vehr (St. Xavier) as the top three. Finnan slaughtered that group at a recent Cincinnati Tournament.

HVY.

PROJECTED CHAMP: MIKE FOOR (NORTH RIDGEVILLE)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2. Huff (Lorain) | 7. Alawan (Strongsville) |
| 3. Smith (Gahenna) | 8. Reilly (St. Xavier) |
| 4. Jones (Toledo Start) | 9. Conklin (New Philadelphia) |
| 5. Chesbrough (Mentor) | 10. Hessel (Jackson) |
| 6. Gruenschlager (Roger Bacon) | 11. Capehart (Franklin Hts.) |

Again, as we saw last year, heavyweight is probably the weakest of the 13 weight classes. And, as in 1981, we can probably expect several unknowns to place or even make it to the finals.

I like the Cleveland area heavies best, not that I'm all that thrilled, but there are more and better ones here than anyplace else. Foor, my choice, is 6'2" and 220# with good speed and skills. However, he can be put on his back on occasion and that is not healthy at any weight class -- especially heavyweight. However, he surely would have placed last year had he not suffered an injury in the sectional final that kept him from district competition, and he is even better now.

Huff is about 5'11" and 270# with a low center of gravity and fast feet. He's tough to do much against. Chesborough, at 185# last year, has developed into a sleek, smooth heavyweight who pinned all four opponents at the prestigious Brecksville Holiday Tourney. This is the trio I expect to get to Columbus, but there is the likelihood of many up-sets. Alawan, sixth at the States, is still a potent force even though he hasn't had an outstanding season so far. Jones (Eastlake-North) is another strong contender as is Ritshel (Valley Forge). An intriguing contestant is Frank Waite (St. Edward) who is really a 175#er disguised as a heavyweight. He has defeated a number of much larger boys (including the #1 heavy in Michigan) on speed and strategy. It remains to be seen how those tools will work on people like Foor and Huff.

Last year in a burst of inspiration I commented on the evident weakness in the Akron District at heavyweight. Naturally, both state finalists emerged from that site. This year that district seems even weaker with Hessel, Tomak (Louisville) and Diehl (Medina) the seeming best of a mediocre lot.

Toledo is also weak with Jones -- one match from Columbus last year -- probably the best. Farley (Maumee), Moyer (Tiffin), and McAdoo (Toledo Central Catholic) are the best shots for the second spot.

In Columbus, Smith has had a good year -- especially early on -- but Capehart and Backenstoe (Hilliard) are threats. The two that come out of this district should win at least a match or two at St. John's Arena. In that same light, state qualifier Conklin should do better than the first round shut-out of last year, as he again carries the banner of the Eastern District.

An intriguing area is the Southwest. Here Gruenschlager at 6'5" and 240# looks and wrestles impressively, and yet was beaten 10-4 by Smith. Reilly with 18 wins and 18 falls obviously is a threat to anyone, but he fades if the match lasts over three minutes. You have to stay away early and come on late to beat him. Collins (Vandalia Butler) and Grant (Mount Healthy) are my other two choices to exit that district.

Summing it all up, this crown will be won by whoever is hot the second weekend in March. The level of wrestling will not be high, but it will be even, making for a lot of surprises.

TEAMS

1. St. Edward -- It seems clear that St. Eds will become the first team in Ohio high school history to win five consecutive state titles. It would take a tidal wave of ill-fortune to St. Eds for them to win by less than 40 points. However, I don't believe they will surpass last year's record for most team points, but then what can you expect from a squad that will graduate only five senior starters.
2. North Canton -- They have a beautifully balanced squad including three boys who were in the top three last year. Mears and Cessna continue to wrestle well, but Bennett needs to develop real consistency. If Gross and Wells come through and Willaman can make 98#, they could even make things interesting for Ed's. Unfortunately, Bennett and Gross (105 and 138) have tough district competition just to get to States.
3. Nordonia -- You have to hand it to Coach Gary Watters -- his squads always have to be highly rated. Vance, of course, is their ace, but Zuccaro and Lapchynski should also score at Columbus. Like North Canton, two of their best -- Coghill and Murphy -- must exit their district at the terribly difficult weights of 105# and 138#.
4. Tallmadge -- Yet another Akron District team -- the third in a row. Franks, King, and Lomelo could all be finalists, but that's about it. With only three "tigers" there's little margin for error here -- and again its 105# and 138# that hold the key.
5. Troy -- Renner, Finfrock, Darbyshire, and Riley all stayed at the same weight as last year. I've wondered whether making that weight all season would make them stale, but so far things have gone well. They need help from at least one more source to move up. They'll need points at 105# and 138# to make even fifth.
6. Sandusky -- One of those teams that could be in the top five or the top eighty. Still McCarty, C. Jones, and Curley form a solid nucleus. Prophet would be a high help if he could make 105# and wrestle well, and maybe Maschari will return and lend aid, too. T. Jones just can't get out of that tough district.
7. Tiffin -- A state champ such as Greer can pick up around 25 points and you generally need around 35 to make the Top Ten. The remainder will have to be picked up by the younger Greer, Baker, and Moyer with perhaps Hulse helping if he can sneak through that tough district at 112#.
8. Hilliard -- The trio of Rice, Bryner, and Browning are the "cannons" for this team, but they could be supported by Backenstoe, Melfe, and Brian Rice.
9. Jackson -- This is a team that seems to get over-shadowed by North Canton in their area, but who have produced some fine wrestlers recently. Their nucleus is Funk, Bentivegna, and Hessel, but it doesn't end there. With the extra qualifying spot people like Bostrom and White have a chance to help.
10. Valley Forge -- My surprise choice for a Top Ten spot. Pat Semary has patiently endured a multitude of setbacks, but the 1972 state champs have four solid seniors in Masica, Stumph, Vadini, and Ritschel. They may not be champs, but each has the potential to place and make the top ten.

11. Reynoldsburg -- Keller is the linchpin of this team with Kelleher, Brooks, and Miller able to provide aid. The key is to get Brooks to the States -- either by dropping him to 119# or somehow sneaking him by either Johnson or Rice at 126#. Perhaps Downs can help, too.
12. Fairfield -- Another team that will have to do it with depth. Hinkle and Heldman are their best but they do have a lot of "maybes". I would include Rednour Bockerstette, Arvin, and Jewell in that category.
13. Worthington -- This team will be helped by the relative weakness of Central District and be able to qualify, perhaps, five or six people for the state. Weaver, Gundling, Baumann, and McClellan are the key people, but Gharbo, Hamilton, or Hitzman could well help.
14. West Chester Lakota -- The trio of Bell, Farber, and Cuntz could pick up a lot of points. The question is who else can help -- and the answer is that its got to come from people like Glossner, Brewer, and Shumaker.
15. St. Xavier -- Another team with a lot of ifs, but also a lot of pluses. The upper weights of Garner, Vehr, and Reilly have to score and Salemme needs to sneak a place at 98#. They'll also need some help from Perrino at 112#.

"AA"

There are no dominant schools in "AA" this year, with good wrestlers being scattered among a great many schools. This means that three or four excellent boys may be enough to capture the team trophy. In addition, no one area dominates "AA" as the Northeast District does in "AAA". Last year, the Northeast had 5 champs as compared to 3 from the Northwest and Central and 2 from the Southwest -- although with 14 finalists the Northeast District still held a slight preponderance of strength. Look for this geographical dispersion to continue in 1982.

98#

PROJECTED CHAMP: ROB HUSTON (OAK HARBOR)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2. Mendicino (Fairview) | 8. Leonard (Highland) |
| 3. Gerome (Aurora) | 9. Focht (St. Paris Graham) |
| 4. Rosen (Clyde) | 10. Diotale (Navarre Fairless) |
| 5. McIntyre (Marion River Valley) | 11. Hotopp (Dayton Northridge) |
| 6. Reindel (Cardinal Stritch) | 12. Adams (South Point) |
| 7. Dermott (Little Miami) | 13. Polinsky (St. Clairsville) |

This is a weight class that should be dominated by Huston and Mendicino. I've gone with the defending champ after substantial deliberation, although Mendicino would seem to have an excellent chance of defeating him. Recall that Mendicino qualified at this weight in "AAA" last year, and still wrestles primarily an "AAA" schedule. I think he'll even have a better chance if they meet in the finals after both can really eat.

Along with Mendicino, Gerome dominates the Northeast District. He has had an outstanding two year record at this weight, though he has fallen to upsets several times. He'll give both boys ahead of him a rugged bout. Below him, Leonard (brother of last year's runner-up) and Diotale have the best chance for the last two spots, but the drop-off is severe between them and the top two. Rennie (Sandy Valley), Staniford (West Salem Northwestern), Kosco (Northwest), and the district experienced Hayes (Brookfield) seem to have the best chance for an upset.

The Northwest District is also strong. Rosen and Reindel should join Huston to form a formidable trio. They all should win at least one bout at the state although Reindel was beaten by Gerome 13-3 at the MIT. Remaley (Bellvue), Gross (Coldwater) and Villagomez (Napoleon) are also threats. Watch for Rosen to pull off one big upset either in District or State competition.

McIntyre heads up an unusually weak Central District contingent, but his defeat of Tim Greer shows that he'll be in the battle for a low place. In the southeast, Adams should beat out Coolsey (Hillsboro) for their one spot, but will probably end up a first-round victim.

In the East Polinsky, Tim Ezzi (Uhrichsville Claymont) or Steve Pryor (Barnesville) should be the two qualifiers, but they, too, will have trouble winning even once in Columbus. The Southwest is weak, but could have an influence on the team standings. Focht, if he could score a few points, might boost his more celebrated teammates to a state team title. Besides the other two Southwest contenders shown in the rankings, Haney (Brookville), McDaniel (Bellbrook), and Krimmer (McNicholas) are candidates for the last spot.

PROJECTED CHAMP: DARRIN MOSSING (TOLEDO SWANTON)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2. Ryba (Chanel) | 10. Lynch (Loveland) |
| 3. Studer (Aurora) | 11. Longwell (Bishop Wehrle) |
| 4. Peters (Beachwood) | 12. Brant (Vincent Warren) |
| 5. Menchaca (Wauseon) | 13. Beatty (Brookville) |
| 6. Persons (Clyde) | 14. Shaw (Carrollton) |
| 7. Beck (Navarre Fairless) | 15. Helton (Middletown Madison) |
| 8. McLean (Warrensville) | 16. Cash (Little Miami) |
| 9. Smith (Lima Bath) | |

This weight is completely dominated by the Northern part of the state. All 9 of my top picks are from either the Northwest or Northeast Districts. I've chosen Mossing over Ryba on the narrowest of bases as again I think these two will dominate the weight class. Mossing is definitely the "slicker" of the two, but Ryba has pinned all but two of his opponents. I see Mossing winning a close high-scoring bout. Peters and Studer are both threats -- Peters lost to Ryba 1-0 -- and Beck was fifth last year at 98# (nipping Menchaca). McLean is certainly capable of an upset, and that coveted fourth spot. Eberly (Orrville) and Roginsky (Brooklyn) are other challengers.

In the Northwest, Mossing and Menchaca are exceptional and the oddly named Hiro Persons is only a step behind. Smith is also a strong contender for that third and last spot -- along with Cortez (Kansas Lakota). Both these districts are so strong at this weight that you can expect at least one major upset as the pace will really tell on the competitors.

Elsewhere the state is relatively weak. In the Central District, Longwell heads a weak conglomeration of unknowns. With all the good 112's in that area, I would be most surprised not to see at least one or two cut to 105# for the tournaments. I'm thinking of Hebert (Olentangy) or Samborsky (Pickerington). If so, that duo would easily rate in my top ten.

In the Southeast we have the same trio who fought it out last year. Again state qualifier Brant should dominate over the undefeated Anderson (Hillsboro) and Leibee (South Point). In the East, state qualifier Shaw will be pressed by Sturtz (Warsaw River View), but both should qualify.

The Southwest group will be lead by Lynch, but none of these wrestlers should be able to grab anything better than a fifth or sixth. Beatty, Helton, and Cash, though, are capable of an important win and as such must be treated with respect. Eaton, a long-time power in Southwest "AA" has had a down year, but Kirkoff could be a threat to qualify at this weight.

Overall, it seems to me that Ryba and Mossing should fight it out for the title. After that at least another half dozen competitors has an opportunity to grab a place. If there is an upset, the clever Peters might be the perpetrator. Also look for some of those excellent 112's who just have no chance to qualify for Columbus at that weight to step down and try their luck at 105#.

PROJECTED CHAMP: JEFF JORDAN (ST. PARIS GRAHAM)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2. Jaeger (Chanel) | 14. France (Kenston) |
| 3. DiCola (Akron Hoban) | 15. Hebert (Olentangy) |
| 4. Hauptle (Milan Edison) | 16. Leonard (Highland) |
| 5. Harrington (Sand. St. Mary) | 17. Fitzgerald (Little Miami) |
| 6. Caughell (Milton-Union) | 18. Samborsky (Pickerington) |
| 7. Kosco (Canal Fulton Northwest) | 19. McDaniel (Wooster Triway) |
| 8. Urry (Olmsted Falls) | 20. Jefferis (Belmont Union) |
| 9. Boyer (West Jefferson) | 21. Henry (Versailles) |
| 10. Green (Minerva) | 22. Estep. (South Point) |
| 11. Hammond (Bishop Wehrle) | 23. Kotellos (Martins Ferry) |
| 12. Wilmes (Batavia Clermont NE) | 24. McCrory (Cardinal Stritch) |
| 13. Peters (Uhrichsville Claymont) | 25. Longworth (Manchester) |

This is the finest, deepest weight class in "AA" this year. At the moment, 19 former state qualifiers are wrestling at this weight, though I wouldn't be surprised to see at least several move either to 119# or 105#. Included in this group are two defending state champs, two runner-ups, two third-placers, and three other place-winners. Virtually every district will be a battle royal, but none more than in the Northeast where seven state qualifiers and two other quality boys battle for just four spots.

Clearly with such a multitude of talent, forecasting won't be easy. However, in this situation, a very solid case can be made for two-time state Jeff Jordan. If this exceptional junior has had a close bout in the last two years, I am unaware of it, although he will be challenged more this year than last. That will be true even in his own district where Caughell (a recent easy winner over "AAA" fourth, Begley), Wilmes, Fitzgerald, and Henry lie in wait. That's five state qualifiers after only four spots, so something will have to give. I particularly like both Caughell and Wilmes and several years ago they would have been a champion in that district and now they're fighting for any state spot.

In the Cleveland area there is even more of a logjam. It's difficult to sort out, but let's try. Wrestling at 112# will be state-champ DiCola, state runner-up Leonard, state thirds Jaeger and Green, state sixth Kosco, former state qualifiers France and McDaniel, and Mike Urry and Kevin Friedl. What an interesting group. First, the sophomore Jaeger has been tremendously impressive all year losing only to Robusto (twice). He is also very intelligent and will not let a state champ like Jordan or DiCola overawe him. DiCola, now a junior, just plain loves to wrestle, and after all, he did win this weight class last year. Those two should surely get out of the district, and probably be Jordan's most severe tests. It's interesting that all three are still underclassmen. Green and Kosco would seem to be the logical choices based on the past two year record, but I don't think that will happen. Mike Urry is just so powerful that he'll just battle his way to Columbus, although I was disappointed in the way he wrestled Jordan at the MIT. If he had attacked him like he did Auletta, it might have been a closer contest. This leaves Green, two-time qualifier France, and state runner-up Leonard out in the cold.

In Columbus, Boyer and Hammond will defeat challenges from Hebert, Samborsky, and Wilson (Marion Pleasant) for the two qualifying spots. Hammond was 39-0 when he was upset in last year's quarter-finals, and he could surprise boys rated above him. Boyer, twice a state qualifier, is about due to win a bout in St. John's Arena and this is his last year.

In the Toledo area there isn't quite as much confusion. Haeuptle and state runner-up Harrington are the class of this area with McCrory (Cardinal Stritch), Crow (Toledo Swanton) and Herren (Lima Bath) battling for the third spot. Jordan did a gorgeous job of handling Haeuptle 4-0 last year in a match I thought might be his stiffest challenge.

In the Eastern District there should be a real dogfight for the two qualifying spots. State qualifier Jefferis is 18-1, and state qualifier Kotellos is 10-0, but they both had better prepare for Peters, the flashy sophomore from Uhrichsville Claymont. Already a victor over Kosco, he has been exceptional since moving down from 119#.

Estep should again beat Richards (Vincent Warren) for the one Southeast spot, and might even win a match in Columbus this year.

119#

PROJECTED CHAMP: SCOTT OWENS (ST. PARIS GRAHAM)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2. Gainer (Arkon Manchester) | 8. Tackett (Milton-Union) |
| 3. Dieckman (Olmsted Falls) | 9. Miller (Barnesville) |
| 4. Strickland (Hannibal River) | 10. Gnabah (Aurora) |
| 5. Smith (Tipp City) | 11. Boardwine (Streetsboro) |
| 6. Mazur (Chanel) | 12. Berger (Versailles) |
| 7. Hardy (Pemberville Eastwood) | 13. Delviscio (Toledo Swanton) |

There is a substantial drop-off in quality after the first four at this weight as compared to 112# -- particularly in the Columbus area. That's why you might anticipate some of the many quality 112's to move up a weight.

There were three possible choices in my mind when it came to choosing a champion. I took Owens over Gainer and Dieckman because of his consistency and determination. He's been at 119# since December, and has become comfortable with the weight, and he wrestles a solid bout every time out. Frankly, I think both Gainer and Dieckman could beat him in a regular dual, but I'll have to be convinced that they can persist in the three grueling weeks of tournaments. Dieckman, runner-up last year, will be a gigantic 119# -- but he has not made that weight in some time. It's going to be difficult to make the weight, especially the second day, and wrestle well, too. However, there is also no question that Gary could be awesome at this weight. Again, though, it's a question of consistency, and that's where the doubts arise. Gainer, also second in 1981, has been at 126# all year, but I think his choice to go 119# is wise. He certainly has a good chance of winning here, while it's not in the cards for him to beat Jim Jordan at 126#. I think Jordan would beat him 10 out of 10.

Again the Southwest District has excellent depth. Besides Owens, state qualifiers Smith, Tackett, and Berger all return. In addition, Lutz (Carlisle), Wisbeth (Little Miami), and Boone (Loveland) are all good, too. It is one more indication of the growth of wrestling in that area.

Cleveland again provides a complicated picture. You have to figure Gainer and Dieckman to get to Columbus while state qualifier Mazur should grab one of the two remaining spots. That leaves Gnabah and Boardwine to fight for that fourth spot. In addition, Friedl (Brooklyn) and Kowatch (West Salem Northwestern) will be challengers. The battle for that fourth spot could well be determined by the pairing at District since Gnabah and Boardwine exit from the same sectional.

In the Northwest, Hardy looks very tough with Delviscio and the excellent freshman Peters (Cardinal Stritch) as best choices for the other two spots. Poggiali (Sandusky Perkins), Closson (Ottawa-Glandorf), and Gibson (Kansas Lakota) are probably their three closest pursuers. Only Hardy of this group has any chance for a place.

It's unusual when the Eastern District has one threat so it's almost unique when they will field a strong tandem. Strickland was fifth last year, and lost to my pick Owens in overtime. Miller was third in "A" last year, and would have been my pick at 119# in the small school classification had Barnesville remained in that class. It will be interesting to note his progress.

In the Southeast, Smith (South Point), Paxton (Vincent Warren), and Wilson (Belpre) will battle for one spot. I favor Wilson, but it shouldn't make any difference since the loser won't see the Friday sessions. In that same light, I can't find any reasonable contenders in the Central District -- only Mulligan (Columbus DeSales) stands out at all -- so I will assume a couple of the 112's will move up.

126#

PROJECTED CHAMP: JIM JORDAN (ST. PARIS GRAHAM)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2. Wood (Columbus DeSales) | 11. Butcher (South Point) |
| 3. Nelson (Lexington) | 12. Andrews (Akron Hoban) |
| 4. Talbott (Cardinal Stritch) | 13. Laws (Sandusky St. Marys) |
| 5. Dowdell (Wellington) | 14. Asadorian (Kenton) |
| 6. Florian (Highland) | 15. Farler (Trenton Edgewood) |
| 7. French (Olmsted Falls) | 16. Isleman (Toronto) |
| 8. Plummer (Chaminade-Julienne) | 17. Jones (Grand Valley) |
| 9. Neely (Marion Pleasant) | 18. Neill (Pemberville Eastwood) |
| 10. Mariola (Chanel) | 19. Menchaca (Wauseon) |

This weight is substantially weaker than in a normal year, and it's a real tribute to one wrestler, Jim Jordan. The fact that he was the victim of a gigantic upset in no way detracts from the incredible record that he has compiled. I don't think I've ever seen a wrestler control the tempo and flow of a match better than Jordan. It's this total domination that had convinced many state hopefuls to look for a more congenial weight class. Now that he's a senior, he's getting many more falls, and that will translate to three of four pins in Columbus.

The Northeast District is very even -- though none there are within a dozen points of Jordan. I think the Florian, French, Dowdell, and Mariola will qualify, but there is one catch. The first three all come from the same sectional, which may confuse the district pairing. With such parity, Asadorian, Andrews, Jones, or even Bogomolny (Orange) could slip into the qualification circle. Two-time state place winner Mariola would seem particularly vulnerable to such a threat.

The Northwest District is also very even with Nelson and Talbott particularly good. Talbott won the Cincinnati Christmas Tourney, but slumped at the MIT. He'll have to be sharp by district-time. Neill, Menchaca, and Laws will battle for that third spot.

Joe Wood was fourth at 112# last year and was runner-up to Vance at the Brecksville Tourney. He's very erratic, but I think he'll have a hot weekend at Columbus. He just has to keep his self-confidence high. Neely should join him.

In the Southwest, Farler and Plummer will be qualifiers, but they're not really place material. Isleman will return to Columbus from the Eastern District with probably Byrd (Uhrichsville Claymont) as his partner. Watch, however, for Bosson (Coshocton) and Pryor (Burnesville).

In the Southeast, state veteran Benny Butcher will face stiff competition from Tompkins (Hillsboro) and Kalkreuth (Belpre). Still he should prevail and may win a match or two at Columbus.

132#

PROJECTED CHAMP: MIKE SCHNEIDER (WAUSEON)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 2. Burton (Highland) | 9. Stickley (St. Paris Graham) |
| 3. Ghezzi (Watterson) | 10. Marlow (Twinsburg) |
| 4. Byrne (Fairview) | 11. Maxwell (Uhrichsville Claymont) |
| 5. Chamberlin (Huron) | 12. Evans (Trenton Edgewood) |
| 6. Kuzniakowski (Chanel) | 13. Carpico (Jefferson Union) |
| 7. Studebaker (Springfield Northwestern) | 14. Woodruff (Vincent Warren) |
| 8. Poppenhouse (Coventry) | 15. Ledyard (Steubenville Cent. Catholic) |

This will be a classic weight class. The only people who really matter are the first five mentioned above. They stand head and shoulders above the rest, and their confrontations should be titanic.

I've taken the long-shot, Schneider, over four better known wrestlers. Still he was third at 126# last year losing (his only bout of the year) by 2 points in the semi-finals. He's been at peak form all year. Burton, on the other hand, is the defending champ, but has not wrestled well much of the year. He still has that unbelievable determination, but just doesn't seem quite as quick. I hate to pick against him, because it will just be one more spur for him to win it again. Ghezzi, the only junior of the five, is explosive, but has had trouble winning the close matches. He took Burton into overtime before losing, and may really be Schneider's toughest opponent. You'll have to watch out for Byrne, too. He lost to Ghezzi by one point, and is just now hitting peak form. Like all the seniors this is his fourth varsity year. Finally, we have Chamberlin who gave Jim Jordan his toughest battle last year. He may be a trifle small for 132, but his quickness should compensate for that. These five are so close, that any of them could win. One will probably be upset early, and let's hope the other four are all in different quarter-brackets.

In the Northeast, Kuzniakowski and Poppenhouse look to follow Byrne and Burton, but there are other challengers. Marlow and Kirk (Woodridge) seem to be the top two, but there are another half dozen who are close.

The Central District is dominated by Ghezzi, while the oft-injured Engert (DeSales) and Frass (Marion Pleasant) are contenders for the second spot. In the Northwest, the crucial third spot should be battled for by Papst (Ontario), Hiemstra (Milan Edison), and Van Meter (Lima Central Catholic). Ackerman (Cardinal Stritch) has been injured most of the year, but he could play an important part in the team chase with a quick recovery.

In the Southeast District, two-time state qualifier Jeff Woodruff has one last chance to win a match at States. He'll have to defeat Wilson (Washington Court House) and Koenig (Hillsboro) just to grasp that opportunity.

Finally, a fierce, but little-noticed battle will ensue for the two Eastern District spots. Right now Maxwell and Carpico have to be favored with Ledyard standing a close third. Any of these boys can compete with all, but the top five.

138#

PROJECTED CHAMP: SCOTT DUNCAN (MARION PLEASANT)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2. DeLande (St. Clairsville) | 7. Fairbanks (Kansas Lakota) |
| 3. Corrigan (Norwalk) | 8. Vandermark (St. Charles) |
| 4. Brown (Cardinal Stritch) | 9. Kasten (Toledo Swanton) |
| 5. Malley (Lewistown Indian Lake) | 10. Davis (Columbia Station) |
| 6. Kuzniakowski (Chanel) | 11. Miller (Philo) |

Scott Duncan is one of the finest senior wrestlers in Ohio. He is highly recruitable and will enhance his reputation with his second state title. DeLande, the runner-up to Duncan, last year will again be his chief challenger. DeLande is astonishingly tall for a 138# and makes excellent use of that leverage advantage.

Corrigan, Brown, Fairbanks, and Kasten will vie for the three spots allocated to the Northwest District. I would not be surprised to see state qualifier Fairbanks drop to 132# for that seemingly available third spot down there. Nonetheless, in terms of real depth, this is the best district in the state. Corrigan upset John Ramsey at the Kenston and has had a super year, while Brown tied my "AAA" choice at 138# -- John Cvetic. Kasten was second at the MIT so that each of these boys has excellent credentials. Look for the rapidly improving Corrigan to eke out a win in that district.

Unusually, the Northeast District is extremely weak at this weight class. I keep feeling that I'm overlooking some potential stars, but it's hard to know where. Davis and Kuzniakowski might capture a low place, but no one else here stands a chance of a trophy. It's strange how each year one weight class seems ignored and alone.

In the Southwest, state qualifier Malley should top that field. White (Trenton Edge-wood), Miller (Brookville), and Stamper (Middletown Madison) are other possibilities.

145#

PROJECTED CHAMP: DONALD DERR (CARDINAL STRITCH)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 2. Murphy (Ravenna Southeast) | 7. Amato (Akron St. Vincent) |
| 3. Seiter (Marion Pleasant) | 8. Sonnenberg (Napoleon) |
| 4. Rhonehouse (Holland Springfield) | 9. Wright (Wyoming) |
| 5. Missey (Norwalk) | 10. Hill (Kirtland) |
| 6. Baker (Versailles) | 11. Gardner (West-Milton) |
| | 12. Peters (Uhrichsville Claymont) |

To be honest, nobody really has the look of a state champion at this weight. I've gone with Derr because he is a consistent performer who wrestles a solid match every

time. Besides, he faces a difficult schedule all season that should toughen him for the tournaments. However, I might feel a bit more comfortable choosing him for a high place.

He'll really even have difficulty getting out of that rugged Northwest District. Missey is down from 155#, and had all falls at the Kenston Tourney. Rhonehouse has won both the Springfield and Rogers Tourneys and convincingly walloped Meredeith at the latter. These two should join Derr in Columbus. Right behind them are Sonnenberg (Napoleon) and Sanchez (Lima Bath), the former an upset winner over Rhonehouse recently. This should be an excellent competition.

In the Northeast state qualifier Murphy has been powerful racking up a high proportion of falls. Amato is consistent while Hill is brilliant, but erratic. After those three, it's chaos, though I do like Salchak (Hoban) and particularly McMicheal (Streetsboro).

In the Central District, Seiter will be moving up to this weight as Duncan drops to 138#. I think this will work well since Seiter looked drawn at the lower weight. Fifth at this weight last year, he has an excellent chance of moving up. This year there won't be any major size difference to overcome. Knight (St. Charles) could well join him from that district.

In the Southwest, state qualifier Baker heads a lackluster group. Wright and Gardner look the strongest of the rest, but that fourth spot is wide open. Perhaps Ackerman (Little Miami) or Scheibler (McNicholas) will rise to the occasion.

Peters looks to dominate the Eastern District with Rininger (Carrollton) at least one step behind. Both should qualify and Peters had a good chance of winning at least one bout at St. John's. I haven't a clue as to whom will get out of the Southeast District.

155#

PROJECTED CHAMP: DICK REED (RAVENNA SOUTHEAST)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2. Munafo (Huron) | 10. Biggert (Watterson) |
| 3. Field (Milan Edison) | 11. Massie (Wash. Court House) |
| 4. Herold (Olmsted Falls) | 12. Krieger (West Milton) |
| 5. Smithey (Pemberville Eastwood) | 13. Stevens (South Point) |
| 6. Goldsmith (Dayton Roth) | 14. Schandel (Carrollton) |
| 7. Scott (Sycamore Mohawk) | 15. Updyke (Chagrin Falls) |
| 8. Hord (Columbus DeSales) | 16. Moore (Chanel) |
| 9. Locher (Coventry) | 17. Calabrese (Toronto) |

This will be an interesting weight to watch with close competition and a diversity of types and styles of wrestlers. My choice is Southeast's outstanding senior Dick Reed. From the "sensational sophomore" of two years ago he has matured into a solid, hard-to-beat competitor. From within his own district he should be challenged most severely by Bruce Herold, the clever but erratic senior from Olmsted Falls. Herold scored a solid decision over soon-to-be state champion Jeff Miller in the sectionals last year, but then was eliminated in the districts. This year at the MIT, he lost to a non-entity in the first round, then won 7 bouts in the consolations. He's difficult to

figure. Locher, the MIT champ, is a solid journeyman able to capture that third place, but the fourth spot is wide open. Moore is yet another inconsistent performer who could score at Columbus if he could get there. He'll have to keep together to do so, because old rival Ken Sanger (Holy Name), Updyke (Chagrin Falls), Rochelle (Orange), and Green-slade (Aurora) are primed to gain a district trophy and a ticket to Columbus. Any Northeast qualifier should win at least one bout at the States.

Another excellent District will be at Toledo and it brings together four outstanding prospects looking for 3 spots. Munafo and Field are as close as you can get in ability, with Smithey a little bit of an unknown quality. Twice the Rogers Inv. winner, he, for some reason, did not get out of the sectionals last year. The fourth contestant -- right now staying home in March -- is state qualifier Scott. He won a lot of close matches last year, and it'll be interesting to see if he can do so again. Behind these four lurks Stinebuck (Lima Bath) and Recker (Ottawa-Glandorf). It'll take a little bit of a miracle for them to qualify.

The Southwest District is unsettled. Goldsmith defeated a two-time Kentucky champ recently, but is a complete unknown, otherwise. State qualifiers Krieger, DeCarlo (Chaminade-Julienne), and Tumbusch (Oakwood) are also back in that district. The latter two will have trouble fending off the threats of Brulport (Loveland), and especially Earhart (Tipp City). Still this district will have trouble winning many at Columbus.

I've placed Hord at 155# because I think he'll end up there, even though he wrestled 167# most of the year. Biggert and he should do well in the States -- assuming, that is, that they defeat Little (Olentangy).

An interesting battle shapes up in the Southeast. In an area where most qualifiers lose early at Columbus, two state quarter-finalists will clash for one spot. I'll go along with Massie over Stevens because of his slightly more demanding schedule.

In the Eastern District state qualifier VanCamp (Hannibal River) has been at a number of different weights and not too effective at any. I don't think he'll qualify at 155. Instead Calabrese, Jennings (Coshocton), and Blazek (Bellaire) should battle it out for the two spots.

167#

PROJECTED CHAMP: JAMEY BAILEY (RAVENNA SOUTHEAST)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2. Bulgrin (Akron Manchester) | 9. Cope (Germantown Valley View) |
| 3. Sheehe (Ontario) | 10. Kohler (Fairview) |
| 4. Kearns (Clear Fork) | 11. Jagush (Holland Springfield) |
| 5. Roy (Columbus DeSales) | 12. Krug (McNicholas) |
| 6. Miller (Coventry) | 13. Ziebold (Cardinal Stritch) |
| 7. Byers (Bishop Hartley) | 14. Saltzer (Orange) |
| 8. Cook (Oak Harbor) | 15. Henry (Versailles) |
| | 16. Yarosz (Toronto) |

Last year, this was one of the best weight classes at Columbus. There was drama, upsets, great comebacks, overtimes, and, most of all, good wrestling. Expect more of the same in 1982.

I've gone with state runner-up Bailey even though Bulgrin won an overtime criteria decision from him at Smithville. Bailey has the knack for always being in a match and, for example, came from far behind to tie Burrer 12-12 in the state semis, and then win in overtime. Bulgrin, a former Coventry wrestler, may have an opportunity to see a former teammate close up since Miller will be the third strong contender from the Northeast District. That leaves one spot open, which I believe Kohler will capture. However, Saltzer, Grucza (Trinity), and Calderone (Akron St. Vincent) will try and wrest it away.

The Northwest is also loaded. Two-time qualifier Sheehe and qualifier Kearns stand at the top of this group. Both are pinners, but Sheehe may need to work on conditioning. That third spot will see a close battle between Cook, Ziebold, and Jagush who have struggled against one another all year. I favor Cook, but obviously, the pairings will be crucial. Ziebold could help in the team chase by qualifying. Behind them stand such luminaries as Galati (Sandusky St. Mary), Stower (Milan Edison), and Ickes (Kansas Lakota)

Roy and Byers dominate the Columbus area and they both could place. I've been impressed with both, and see no serious challengers for them at this district.

The Southeast and Southwest Districts are weak. Cope was a quarter-finalist last year, but I can't get excited about his chances when viewed against his competition. State qualifier Henry was also in the quarter-finals at 155#, but he, too will be in trouble with this field.

175#

PROJECTED CHAMP: GARY MILLER (METAMORA EVERGREEN)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 2. Cyphers (Tipp City) | 9. Baker (Ravenna Southeast) |
| 3. Graf (Akron St. Vincent) | 10. Fox (Cardinal Stritch) |
| 4. Stevens (St. Thomas Aquinas) | 11. Calvert (Coventry) |
| 5. Flannegan (Ontario) | 12. Shepherd (Dayton Northridge) |
| 6. Rickard (South Point) | 13. Eastep (West Holmes) |
| 7. Majoy (Huron) | 14. Chapman (Olentangy) |
| 8. Soeder (Brooklyn) | 15. Barker (Uhrichsville Claymont) |

Last year in the state semi-finals Gary Miller defeated Barry Cyphers 5-2; only to lose the title the next day to the powerful Daryl Render. This year, if Miller can duplicate that victory over Cyphers, there will be no one who can snatch the crown away. These two seniors surely tower over the remaining competition so that there is little doubt that one or the other will win. Miller is my choice, but he must not back away as much as he did in the MIT finals or an unsympathetic ref may keep penalizing him.

The Cleveland area features state qualifier Soeder, but he is far from the best at this weight. I like the former 185#er Graf and little known Stevens better, but they have not had the pressure matches that Soeder won last year. Baker and Calvert will fight it out for that last spot.

The Central District is very weak and should be no factor at this weight -- unless Roy should choose this classification in which case he will be in the top five.

The Northwest District is a boiling stew of wrestlers. I've gone with Miller as champ, and Majoy and Flannegan as his torchbearers. Fox is yet another Cardinal Stritch wrestler on the borderline of qualification. If they pick up some early wins, the momentum engendered might carry people like Fox and Ziebold, at 167#, to Columbus. Other solid performers at this weight are Perkey (Ottawa-Glandorf), Fruth (Wauseon), and Boulton (Napoleon).

Tex Rickard will qualify for the third consecutive time at this weight. Yet, he twice has been "destroyed" in the first round despite a record of over 100 wins and only 3 other losses. It's about time he showed what he really can do.

In the Eastern District, state qualifier Eastep and Barker are the favorites to qualify. But Gibson (Toronto) down from 185#, and Unger (Coshocton) will be their chief challengers.

Finally, Cyphers stands alone in the Southwest. No one else there will win a state match -- though Shepherd (Dayton Northridge) and Johnston (Reading) are the best hopes.

185#

PROJECTED CHAMP: VINCE O'BRIEN (COLUMBUS DESALES)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 2. Whetsel (Metamora Evergreen) | 9. Wetzel (Marion River View) |
| 3. Parvin (Coventry) | 10. Readinger (Fairview) |
| 4. Long (Kenston) | 11. Terebuh (Bellefontaine) |
| 5. Zody (Wooster Triway) | 12. Ishmael (Oak Harbor) |
| 6. Hastings (Hillsboro) | 13. Hollern (St. Charles) |
| 7. Mayfield (Canal Fulton Northwest) | 14. Ridder (Eaton) |
| 8. Stavinski (Dayton Oakwood) | 15. Dague (Uhrichsville Claymont) |

Last year 185# was a boring and mediocre weight -- with the exception of Richards. This year another DeSales wrestler is my choice, but the weight is neither boring nor mediocre. In fact, it promises to be one of the most exciting in the tournament. I've chosen the inventive and resourceful O'Brien to win in a close battle with Whetsel and Parvin. These three really offer contrasting styles. O'Brien the reformed heavyweight, has good technique and speed, and from his heavyweight days realizes the necessity of six minutes of constant work. Whetsel, the big, blonde junior is tremendously powerful and seems to expect a quick and decisive end to his bouts. When he doesn't get it, he becomes a little disoriented and doesn't seem to know what to do. Parvin is a self-made wrestler who plugs along -- pushing and pushing until his opponent "cracks". It is this inter-play of styles that will fascinate the aficionado. Even after the top three there are some exceptional wrestlers well worth watching who would have been runner-ups last year.

The Northeast District is loaded. Besides Parvin, we have the undefeated state qualifier Zody, who lost to my 175# choice Gary Miller by one point in last year's first round. There is the powerful Long who missed state qualification by one point last year, and Mayfield who missed it by one bout. This quartet could all place. That is if the oft injured Readinger can be stymied. If his knee is solid, he will give any of my top four a real tussle. Blasens (Ravenna Southeast) continues that teams fine

group of upper weights, but no matter how much those team points would help, it's virtually impossible for him to beat out any of my top four.

I like four 185's in the Central District. With the seeming paucity of talent at 175#, one of them might strive to reduce to that class. As it is, O'Brien and Wetzel are my choices to qualify with Hollern a strong upset possibility. Sanborn (Whitehall) is really a long-shot. My nightmarish thought for the day would be a Whetsel vs. Wetzel televised final.

In the Southwest, state qualifier Stavinski should capture the district crown. However, both Ridder and Terebuh are rapidly improving, and Zink (Kenton Ridge) has been solid. It's unlikely, however, that they can compete with 185's already mentioned in this section.

The Northwest District will be dominated by Whetsel. Ishmael is my second qualifier, but that is certainly not a lock. Hoehn (Ottawa-Glandorf) and DeFellippi (Huron) have solid credentials as does Goad (Toledo Swanton). One figure to watch for is the sophomore DeMorris McDonald (Sandusky Perkins) who is coming on fast, and recently upset DeFellippi.

Hasting comes from Hillsboro, a team that has been dominating its section of the Ohio River. Last year he lost to Richards in the quarter-finals, and this year could be even more of a factor.

HVY.

PROJECTED CHAMP: JEFF REINER (TOLEDO SWANTON)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 2. Salyer (Urbana) | 8. Gibson (Big Walnut) |
| 3. Baker (Millbury Lake) | 9. Ousley (Willard) |
| 4. McDonald (Springfield Northeast) | 10. Russell (Teays Valley) |
| 5. Hall (Highland) | 11. Ludwig (Otsego) |
| 6. Beavers (Dayton Roth) | 12. Howell (Coshocton) |
| 7. Nease (Little Miami) | 13. Sowell (Wehrle) |
| | 14. Wooden (Canal Fulton Northwest) |

This is a weight class that will be dominated by two districts -- the Northwest and Southwest. My choice is big Jeff Reiner, a state qualifier and this year's MIT runner-up to my "AAA" choice, Mike Foor. While he lost that bout 11-9, he showed good technique and speed, and at one point had Foor nearly pinned.

Four of the next six choices are from the Southwest District, and all were state qualifiers in 1981. Salyer, the big junior, is showing great improvement; he should nip McDonald who'll be qualifying for the third time. Nease, sixth last year, is huge but lacks speed. Beavers, an "AAA" drop-out, does not wrestle strong competition so it's a real tribute that he has progressed so far. This quartet will eliminate Caylor (Loveland) who has a 15-1 record with 12 pins.

Reiner has a whole herd of heavyweights (if that's the right term) following him in the Northwest. I think Baker and Ousley are best, but Ludwig and Crockett (Clyde) cannot be overlooked. The emerging trio will be in the hunt for places.

About the only non-westerner I expect to do well is Birch Hall. A small, mobile heavy he must win with speed and guile. His big problem is inexplicable passivity when wrestling mountainous heavyweights one inevitably encounters. Instead of utilizing his skill, he crawls into a shell -- and loses. That happened in his semi-final match with Reiner at the MIT. Other heavies from the Northeast will be bracket fillers and could include Wooden, Baker (Brooklyn) and Fagerstrom (Manchester). Battaglia (Kenston) is one who might aspire to slightly loftier goals.

With only two spots open, Gibson, Russell, and Sowell face a numbers dilemma. It'll take a fluke of the draw for either of the two winners to capture a low place. State qualifier Howell faces the same problem; and, in fact, will face a battle in his own district from Zonker (Bellaire) and Maxwell (Uhrichsville Claymont).

TEAMS

1. St. Paris Graham -- The winning team the last several years has scored over 100 points, but this season no really outstanding teams are present. With this kind of fragmentation, a team with as few as three outstanding wrestlers could score 60 to 70 points and be state champ. St. Paris Graham fits precisely into that mold. The two Jordans and Owens should garner just enough points to take the title, but it's likely to be close.
2. Chanel -- A young team on their way to the 1983 State "AA" championship. However, they could win it a year early if things go right -- or if not, fall out of the Top Ten. Still you have to figure Ryba and Jaeger as finalists, and state qualifier Mazur to pick up points at 119#. The key is for two-time state placewinner Mariola to get hot at the relatively weak 126# class, and for Jim Kuzniakowski to come through at the very weak 138# weight. In addition, aid could come from Mike Kuzniakowski, Moore, and maybe the transfer Donovan.
3. Ravenna Southeast -- Strictly an upper weight team that depends on state qualifiers Murphy, Reed, and Bailey. This trio should account for close to 60 points and that might be good enough for first. One more qualifier who could score would really help, but Baker and Blasens are long shots.
4. Columbus DeSales -- This high choice will occasion some derision, but let's think about it. O'Brien, Roy, and Wood are all quality people who should make the top four -- or close to it. Hord can score at the state level -- and, maybe, Mulligan, too, since he's at such a weak weight in the Central District. If Engert returns, in good form, at 132#, they'll do well.
5. Toledo Swanton -- Two champions in Mossing and Reiner should give them something close to 45 points. If Kasten can emerge from that murderous 138# class in his district, he'll rack up some points, too. That means anything Delviscio or the others can add is pure gravy.
6. Cardinal Stritch -- A team that's difficult to figure. They have great depth, but so many of their kids are on the borderline of qualifying for Columbus. Derr, Brown, and Talbott are solid, but Reindel, McCrory, Peters, Ziebold, and Fox may or may not be able to help. Like DeSales a healthy 132# -- this time in the form of Fred Ackerman -- would be an enormous boost.

7. Olmsted Falls -- This team is virtually a definition of the term erratic. Who knows? Dieckman could be a champ, and Urry and Herold high place winners. French could score well and this team would be very close to the top. Then, again, none of this would happen and they'd end up 25th.
8. Fairview -- This team is doing a "one night stand" in "AA" as they'll return to "AAA" next year. However, Mendicino and Byrne may well be finalists, and Kohler should do well in this classification. If Readinger stays glued together, and Danson chips in at the weak 138# level, they'll make the top five.
9. Coventry -- Another team that will "do or die" in the upper weights. Parvin, Locher, Miller, and Poppenhouse are tough and experienced with potential for placing. Calvert, Patrick, and maybe even Stadvec could surprise with a Columbus berth. The key is to get their people out of the tough Northeast District.
10. Highland -- A perennial powerhouse and defending state champs, Highland still has a lot of questions to answer for so late in the season. Can Ricky Burton reach down and regain the form that made him state champ? Can Ron Leonard reach 105# and wrestle effectively because, if not, Columbus is probably just a dream? Can potential placewinners like Florian, Hall, and Bob Leonard make it to Columbus? Three affirmative answers would make Highland a real threat.
11. Marion Pleasant -- Give Duncan 25 to 30 points, and tack on a bunch more for Seiter. Then hope that Neely or Wilson or somebody can help with a few more. Duncan alone, though, won't make the Top Fifteen.
12. Manchester -- A team with potential to move up. Gainer and Bulgrin should be finalists, and Hooper and Fagerstrom show some promise. If Cain and Longwell could do something the top ten would be assured.
13. Uhrichsville Claymont -- A relatively weak district should help them send a half dozen to state. The vital question is whether they can score at that level. Best hopes are the Peters, the Maxwells, and Byrd, but Barker, Dague, and Ezzi could help.
14. Metamora Evergreen -- Two state champs virtually guarantees a top ten finish and Whetsel and Miller could well provide those kinds of points. However, there is no back-up reserve on this team.
15. Aurora -- A team with talented lightweights, Gerome, Studer, Gnabah, and Ewald all should have state aspirations. Greenslade is one other possibility at that level.
16. Kenston -- A team with good wrestlers at tough district weights. If France can make it at 112# and Long at 185# that might help get Asadorian, Battaglia, and Donaldson through. They're a long-shot team that could score well.

"A"

It seems to me that the entire concept of the "A" category needs to be re-evaluated. What has happened is that many of the better wrestling schools are now in "AA", severely weakening the quality of competition. There should be thought as to how we can increase the number of schools in this category who field wrestling teams; and, if that proves intractable, how we can divide schools so that more teams fall into a small team classification.

For example, in the Northeast District at least five "A" schools that wrestled will shortly become "AA". The two sectional procedure will thus be eliminated in favor of a single qualifying district. Unless some way of determining true second is used or better seeding procedures are implemented, this promises to be an unhappy and unfair development.

In terms of the 1982 wrestling, the level of competition will generally not be high. A few teams -- that emphasize the sport and wrestle an "AA" or "AAA" schedule -- will really dominate. However, the heart of wrestling -- the individual confrontation between relatively equal wrestlers -- will still be strong.

98#

PROJECTED CHAMP: MARK ADKINS (RICHMOND HTS.)

TOP CONTENDERS:

None

OTHER CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2. Woodland (Bishop Ready) | 7. Frietch (St. Bernard) |
| 3. Haywood (Licking Hts.) | 8. Mitchell (New London) |
| 4. Carter (Cadiz) | 9. Kern (Waterford) |
| 5. McFadden (Norwalk St. Paul) | 10. Kitchen (Edgerton) |
| 6. Henessey (Carey) | 11. Canfield (Mapleton) |
| | 12. Isaly (Beallsville) |

There is no question that Adkins will absolutely pulverize any "A" competitor in the state. In fact, there's little doubt that he would also win the state title at 105#, though not quite as easily.

The real pity is that the second and third best wrestlers exit from the same one-man district. It's a shame that both Woodland and Haywood can't both claim the trophies they deserve. As I see it, Woodland will outlast the Licking Hts. freshman Haywood, who was so impressive at the MIT. Haywood, though, will be back for the next three years. Block (Columbus Academy) is also a good 98#er in that Central District.

Carter should eliminate Kern and Isaly (Beallsville) in that one-man district, and should make the consolation finals. He is very tough. Frietch in the Southwest, though, shouldn't be counted on to do that well.

In the Northwest no one grappler stands out. McFadden, Henessey, and Mitchell should qualify, but they are not upset-proof. Kitchen, Kieffer (Arcadia), and Westrick (Ayersville) all could be the author of an upset. This district should probably place one boy.

PROJECTED CHAMP: DAN WRASMAN (DELPHOS ST. JOHN)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2. F. Noel (Arcadia) | 7. Russo (Cuyahoga Hts.) |
| 3. Roberts (Richmond Hts.) | 8. Nemeth (Cadiz) |
| 4. Riggle (Elmore Woodmore) | 9. Kerr (Lutheran West) |
| 5. Herman (Edgerton) | 10. Ward (Beallsville) |
| 6. O'Connell (Bishop Ready) | 11. Lang (Waterford) |

This is a weight that should pretty much be dominated by Northwest District wrestlers. I've gone with Wrasman -- down from "AA" -- because of his surprising quickness and strength. He should be challenged by Fred Noel, who seems to have really hit his groove recently. Right behind them in that district are state third, Herman, and state fourth, Riggle. With only three qualifying spots, anything can happen, though, right now that ferocious little cradler, Ricky Herman, may be in trouble. Waiting in the wings and hoping for a miracle are Lerma (Archbold) and Cramer (Bluffton).

Roberts and O'Connell each dominate their district, although state qualifier Russo could "catch" Roberts and deck him. I've really been impressed with Roberts this year. His match with Coghill was a classic which he pretty much dominated in a losing cause. If he can stay off his back (always his big problem), he can go far.

The Eastern District has done well at this weight as witnessed by Miller's third place finish last year. This year there are a half dozen boys with good records in that area. I've gone with Nemeth over the state qualifier Lang and the rugged Ward. Right behind them stand Boston (Bridgeport), Hellyer (Bergholz Springfield), and Border (Caldwell). All these claimants for just one spot. Look for one or two of these boys to move up to 112#.

112#

PROJECTED CHAMP: KENT CLAIR (ARCHBOLD)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2. Wohrle (Bishop Ready) | 8. Yarian (Newbury) |
| 3. Ward (Berkshire) | 9. Hampson (Lutheran West) |
| 4. J. Noel (Arcadia) | 10. Flores (Fremont St. Joe) |
| 5. McKinney (Cadiz) | 11. Richards (Glouster-Trimble) |
| 6. Miller (Springfield C. C.) | 12. Gischler (Licking Hts.) |
| 7. Sellers (Liberty Benton) | 13. Hall (Covington) |

This should be a close competitive weight featuring a number of tense, low-scoring bouts. I've chosen state runner-up Kent Clair to win, but he'll have to wrestle at the top of his ability. Again, the Northwest District has some real talent, and John Noel could well leap to the top of this weight class. He has been a state calibre wrestler for three years now. Sellers is my choice for the third spot, but only because Randy Herman (Edgerton) has a broken arm and probably will not compete. Sellers probably suffers from too soft a schedule. Other contenders include Flores, Long (Liberty Center), and Moorman (Plymouth).

Ward looks to be by far the best in the Northeast area with Yarian, Hampson, and Darrin White (Black River) fighting for that second spot. They don't match up well with the powerful kids from the Toledo area.

However, a wrestler with real placement potential is Brent Wohrle. He has not yet made 112#, but when he does, this "AA" state qualifier of last year will be a "load". An interesting point is that "A" state qualifier Richards really has no chance against Wohrle or his capable sub Watts. The next three at this weight -- a real prognosticator's nightmare -- are Joey Grashel (New Albany), Drew Gashler (Columbus Academy), and Fritz Gischler (Licking Hts.). No wonder I've been confused regarding this weight.

Another "AA" state qualifier last year, Rich McKinney, won a bout in Columbus and may be better than the fifth I've ranked him. If state qualifier Lang (Waterford) goes at 112#, he'll be McKinney's only real challenger in that district.

Finally, two more state qualifiers will vie for the one Southwestern spot. Both Miller and Hall have state experience, but Miller is by far the better. Maybe Hall will shoot for 105#.

119#

PROJECTED CHAMP: ANDY JOHNSON (ELMORE WOODMORE)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2. Weaver (Liberty Center) | 7. Thompson (Cadiz) |
| 3. Marczika (Bishop Ready) | 8. Kardules (New Albany) |
| 4. Gettig (Hawken) | 9. Holy (Ledgemont) |
| 5. Dawson (Bluffton) | 10. Heath (West Liberty Salem) |
| 6. Karnes (Edgerton) | 11. Pawlowski (Richmond Hts.) |
| | 12. Bonifas (Delphos St. John) |

Well, it's long-shot time. It's just one of those situations where you are deciding between Marczika and Weaver, eliminate both, and end up with Andy Johnson. No particularly rational reason, just a feeling that maybe this excellent free-styler will have a great week-end and win.

That Northwest District is again exceptional. Johnson will face 1980 state qualifier Weaver who was unlucky enough last year to have a district half-bracket that also contained the state champ and runner-up. The third spot will be a dogfight between Dawson, Bonifas, and Karnes with Pierce (Pioneer North Central) looking to sneak past both. I favor Dawson because of the tougher schedule he wrestles.

The Northeast District is weak with Gettig and Holy the logical choices. This is the kind of weight class where Mike Papouras drops in a Richmond Hts. wrestler and he nabs a state berth. Pawlowski just might be that kind of wrestler.

Marczika and state qualifier Kardules fight for the one Columbus spot, but it's an uneven battle. Marczika really is the logical choice to win this weight, and his chances will be enhanced if Ready gets hot and starts winning everything -- which they are certainly capable of doing.

Heath was a state qualifier last year, but a 20-7 rout by Johnson sent him home early. That experience is likely to be duplicated this year, unless Neely (Williamsburg) beats him out in the District.

Finally, Thompson should be yet another Cadiz wrestler in the hunt for a low place. If things go as forecast he would also be their fourth consecutive qualifier in that one man district. Steve Kosky (Bellaire St. John) is probably his most formidable challenger.

126#

PROJECTED CHAMP: LUKE DISABATO (BISHOP READY)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2. Galvan (Archbold) | 7. Harden (McComb) |
| 3. Cruz (Fremont St. Joseph) | 8. Franks (Stryker) |
| 4. Carabin (Norwalk St. Paul) | 9. McClure (W. Liberty Salem) |
| 5. MacLellan (Richmond Hts.) | 10. Wright (Cardinal) |
| 6. Parrish (Caldwell) | 11. Hinson (Licking Hts.) |

This weight and the next one are subjects of intense interest in the one-man Central District. Both Bishop Ready and Licking Hts. are maneuvering for maximum advantage with the outstanding wrestlers that they have. I am going to assume that they wrestle everyone "straight up" at the class they've been going at all year.

If the above assumption is true, Luke DiSabato should squeak into the throne room as yet another in a long line of DiSabato brothers and cousins who became state champions. But it won't be easy. The Northwest District has five outstanding "A" wrestlers going for just three spots. State qualifiers Galvan and Cruz are probably safe, but Carabin is "on the bubble" and Harden, in particular, will be an immense threat.

In Cleveland, state qualifier MacLellan has had a miserable season, but he may make more of a move now that he is back at the "A" level. Besides the weight is weak in this area with Wright (Cardinal) and Snyder (Smithville) as other possible contenders. Once at the State, MacLellan could redeem himself with a good weekend. When I saw him in December, he seemed, perhaps, less intense than one would expect.

Parrish should dominate the Eastern District with Kosky (Bellaire St. John) and Pryor (Beallsville) as distant threats, while in the Southwest it should be McClure defeating yet another Williamsburg wrestler -- Ed Ratliff.

132#

PROJECTED CHAMP: PAT SCHIRTZINGER (LICKING HTS.)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2. Schroeck (Bishop Ready) | 7. Kern (Waterford) |
| 3. Jaworski (Norwalk St. Paul) | 8. Cardamann (Ledgemont) |
| 4. Mayes (Galion Northmor) | 9. Heminger (Van Buren) |
| 5. Bonnay (Richmond Hts.) | 10. Ziessler (Blufton) |
| 6. Wycoff (New London) | 11. Adams (Bergholz Springfield) |
| | 12. Agerter (Hopewell-London) |

This may be the best weight class in "A", but we'll only see part of it during states week. That's because the title will be decided the week before when three of the four

best wrestle for the one spot allowed the Central District. It's really a shame that they all can't wrestle before the big crowds.

I've gone with two-time state place-winner Schirtzinger by the narrowest of margins. He's been in countless pressure matches, and will just barely defeat the exceptional Schroeck. The problem, though, is the nagging injuries that have dogged Schirtzinger all year. If it reduces his efficiency by as little as 10 percent, Schroeck will be the state champ. Not that Schroeck wouldn't deserve the title. On a very strong team he is one of the very best. This is all assuming, of course, that the coaches don't start playing games with their people. Last in this shuffle is the gallant Mayes who might place at Columbus, but can't get through that murderous district.

About the only person who has any chance of stopping the Central District champ is Scott Jaworski -- fourth last year at this weight. An outstanding junior he might benefit from a letdown by the Central winner. Wycoff will be his back-up along with Heminger, Ziessler, or Agerter.

The surprisingly good Bonnay and Cardaman lead the Cleveland group with Armstrong (Cardinal) a step or two behind.

Finally, a sharp three-way competition will also take place in the Eastern District where Kern, Adams, and Vermillion (Cadiz) will clash. The outcome could have a bearing on the team race.

138#

PROJECTED CHAMP: BRIAN SCHELL (BISHOP READY)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 2. Van Horn (Licking Hts.) | 7. Kieffer (Arcadia) |
| 3. Loze (Cardinal) | 8. Brooks (Black River) |
| 4. Rogers (Mapleton) | 9. Clymer (Columbus Grove) |
| 5. Kidder (Cadiz) | 10. Hall (Carey) |
| 6. Briseno (Ayersville) | 11. Hoffman (Newbury) |
| | 12. Sheets (Hammondsville Stanton) |

Another weight class that will be decided at the Central District Finals. I'm going with Schell, but it's no secret that Van Horn could easily spring a mild upset. With my luck Schroeck will beat Schirtzinger & Van Horn take Schell and I'll be wrong both ways.

Otherwise, this weight like 138# in "AA" is mysteriously weak this year. The Northeast District has fair depth, but the quality is suspect. I'm picking Loze over Rogers reversing the decision of a year ago. Mapleton has been switching Rogers and Rohr so it's difficult to say which will wrestle at this weight -- although they are both good. Brooks and Hoffman will look for that state alternate spot.

The Northwest is uncharacteristically weak with Briseno, the erratic Kieffer, Clymer, and Hall. Hall has been coming on fast and with Clymer's injury and Kieffer's inconsistency may easily win a place. Wolford (New London) who just can't seem to win the big one, Ernest (Cory-Rawson) and Wise (Hopewell-London) are other possibilities.

Kidder is yet another Cadiz wrestler who should cakewalk to Columbus. However, it will be much different once he gets there. He'll have problems winning a bout. If there is an upset, look for Sheets to pull it in that district.

145#

PROJECTED CHAMP: TOM RICHARDS (RICHMOND HTS.)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 2. Terry (Licking Hts.) | 7. Rose (Bellaire St. John) |
| 3. Groce (Bishop Ready) | 8. DeLuca (Northwood) |
| 4. Rohr (Mapleton) | 9. Smith (Tiffin Calvert) |
| 5. Giesige (Columbus Grove) | 10. Lemaster (Jamestown Greeneview) |
| 6. Blair (Berkshire) | 11. Guyer (Fremont St. Joseph) |

This should be a two man battle between a pair of excellent seniors in Richards and Terry. That is even more evident now when it appears likely that Groce will not compete. If so, Richards is my favorite because I believe he'll beat Terry on his feet. Besides, Mike Papouras got to watch Terry close-up when he beat Potokar last year, and he's had a year to devise appropriate strategies.

In Cleveland, Richards will be involved in a three-cornered battle with Rohr and Blair. The two winners should both place. Terry should stand alone if Groce is indeed out of the picture, although Queck (Columbus Academy) isn't bad. Of course, Happ (Bishop Ready) might prove to be an interesting substitute for Groce.

The two man battles should prevail in all three other districts. Lemaster and Jackson (Middletown Fenwick) should "duke" it out in the Southwest, while Rose and Barr (Cadiz) are the two best in the Eastern District.

In the Northwest, state qualifier Giesige and the powerful DeLuca should be 1-2. Then Campbell (Cory-Rawson), Smith, and Guyer should have one spot left to fight for. Again, though, as with 138#, the Northwest District lacks real firepower.

155#

PROJECTED CHAMP: JOHN POTOKAR (RICHMOND HTS.)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2. Smith (Bluffton) | 8. Martin (Columbus Grove) |
| 3. Wisener (Licking Hts.) | 9. Hammett (Columbus Academy) |
| 4. MacKinnon (Newcomerstown) | 10. Callard (Cincy County Day) |
| 5. Beatty (Bishop Ready) | 11. Kitchen (Edgerton) |
| 6. Zayakosky (Berkshire) | 12. Brumbaugh (North Baltimore) |
| 7. Milliken (Jamestown Greeneview) | 13. Beary (Columbiana) |

It seems to me that the only three that really count at this weight class are Potokar, Smith, and Wisener. They are a quantum jump ahead of the rest of the pack. Potokar is probably the best wrestler of the trio, but both Smith and Wisener will dwarf him. I think he has a better chance of beating Wisener than Smith, but, for the title, I believe he can beat either. Wisener is a real fooler. He doesn't look like much of anything, but he wins and wins -- and wins. Smith, just down from 175# is the runner-up at this weight from last year. If he can get comfortable with the weight he'll be a rugged opponent.

Beatty and Hammett both have good credentials, but they're stuck behind Wisener. Should he falter, Beatty could move quite nicely into a placement position.

Nobody can challenge Potokar in the Cleveland area. He can cruise to Columbus while Beary and Zayakosky battle it out. Zayakosky should emerge the winner.

Two boys going in opposite directions will be the contenders for the Southwest spot. Milliken down from 167# and Callard up from 145# should take care of the other competition. Winning even one bout at the state, though, will be tough.

After Smith, the quality in the Northwest falls off rapidly. So he, like Potokar, should have an easy time to Columbus. Besides those rated, Lora (McComb), Boff (Tinora), Bodenbender (Liberty Center), and Wiles (Pioneer North Central) should contest for a state spot.

The raw-boned MacKinnon will dominate the Eastern District. Whether he can harness that strength for a state place is not an outlandish possibility.

167#

PROJECTED CHAMP: MARK FALK (BLUFTON)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2. Brooks (Cadiz) | 7. Loushin (Richmond Hts.) |
| 3. Simonson (Black River) | 8. Hoffman (Liberty Center) |
| 4. Fee (Williamsburg) | 9. Langston (New Albany) |
| 5. Herman (Edgerton) | 10. Smith (Attica Seneca East) |
| 6. King (Bishop Ready) | 11. Black (Lutheran West) |

It seems clear that Mark Falk will shortly become one of the dozen or so wrestlers in Ohio history capturing three state titles. He has had yet another outstanding year (losing only to Elinsky of St. Edwards) and now has lost only three times in two years -- all to St. Ed's competitors. Perhaps what he'll most be remembered for is his title last year when, with an injured shoulder, he defeated the rugged Porter to give Blufton the team title by one-half point.

The one unknown for Falk is two-time "AA" place winner and All-State runningback, Mike Brooks. Now in the "A" classification, Brooks is the heart of a rugged Cadiz team. He is not an impressive looking wrestler, but he gets the job done. His only losses have been to "AAA" Tluchowski by one point. Vance Fabry (Bellaire St. John) is good here, but would be better off going back to 175# for a state berth.

Simonson should head the Northeast District, but I've been very impressed by the sophomore Loushin. Two older brothers were excellent athletes, and this boy looks like a star over the next few years. He could surprise and place this year.

One of the few legitimate state contenders from the Southwest District is Jeff Fee. He lost last year to state champ Coleman 9-9, 5-0 OT in the first round. He's ready to place.

The Central District for one of the few times really does not have a strong threat for state honors. King and Langston will contest for the one spot, but neither can hope for any more than a low place.

Behind Falk in the Northwest are a large group of people -- all of whom have been dominated by the state champ. Herman and Hoffman would be my current favorites for the other two qualifying spots, but Vonderwell (Delphos St. John) is a dark-horse to watch. Other possibilities are Smith, Dunlap (Elmore Woodmore), and Whistler (Crestview).

175#

PROJECTED CHAMP: KEITH EDMONDSON (NEWBURY)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 2. Scheerer (New London) | 7. Sanning (Cincy County Day) |
| 3. Cordle (Licking Hts.) | 8. Diamond (Ayersville) |
| 4. Coleman (Fremont St. Joseph) | 9. Hiltibran (West Liberty Salem) |
| 5. Mack (Cuyahoga Hts.) | 10. Wertz (Smithville) |
| 6. Lenox (Elmore Woodmore) | 11. Nice (Bergholz Springfield) |

This should be an outstanding competition. The top five are where it's at, and they each have outstanding credentials. Edmondson, third at 185# last year, is my choice to take the title, but it will be close -- very close. The big senior from Newbury will have to beat a defending state champ, and can expect a tough bout in every round.

Scheerer has been devastating as of late, and if he can avoid the upset bug (which he failed to do last year) he should be a finalist. Last year he lost to Falk by two points in the District semi-finals and then got decked in the consolations. He is tough enough to win it all. Defending state champ Coleman will also exit from that district though his choice of weights is still not clear. I expect the junior to stay at 175# because he has a possibility of repeating at this weight. No way do I see him defeating Falk at 167#. Coleman had eight losses going into the state meet, and was close to elimination in the first round before pulling out a 9-9 tie and winning in overtime. He then won a 2-1 squeaker in the semi-finals before defeating Smith in the finals. It may not work out that well this year. Lenox (Elmore Woodmore) is my choice and his speciality is the upset. He was the one who surprised Scheerer last year, and upset state runner-up Steve Smith this year. Diamond (Ayersville), Hoen (Delphos St. John), and Dillon (McComb) will be the disappointed also-rans in that district.

The Central District will provide Edmondson with a formidable opponent in the person of state qualifier John Cordle. He was expected to score at the state last year, but was beaten out in the first round by Schwartz of Lincolnview and eliminated. Any victory would have given his team the state crown. There's no question that this year he'll score heavily.

The fourth Edmondson challenger will be from his home district as Mack has been outstanding all year. With Shiowaza (Richmond Hts.) no longer competing these two should sweep to Columbus with a chance of meeting again in the finals. Wertz (Smithville) is just too far behind them to offer much of a challenge.

State qualifier Hiltibran will be an underdog to Sanning for the one berth given the Southwest District. Sanning's a pinning machine with a 90 percent fall ratio. He'll have trouble maintaining that with the competition he'll see at Columbus.

PROJECTED CHAMP: JOE THOMPSON (BISHOP READY)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 2. Puder (New London) | 6. Hoog (Middletown Fenwick) |
| 3. Wegesin (Delphos St. John) | 7. Keller (Pioneer North Central) |
| 4. DeMeo (Richmond Hts.) | 8. Vaughn Fabry (Bellaire St. John) |
| 5. Jenson (Independence) | 9. Kutsko (Jackson-Milton) |
| | 10. McCain (Ottawa Hills) |

Another weight class that should produce some outstanding action. I'm really excited about the three-way battle between state runner-up Thompson and state runner-up Puder with the exceptional Wegesin tossed in for good measure.

Thompson lost 13 times last year, but most were to the awesome Richards. He had an exceptional year so far this season, and with the rugged schedule Bishop Ready wrestles, he has to be the slight favorite. However, I really like Puder's attitude. He couldn't make the team at 167# last year, so he moved past Scheerer and Wycoff and wrestled courageously to capture a second place at heavyweight. Now at 185# he has been annihilating opponents. I don't think he's anywhere near what his potential is, but it still may be good enough for a state crown. Wegesin, the third member of this triumvirate, is recovering from a broken ankle(?). Last year in "AA" Wegesin did well, but this year he started off with a real flourish. He exits from the same district as Puder so Thompson will have to beat them both to fulfill my prediction. The Northwest also features Keller, McCain, and Miller (Columbus Grove).

Fabry and Hoog dominate their respective districts. I may be underestimating Fabry by placing him eighth. He and his twin brother are both powerful wrestlers.

In the Northeast District state qualifier DeMeo, "AA" district qualifier Jenson, and long-time Warren star Kutsko will battle for two spots. I think DeMeo will make it easily and Jenson will win because of his wider experience. Jenson, however, hasn't gotten as many matches at Independence as he did at Chagrin Falls, but I'm sure his fine coach Joe O'Brien is pushing him plus he has Gold to work out with. In the Hawken Final, for example, he pinned in 13 seconds.

HVY.

PROJECTED CHAMP: JOHN O'GRADY (BISHOP READY)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 2. Aldridge (Springfield Central Catholic) | 6. Risner (Cory-Rawson) |
| 3. Lloyd (Stryker) | 7. DeLong (Bergholz Springfield) |
| 4. Bartholomew (Berkshire) | 8. Gold (Independence) |
| 5. Jacoby (Archbold) | 9. Fleming (Blufton) |

This is really a weak weight class as it is presently constituted -- probably the weakest in "A". O'Grady should romp through the bracket, possibly with three consecutive falls. However, I think some of the 185's -- especially in the Northeast -- may choose to wrestle heavyweight. Puder, of course, did that last year, and if his coach,

Bob Hasseman, thinks Puder would do better against O'Grady, he could move up -- but I doubt it. Puder is probably better off showcasing his skills at 185#. However, both Keller and McCain have wrestled at heavyweight with some success and may choose that easier route to the State.

Aldridge, ranked #2, was a state qualifier last year, but was pinned by both Puder and Weaks. With the current field, he should do better.

Bartholomew and Gold in the Cleveland area are both small, and Hamilton (Richmond Hts.) might scrap his way into a state spot. He won probably the biggest dual meet bout of the year (and didn't even make wrestler of the week).

The Northwest heavies keep pinning one another so no real pattern has been established. Lloyd and Jacoby look reasonably good, but Risner or Fleming can certainly be expected to challenge. A good looking long-shot might be Sanchez (Gibsonburg).

This is a weight class that has traditionally been very weak in "A" (with the exception of last year). This pattern continues in 1982.

TEAMS

1. Bishop Ready -- This team probably has too much firepower for any other "A" team in the state. In fact, if they qualify, their 98#, 132#, and 138#, the tourney will be a runaway with Ready winning by more than St. Ed's does in "AAA". They are just beautifully balanced and could take as many as 10 to St. John's. They'll soon be calling this team St. Edwards South.
2. Richmond Hts. -- Make no mistake about it -- this team would have been state champs last year. Adkins is a sure winner and Richard and Potokar are my favorites. Mix in good performances from Roberts, Bonney, and DeMeo and get that youngster Loushin going, and you'll have a bushel load of points. If state qualifier MacLellan can right himself they still could take the team title. What they need most is for Licking Hts. to have a good district and keep some of Ready's wrestlers at home.
3. Licking Hts. -- Injuries have really struck at the inner-fiber of this team. You have to figure Wisener, Terry, and Cordle to qualify and then it's up to Haywood Schirtzinger, and Van Horn to beat tough Ready opponents. If they get six to the state and pairings like Blufton had last year, they could still be state champs.
4. Cadiz -- Eastern District wrestling is generally not rated as strong, but Cadiz has the team to change some minds. They'll have to bring lots of people to Columbus to get fourth, but that is certainly a possibility. If the low weights can generate momentum this team will rank higher than any other Eastern District squad since the early 1940's.
5. Blufton -- The defending champs were "savaged" by graduation, but they kept their best with Mark Falk. Concede him his third state title and make Smith a finalist, and then start looking for more help. Perhaps Dawson or the Ziesslers will help, but they are all in tough weight classes. A key might be Fleming at the weak heavy-weight classification.
6. New London -- A disappointment last year, they still retain a lot of horsepower. Puder, Scheerer, and Scott Wycoff should qualify and score in Columbus. If Mitchell and Wolford could help they might make fourth. Osterland at the weak 155# level is a long-shot to gain a state spot.

7. Berkshire -- A team that is making progress and only one big star to move even higher. As it is Ward, Blair, Zayakosky, and Bartholomew are their standouts. If they can get them to Columbus they can score there.
8. Fremont St. Joseph -- A perennial powerhouse that has depth, but not potential champs. Coleman is at a tough class and is unlikely to repeat. Cruz, Guyer, and Flores could do well and Weickert might help. Too many ifs to rate this team much higher.
9. Delphos St. John -- This team could possibly reach 5th if Wegesin and Wrasman win, and Vonderwell, Bonifas, and Hoen can get to Columbus. Since it's their first time in "A", they're kind of a mystery team, but they have a good looking squad.
10. Archbold -- Clair, Galvan, and Jacoby have excellent credentials and possibilities. If somebody like Lerma could make it a quartet to the state, they could move up even more.
11. Arcadia -- Both Noels could be finalists and that's a lot of points. Kieffer has got to get hot, and somebody else has got to pull a shocker, but the top ten is a possibility.
12. Norwalk St. Paul -- A three team of Jaworski, Carabin, and McFadden. If people like Mack or Rosport can come through, they'll do well.