

1981

HIGH SCHOOL

WRESTLING

FORECAST

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INTRODUCTION

I use this space to try and bring attention to issues that I think need to be discussed to help improve high school wrestling in this state, and to make some overall judgments as to the quality of wrestling we'll be seeing between now and the end of the season. In 1981, at least, it seems that the first category has more than the usual number of items.

First, of course, is my continuing concern about the weight certification rule now in force. What a shoddy system that allows boys to wrestle at weights they never have truly made. What's worse, in December and January, boys are worrying more about weight classes than wrestling. If you've made 138# in December, the temptation is irresistible to cut to 134#. So, instead of stopping excessive weight reduction, it is actually encouraging additional weight losses. I must have personally been contacted by 50 coaches trying to place their wrestlers at the best (least competitive) weight class. Remember, with the old certification system we gave two pounds in January after you made the original weight, not before you made it.

Second, is the dilemma dealing with the "A" classification. The loss of Sandusky St. Marys, Bishop Ready, Jonathan Alder, and other former "A" powerhouses has severely depleted the stockpile of outstanding wrestlers in this classification. It cheapens the concept of state champion, if the competition is not of a high calibre. Alternatives need to be examined as to how best to improve this situation. Some options might be:

- a) Take all high schools that wrestle, and then divide this group into three equal parts.
- b) Recombine "A" and "AA".
- c) Use the football classifications in the following manner: Division 5 = "AAA", Division 3 & 4 = "AA", Division 1& 2 = "A".

Third, we ought to look at the rule that allows wrestling just once a week. It's has the effect in many areas of discouraging dual meet competition in favor of a constant diet of tournaments. This is bad for a number of reasons:

- a) Casual fans prefer dual meets because it provides constant, easy-to-understand entertainment.
- b) Dual meet competition encourages coaches to work with the entire team, and develop more of a team concept. Most tournaments can be won with six or seven excellent wrestlers.
- c) I think we may be reaching a point where some boys are "over-wrestled". Sixty bouts in a year is a lot; and that, along with making weight, can cause a boy to go stale. More and more in my reports I see advantages to boys who miss parts of a season due to illness or injury. They seem fresher, more ready to wrestle.

As I mentioned last year, the real object of these annual reports is two-fold in nature: 1) To acquaint everyone with the cast of characters at each weight class, and 2) to stimulate discussion in the state tourney process from sectionals through states. The last two years, as an added bonus, they've also been relatively accurate. Don't count on that in 1981. This is not a strong year in Ohio wrestling -- like I thought it might be last year. There's still the

super-star layer like Bartalone, Kasser, Wright, and Horning; but the next group-
ing -- potential stars -- is thin this year. Very few times in selecting champ-
ions was I able to do so with only a moment's thought. The competition is too
closely bunched to be allowed that luxury this year.

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
sectional or district tourneys they attend this year, and the same item for tour-
naments they might participate in next year.

"AAA"

This is the second consecutive year that "AAA" wrestling strength is below normal here in Ohio. The overall level of competition is adequate, but there are few superstars with potential to become collegiate All-Americans. You can anticipate a lot of upsets during the tournaments, and situations where District thirds and fourths win State titles. With the level of competition being so close -- pairings, illness, and just plain luck will play a major part in the crowning of many champs.

A developing trend lately has been the increasing dominance of the Northeast District (Cleveland and Akron sites). With 11 champs and 21 finalists (not including the loss of three sure finalists -- Kalski, Cantini, and Brnilovich -- by disqualification) and 20 finalists the year before, this area has been demolishing downstate competition. I anticipate some lessening of this trend in 1981.

98#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Dave McFarland (North Olmsted)

TOP CONTENDERS

2. Prommersberger (Fitch)
3. Harmon (Gahenna Lincoln)
4. Romero (Lorain Southview)
5. Peters (Oregon Clay)
6. Perrino (Cincy St. X)
7. Coghill (Nordia)
8. Arthur (Lima Shawnee)
9. Franks (Tallmadge)
10. Belfiore (Maple Hts.)

Generally, 98# is a weak weight dominated by sophomores; and, perhaps, a handful of juniors. This year it's a totally different story. Four of my top six picks are seniors and all six have previous state experience. In fact, this is one of the deepest, most competitive weights in the state.

My choice for the crown is the junior, Dave McFarland, the fourth of the highly successful clan from North Olmsted. In the past, both Brian and Joe really blossomed in their junior year; and I'm looking for the talented Dave to do the same. The only disquieting factor was his relatively shaky performance at the Medina Tourney, where his quarter-final and semi-final bouts were extremely close.

While any of the next five contenders are potential winners, Prommersberger has especially good chances. He has had no close matches this year, and lost a narrow 2-0 bout in the state quarter-finals last year. He looks very ready. He'll need to be with both Coghill and Franks in his District, along with the tough Bennett (North Canton) challenging for a state berth. Coghill, in particular, is a fine wrestler. However, this very experienced sophomore still seems to have problems with taller opponents, and loses his poise when things like referee's calls go against him.

Harmon beat Cordiak last year before running into Horning. He's by far the best in the Central District, and should have things his own way until the State meet. Nick Perrino is in pretty much the same situation in the southwest area. This

nearly six-foot tall boy may move to 105#; but, if he stays at this weight, he will be hard for the much smaller guys to deal with. His only loss was to Harmon. Other potential State qualifiers from that area are Von Allman (Oak Hills), Hinkle (Talawanda), and Betsch (LaSalle). Incidentally, if Perrino goes to 105#, his younger brother could take his place as a State qualifier at this weight.

As tough as some of these Districts are, none can compare to the furious struggle that will ensue in the Cleveland area. Besides McFarland and Romero, there are another half-dozen contenders for the two remaining spots. Besides Belfiore, such solid wrestlers as Thompkins (Brecksville), Killius (Bay), and Thomas (Mayfield) stand out. Thompkins, in particular, has had an outstanding season; but his small stature and relative inexperience weigh against him. What helps him most is a great fighting heart. Matos (Lorain) and Mendicino (Fairview) are long-shots. It is interesting that Romero, Killius, and McFarland exit from the same sectional; and this could make district pairings very tough for other sectional winners.

105#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Luke Edwards (Galloway Westland)

TOP CONTENDERS

2. Robusto (Walsh)
3. Cordiak (Maple Hts.)
4. Peterjohn (St. Edwards)
5. Smith (Nordonia)
6. Greer (Tiffin)
7. Farber (West Chester Lakota)
8. Pizzino (Field)
9. Auletta (Mayfield)
10. Gray (Kent Roosevelt)
11. Saeger (Marietta)

A rather weak weight class in a very unsettled condition. In fact, this class is one of the last I wrote in "AAA" because I, frankly, had little idea as to the best choices all the way down my top ten list.

I've gone with senior Edwards because his only loss last year was an upset in the first round of the state, and because he has good genes (two older brothers were State champs). My guess is that it will come down to a matter of pairings because we have every conceivable style represented here. Based on that premise, Edwards is a good choice because he matches up well with everyone. A problem is his lack of competition in Columbus with Brewer (Reynoldsburg), Gundling (Worthington), and Nichols (Upper Arlington) far behind in that contest for the second State berth.

The Akron District, on the other hand, is loaded with possible place winners. Robusto has been out nursing an injured shoulder for nearly six weeks, and how much that has hurt his conditioning is hard to determine. He must be close to 100 percent to beat off the challenges of Pizzino, Gray, and especially the freshman Smith. A former age group world champ, Smith has all the tools but maturity. His problem will come with the super-strong 105's. Pizzino comes from a school where nobody can push him in practice, and this will hurt his chances. Patterson (North Canton) is a good long-shot in this district.

The Cleveland area is just as muddled. Cordiak is a great rider, but the question remains whether he can score enough to overcome a lead by a solid competitor.

His first-round state loss did not show him in top form. Peterjohn, only a sophomore, has been plagued by a series of injuries; but that has probably had its advantages. He hasn't had to struggle to make weight every week, so he should be relatively fresh for the tournaments. The feisty Auletta, Redman (Euclid), Coates (Brush), and Pierson (Elyria) could also challenge. It seems that you could name almost every 105 in the District with a chance, because Lis (North Olmsted), Caruso (Bedford), and Mulhall (St. Joseph) have also shown flashes of brilliance. It will be a real struggle to exit the Cleveland District at this weight for a trip to St. John's Arena.

Farber in the Southwest and Saeger in the Southeast dominate their particular regions. Much the same can be said for Greer in the Northwest, although Higgins (Anthony Wayne) and Nelson (Lexington) may have a slender chance. All in all, a weight with no superstars, but brimming with possibilities. In the Southwest, Renner (Troy) could play a major role in the team competition with a good district performance.

112#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Don Horning (Walsh)

TOP CONTENDERS

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2. Berry (Maumee) | 6. McCarthy (St. Eds) |
| 3. Kent (Sylvania Southview) | 7. Ruby (Fairfield) |
| 4. Sinko (North Olmsted) | 8. Randall (Akron North) |
| 5. Velimesis (Revere) | 9. Miller (Louisville) |
| | 10. Poling (Lebanon) |

This is another superior weight class containing 13 boys with previous state tournament experience. This should be one of the most exciting weight classes in Columbus, and should feature many high scoring bouts.

If Don Horning were a little bigger, there is no question in my mind that he would dominate this weight class. He is perpetual motion on the mat --- always looking for the fall, and is willing to take risks to achieve that aim. His only problem is that he is too small at 112#, and he has to be more selective in the moves he is willing to attempt. Last year he was 40-0 with over 30 pins because he had speed, quickness, and great strength --- a combination leading to a 98# state title. This year some of those strength moves will put him on his back when he faces a bigger boy. Still, he is an intelligent wrestler and should make the necessary alterations to keep winning.

Toledo will send a terrific tandem of 112's, both of whom were in the top four at Columbus last year. Berry is a large 112# with plenty of experience and free-style skills. Last year he was not as aggressive as he should have been, and it is this trait which will hurt him against the crop of "goers" at this weight. Kent, on the other hand, is much in the Horning mold. He scores a lot, goes six full minutes, and really punishes his opponent. DeVilbiss (Mansfield) and McCarty (Sandusky) trail far behind these two boys in the Northwest District.

Sinko and McCarthy lead the Cleveland delegation. Sinko went to States at this weight last year, even though he should have been at 105# (he couldn't beat out Joe McFarland). He's great on his feet and rugged on the mat, too. He has been injury prone in the past. McCarthy, 2nd at 98# last year, is a fine technician who will wrestle a succession of steady matches. He was a huge 98#er last year,

which helped him win a lot of close matches. He doesn't have that advantage this year. After these two, there is a quantum jump in quality down to boys like Simon (Maple Hts.) and Philips (Brunswick).

Besides Horning, the Akron District has just an outstanding number of fine 112's. I really like the short, stocky Velimesis who battled Horning all the way at the Revere Tourney before losing 16-10. That is his only defeat. The brilliant sophomore Todd Randall is erratic, but Horning beat him only 10-7 in a December dual. There are at least three other wrestlers who could place at Columbus, if only they could get there. Tim Miller, a state quarter-finalist last year, looks like he'll be shut out in this district in 1981; and Mike Miller (Kent Roosevelt) and Bryan Newhart (Beloit West Branch) will probably endure the same fate. Zuccaro (Nordononia) and Theiss (Glen Oak) have just been victims of bad timing.

Brian Ruby placed as a freshman, and it seemed to herald the onset of a brilliant career. Well, it hasn't worked out that way, and now he's a senior and down to one last chance. He'll lead three other 1980 State qualifiers -- Poling, Bell (West Chester Lakota), and Griffen (Franklin) -- into Columbus. Unfortunately, he'll need a ton of luck just to make the top four, while his colleagues won't place.

Nobody in Columbus can meet this competition, but Dawson (Gahenna Lincoln), Hoess (Upper Arlington), and Martin (Northland) will battle it out in their District for a chance to fill out the bracket sheet. Rowland (Marietta) will represent the Southeast, and he is not that bad. He could win a bout.

119#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Chris Mears (North Canton)

TOP CONTENDERS

2. Ramsey (Westlake)
3. Budnar (Euclid)
4. Funk (Cloverleaf)
5. Kahl (Oregon Clay)
6. Elliott (Nordononia)
7. Edelinsky (Lake Catholic)
8. Notte (Madison)
9. Picolo (Springfield North)
10. Landrum (Gahenna Lincoln)

After all the outstanding 112's, I'm kind of scrambling to come up with a lot of good 119#'s. Mears, only a junior, is my choice; but I don't think it'll come easy. Up two weight classes and recovering from a motorcycle accident, Mears possesses an abundance of talent. Quick and brilliant on his feet, he will have trouble with strong 119's.

Five of my top ten are from the Cleveland District, so it's obvious at least one won't make it. Ramsey was the best-looking sophomore I saw in "AAA" last year. He was 3rd in the state losing to Dane Tussel in the semis. This year, though, he's had problems. First, he looked a little buttery at 126#; and then contacted mononucleosis. I'm assuming he will recover completely, but he'll need that competitive spark, too, to get to Columbus.

Budnar is twice a state qualifier and knows how to win. Funk is an outstanding wrestler, but weak on the bottom. Edelinsky and Notte have state experience,

but will be challenged by Gonzalez (Lorain Southview) and Beaune (North Olmsted). Getting out of the Cleveland District may well be more difficult than placing at Columbus.

In the Toledo state qualifier Kahl seemed to read the hand-writing on the wall. With Berry and Kent at 112#, he was a long-shot to make the state at that weight so he did the smart thing and moved to 119#. I believe he'll do well there and possibly garner a low place. Darson (Mansfield) or Scott (Elida) should be his main competition in that district.

Elsewhere around the state I see only an occasional good wrestler with credentials possibly solid enough for a low place. I'm talking about Picolo, Tiller (Cincy St. X), and Roseman (Mt. Healthy) in the Southwest; Saeger (Marietta) and Crow (Dover) in the Southeast; and Landrum in the Central region. Real long shots might be Bennett (Sycamore), Rice (Hilliard), and Cline (Barberton).

126#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Pat Welch (St. Edwards)

TOP CONTENDERS

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 2. Johnson (Pataskala Watkins Memorial) | 7. Townsley (Oak Hills) |
| 3. Vance (Nordononia) | 8. Bell (Cloverleaf) |
| 4. Bryson (Medina) | 9. Gianatassio (Dayton Wayne) |
| 5. Klempay (Walsh) | 10. Bostrom (Jackson) |
| 6. Chambers (St. Ignatius) | 11. Chandler (West Chester Lakota) |

An interesting weight that features a diversity of styles and personalities. I've gone with the two-time place winner Pat Welch -- who has already beaten Klempay, Vance, and Chambers. This is the fourth straight year I've picked a St. Eds boy at this weight, and have a 67 percent batting average so far (Foldesy and Mason winning and Oddo finishing 3rd). If Welch does win, it'll be the first time that three different boys from the same school have won consecutively at the same weight.

Johnson is up from "AA" where he finished 2nd at 119#. A flashy wrestler, he may make enough mistakes to lose to solid seniors; but he can score from any position so he's never out of a match.

The Akron District is loaded with outstanding 126's. Vance and Bryson are two outstanding juniors, and Klempay has lost only to Welch (3 times) and Bryson this year. Yet each has had a weakness. Both Vance and Bryson have had trouble winning big matches in the past, but anybody who saw Bryson at Revere or Vance at Brecksville have to believe that that has been cured. Klempay needs a better takedown and is recovering from mono, but his fighting spirit is unsurpassed. If one of these three should stumble, Bostrom, Culpepper (Talmadge) -- twice a state qualifier in West Virginia -- and Seals (Cuyahoga Falls) or Feriance (Perry) are poised to grab a state berth. A very fine district at this weight.

Chambers and Bell both look like state calibre wrestlers to me, with both certainly having chances to place. Bell beat Welch last year on a late 5-point move, but I don't think he'll do it again. Chambers is a big 126#, and is a

real dark-horse and good college prospect. Matteo (Lake Catholic), Byrne (Fairview), and Schwertner (Chardon) should be in the fight for the fourth district spot.

Townsley and Gianatassio lead a weak Southwestern contingent. The latter boy missed all of last year due to injury, and so it's hard to rate his progress. Most papers down there are concentrating on his female teammate at 98# rather than his own progress. A real dark-horse might be Chandler, if he can make the weight. Becknell (Fairfield) may well be the fourth qualifier.

The Toledo area seems quite weak with no standouts at this weight. Ibarra (Whitmer) is rated best there, but he was not impressive at the Revere Tourney.

132#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Greg Wright (St. Edwards)

TOP CONTENDERS

2. Wenger (Copley)
3. Britton (E-N)
4. Zingale (North Olmsted)
5. Magliano (Moeller)
6. McIntire (Maumee)
7. Keller (Reynoldsburg)
8. Behm (Walsh)
9. Creps (Bay)
10. Dondero (Sylvania Northview)

This is a rather weak weight class. I was able to come up with six prospects for places, but after that I just kind of ran out of names. Greg Wright, 3rd and 2nd the past two years, should dominate this weight. He is super-quick, immensely skilled, and indomitable in battle. Three of his five career losses are to Dane Tussel. Finally, his only weakness is that he is easily a 126# and will be small for the weight. He's one of the best college prospects in the state.

Wenger is big and strong, but not nearly quick enough to beat Wright. He has beaten Todd Winter -- state runner-up in "AA" -- three times this year. Behm and possibly Shatzer (Canton McKinley) are guesses for the other two Akron spots.

Cleveland is the only area with decent depth at this weight. Britton, Zingale, and Creps are all solid journeymen who could place at the state level. I would not be surprised to see them all place at Columbus.

Around the rest of state it's pretty much chaos. Nobody else has taken charge and shown himself to be a legitimate contender at this weight. Expect some falls and superior decision in the early rounds at Columbus in this weight class.

138#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Jim Heffernan (St. Edwards)

TOP CONTENDERS

2. Troutman (Hilliard)
3. Sabatino (Mayfield)
4. Glasscott (Nordia)
5. Helsing (West Chester Lakota)
6. Gross (North Canton)
7. Jones (Sandusky)
8. DeLong (Toledo St. Francis)
9. Welsh (Walsh)
10. King (Tallmadge)

This should be an interesting weight class, because it pits boys with a wide array of skills against one another. I've gone with the junior, Jim Heffernan, who, like Wright, is really one weight class too high. However, he has been the most impressive wrestler on the St. Ed's team -- no small feat -- and his improvement has been dramatic. Except for his physique, he's a college wrestler right now; and his machine-like performances allow for no errors. If he joins Welch and Wright as champs, St. Ed's will become only the second "AAA" team since 1951 to sweep three consecutive weight classes. Maple Hts. did it twice -- in 1969 with Hicks, Milkovich, and Calendar; and in 1962 with Sadowsky, Sadowsky, and Peritore. Incidentally, in 1951 West High had four straight champs followed by a second and then two more champs in seven consecutive classes. In "A", Cardinal, two years ago, had three straight titleists.

Troutman is an outstanding senior who will dominate the Central District. You can be sure he'll be looking for revenge after his quick defeat at the hands of Heffernan last year.

State runner-up Sabatino will join Heffernan as the dominant forces in Cleveland at this weight. As he did last year, Sabatino has had an erratic dual meet season; but, as usual, he is very tough in tournaments. His only problem is that his penchant for close matches give him little margin for error. Other area possibilities include Anderson (Brush), Stumph (VF), and Cotleur (Lakewood).

The Akron District boasts four of my top ten, so again the competition there will be fierce for only three places. Glasscott beat Sabatino and Helsing this year, but collapses against Heffernan. He and Gross both look very good to me, so the third spot should be between Welsh and King; and they all should watch out for Aaron Halsey (Akron East). It should be interesting.

Toledo is another area with intriguing possibilities. Jones was a state runner-up last year due to a series of weird circumstances. This year he started off well with some big wins, including a 2-1 decision over DeLong. However, his performance at Brecksville was, frankly, dismal. He's too good to let that continue; but besides DeLong, he'll have to beat out Gerken (Vermillion) and Boston (Bowsher).

In the Southwest, Dave Helsing is undefeated and has 90 percent falls besides. At the Brecksville Tourney, he looked good until demolished by Heffernan and beaten by Glasscott. In my mind this may well have toughened his mental outlook, because I believe he'll be a threat in Columbus. Once he realizes he just isn't going to throw the good people on their backs, he'll do fine. Neyer (LaSalle) and Green (Princeton) should be two of the other qualifiers in that area. They'll probably be joined by Dilley (Lancaster) from the Southeast, although Melvin (Miami Trace) will provide a stiff challenge.

PROJECTED CHAMP: Randy Nickel (Bay)

TOP CONTENDERS

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 2. Lyddy (Toledo St. John) | 7. Musser (Copley) |
| 3. Elinsky (St. Edwards) | 8. Lawson (Chardon) |
| 4. Lee (Medina) | 9. Budka (Vermillion) |
| 5. Kline (Nordononia) | 10. Bucey (E-N) |
| 6. Smith (Elder) | 11. Lomelo (Tallmadge) |

This will be a most competitive weight class featuring a number of good, but not outstanding, wrestlers. The anticipation is that we'll see a lot of close, exciting bouts featuring a number of 145's who are very strong; but generally, not that quick.

My choice is last year's fifth place finisher, Randy Nickel. My guess is that he'll win because he's the steadiest of the top group. He rarely wrestles a bad match, and he can score in the third period. I think he'll outslip the strong boys like Lee or Kline, and capitalize on the mistakes of the others. He'll have to be very sharp himself, though, because he doesn't have much margin for error.

Lyddy lost an overtime match to go to the state last year, but he should easily dominate the Toledo area this time. Budka and Arnold (Findlay) will probably vie for the second qualifying spot, but don't figure to win a match in Columbus.

Besides Nickel, Cleveland will showcase a number of other good 145's. The best of the remainder is Greg Elinsky -- who, I believe, could, at a given time, beat any other 145 in the state. I doubt that he can sustain that intensity over three weeks of tournaments and take the title. Look for him to be an upset victim along the way. Lawson and Bucey should be the other two state qualifiers, with Lawson having the potential to surprise a lot of people. Yanick (Brush) and Drellishak (Westlake) are two other strong wrestlers who could make that select top four for the trip to Columbus.

Smith dominates the Southwest District, but we should see a real free-for-all in the Akron area. Lee has been ineligible all year, but should be ready to go around the beginning of February. My guess is that he'll go at 145#, although he will not have the leisure of working his weight down gradually. Enormously powerful, he is sudden-death at any time; but can be outslipped. He'll face plenty of competition. Musser and Kline are both very strong and very experienced. Kline lost a narrow 8-7 bout in the Brecksville finals, while Musser has twice pinned "AA" State champ Tim Timmons (while losing once). Musser has lightening quick hands and a great cradle. Get your head down and you'll be on your back. That makes him dangerous, if you've got him 9-0 -- like Timmons did -- and get careless. Clearly he's beatable with a record that shows 5 losses already. Lomelo, Pucci (Alliance), and Stobaugh (Barberton) are three other competitors waiting in the wings to see what'll happen.

PROJECTED CHAMP: Paul Bartalone (St. Josephs)

TOP CONTENDERS

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2. Thompson (Troy) | 7. Ruffing (Cincy Elder) |
| 3. Zingales (St. Edwards) | 8. Charton (Tallmadge) |
| 4. Mey (Vermillion) | 9. Bright (Collinwood) |
| 5. Beshara (Westerville North) | 10. Morales (Lorain Southview) |
| 6. Ogilvie (Lancaster) | |

This is probably the best and deepest weight class in "AAA". Some good college prospects won't even place at this weight. The placements I've made between 2nd and 6th are subject to almost weekly change. My guess is that five tourneys would show five separate placements.

However, the one constant would be Paul Bartalone on top. He's been nursing a broken hand the past month, but he'll be ready soon. A lovely blend of speed and power, Bartalone, if healthy, will be able to dominate this top flight competition; and take his second consecutive state title.

Many people will be surprised that I've selected Thompson, a relative unknown, over state champ Jeff Mey and state runner-up John Zingales. I've done so because of the raw power this boy exhibits in combination with good fundamentals. Only a bad break last year kept him from placing after he beat a good Billy Whitehair in the first round. He'll be a real handful.

Zingales, when he is aggressive, is an outstanding wrestler. He still slips into neutral (and even reverse) on occasion; but, if he stays mentally sharp, he is tough to beat. I place him over Mey because he beat him at 167# when he was outweighed by close to 10 pounds. At 155# it should be even easier. One other pertinent factor is that Zingales has wrestled Bartalone so often that they know each other inside out. Since Bartalone has won every time, you might expect a wrestler as good as Zingales to snag a bout one of these times.

Besides Bartalone and Zingales, the Cleveland District features some outstanding talent. State qualifier Morales, however, has not looked good; and will be pushed by the powerful Bright, the stocky Fleming (Lakewood), and the cagey Sturm. I see Bright, in particular, as a sleeping giant if he can learn to wrestle six full minutes.

State champ Mey cannot be overlooked because he suddenly gets very good in March. The second spot out of Toledo should come from Heater (Findlay), Hohenburger (Central), or the sophomore Mayse (Marion Harding).

Besides Thompson, the Southwest has Ruffing, Davis (Cincy Princeton), and Ingle (Centerville). I like Ruffing and with a break he could place. The others will just provide first round victims for the heavy hitters.

Beshara was about one second from being state champ when Mey's last second reversal won the match, and the title the next round by forfeit. He is a tough mat wrestler, but I think his takedown is still suspect. He gets that first takedown and he is tough to beat. Browning (Hilliard) is about the only other

Central District wrestler that I'm aware of at this weight.

The Akron District will be strictly a collection of long-shots and dark horses. Charton (Tallmadge) is a 75 percent pinner; but, otherwise, an unknown quantity. Another real possibility is Massaro (Canfield) who is undefeated with District experience. Other contenders will be Nist (Glen Oak) and Martz (Revere).

Finally, we come to Ogilvie. This boy is very good, but he has two problems. He is injury prone and comes from an area where he doesn't get much competition. I kept expecting him to be at 145#, but so far he has remained at this weight.

167#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Todd Darbyshire (Troy)

TOP CONTENDERS

2. Robinson (Akron East)
3. Carroll (Sylvania Northview)
4. Cessna (North Canton)
5. Silvestro (St. Edwards)
6. Pugh (Moeller)
7. Parker (Copley)
8. Strause (Sylvania Southview)
9. Lestock (St. Josephs)
10. Sabatino (Brush)
11. Mitchell (Sycamore)

This is a weight class just waiting for someone to take control. Except for heavyweight, it is the weakest "AAA" class. Some of the 155's are missing a real bet at this weight, because, quite honestly, I'm having trouble coming up with real bona fide contenders who I can picture as champion.

For a long time I felt that Bill Elbin from St. Edwards would eventually wrestle at this weight. Third last year at 155#, he has, however, campaigned very successfully at 175#. Although he is still weighing in at 167, I think this is done in case of an injury to Silvestro. His absence leaves this weight class wide open.

That leaves Todd Darbyshire, affectionately known at the "Resident Destroyer", as my top choice. Amazingly powerful, this junior also exhibits good technique; and, just as importantly, has Thompson to work out with. He would not have been ready for Elbin, just yet; but he should win against this relatively weak field.

After my top choice, I've listed a large number of slightly above average wrestlers. I have made that list close to a dozen times, changing it radically each time. This one is probably no closer to correct than the rest, except fatigue has set in and I've left it alone.

The Cleveland District is a mystery to me. Lestock had a great December, and so far, a winless February. Sabatino won only one sectional match last year; while Seals (Cleveland Hts.), Znidarsic (Lake Catholic), and Gentile (Padua) have never won anything. Joe Silvestro may be the best in this area, though he is a very small 167. Terrific on his feet, if he wins enough to gather confidence, he will be a leader out of this area. The CIT will be his big test.

In Akron, Robinson, Cessna, and Parker are my qualifying choices. But McCann (Marlington) and Tolar (Crestwood) certainly will challenge. The Columbus group

seems really weak with McLeese (Franklin Hts.), Linville (Galloway Westland), and Larimer (Gahenna) probably the best of this lot.

One bright spot is in the Southwest. Beside Darbyshire, Mitchell and Pugh are good; and Ryan (Cincy St. X) and Herth (Oak Hills) are certainly possibilities. Action at this district will be the fiercer at this weight than anywhere else in the state.

Incidentally, this entire exercise would have been a lot simpler if Brant Amundson (Solon) was able to compete. He narrowly lost to the heavily recruited Tim Cooper last year, and was an obvious title choice. However, he is sitting out the year because of a knee injury suffered during football season.

175#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Bill Elbin (St. Edwards)

TOP CONTENDERS

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2. Walczak (Maumee) | 7. Davies (Chardon) |
| 3. Shivak (Parma) | 8. Caywood (Toledo Rogers) |
| 4. Worthington (Galloway Westland) | 9. Kappeler (Piqua Central) |
| 5. McCallum (Milford) | 10. Litts (New Philadelphia) |
| 6. McVey (Kettering Fairmount West) | 11. Manfredi (Centerville) |
| | 12. DeSalvo (Fitch) |

I suspect Bill Elbin will be just good enough to win. The problem, though, is that he will be a very small 175 by March. This amplifies his big problem, which is in the down position. Against big boys, he must learn that gnashing teeth, rolling eyeballs, and apparently random body movements don't get you out. He'll have to overcome this by getting every first takedown.

Shivak will give Elbin trouble in this area. He's a big 175 with good strength and agility, and with a record that includes victories over some top-flight competition -- including Elbin. He's also a very intelligent wrestler, who'll be able to adjust to the wide array of skills at this weight. If he is to win the state, he'll have to win a lot of close matches on the mat.

Another contender in the Cleveland area is the brilliant sophomore Davies, who I feel is improving so rapidly that he'll be able to "go" with all but the most physically powerful seniors. I may be badly underrating him by placing him as low as seventh. Other district contenders include Corbo (Brush), Palmer (Madison), Bennett (Cloverleaf), and DiBacco (Bedford).

Another "dynamite" district should be the Southwest battleground. State runner-up McVey, state place-winner Kappeler, Manfredi, and McCallum are all rugged contenders. The Kalski disqualification and the Fowler injury really "messed up" the top half of the bracket last year, and so judgments based solely on that can be deceptive. McCallum, for example, pinned Manfredi, Medina runner-

up, and decidedon McVey, state runner-up, in a single day recently. It should be interesting to see how this will all work out at that District.

Walezak and Caywood should dominate the Toledo area with a push from Shankle (Galion), while Worthington shouldn't have much trouble out of the Central District. An interesting contender will be the powerful Litts -- out of the Southeast area. Sporting a perfect record, his big problem is lack of real competition. In the end, that flaw will doom his state chances.

One area where 175# is weak is in Akron. Brunot and the slimmed down 185#er DeSalvo seem like the best of a mediocre group. I'm particularly sensitive to Brunot, since I completely missed his runner-up heavyweight brother last year. Haramis (Copley), Chenevey (Jackson), and Michel (North Canton) could also do well.

185#

PROJECTED CHAMP: James Robinson (Lorain Southview)

TOP CONTENDERS

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2. Kijauskas (St. Josephs) | 7. Savage (Beavercreek) |
| 3. Swantek (Toledo Woodward) | 8. Bucciere (Maple Hts.) |
| 4. Foliano (Fairborn Baker) | 9. White (Centerville) |
| 5. Carmichael (Warren Howland) | 10. Klever (Toledo St. John) |
| 6. Grube (Brush) | 11. Salm (St. Edwards) |
| | 12. Burrell (Dover) |

James Robinson is the type of wrestler that I generally shy away from choosing to win state titles. He has no state experience, he is cutting a lot of weight, and he has never been lucky. Last year, for example, his district half-bracket contained the two wrestlers who finished first and second in the state. What he has going for him is a beautifully proportioned 6'4" frame, which reminds many people of former champ Harold Smith, bone-crushing strength, and good balance. He has not been as much of a pinner as one would like to see, and he hasn't always won his share of close matches; but if he stays cool and calm, he should win it all.

Much of his top competition will come right from this district. Grube has come out of nowhere to look super against tough competition. He and Bucciere have shown real progress; but they'll be challenged by Salm, Edwards (Riverside), and Erickson (Eastlake North). However, the competitor Robinson really has to prepare for is Simas Kijauskas. This blocky blonde has been very successful at heavyweight, and should do very well indeed at this weight. He is just so strong it's hard to do much to him, and besides, St. Joseph's wrestlers traditionally make few mistakes -- vitally important at the upper weights.

Swantek seems head and shoulders above the competition in the Northwest District. Klever seems a logical second choice, but Wiseman (Lexington) and Colchagoff (Toledo Rogers) certainly will be stiff competition. The wrestler to watch, though, is the incredibly powerful George McDuffie (Lima). For raw power, this young man is unsurpassed in this weight; but sometimes the technicalities of the sport have given him trouble. He may be "out-slicked", but he will not be out-strengthened. However, there is a good chance he will compete at heavy, which is where I rated him.

I'm not impressed with the Akron District save for Carmichael; but the South-east District, usually weak, has two bonafide candidates -- Burrell (Dover) and Farrow (Chillicothe). Only the winner gets a state berth, and that boy will probably win a match at Columbus.

The Columbus delegation is weak, but Maclellan (Worthington) has shown flashes of brilliance, including the Dayton Holiday Title. Hunt (Newark) and Miller (Gahenna) will probably vie for the honor of being crushed in the first round of the state.

There are five good candidates, though, in the Southwest. Follano and Savage have state experience, while White and Reilly (Cincy St. X) are aggressive and strong. Reilly, particularly, goes for the fall. A dark horse might be the junior Vilardo (Anderson), who wrestles a weak schedule and is subsequently difficult to evaluate.

HVY.

PROJECTED CHAMP: Mike Golic (St. Joseph)

TOP CONTENDERS

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2. D'Angelo (Lake Catholic) | 7. Seekins (Warren Howland) |
| 3. Allen (Cincy Northwest) | 8. Gant (Mt. Vernon) |
| 4. Creclilius (Ashland) | 9. McConigle (Col. West) |
| 5. Murphy (Fairfield) | 10. Neal (Oregon Clay) |
| 6. Lee (Marion-Franklin) | 11. McDuffie (Lima Sr.) |

What ever happened to years like 1975 when we had Bob Golic, Harold Smith, Tom Cousineau, Tim Payne, and Mike Weitzman all competing against one another. In 1981 the heavyweight class is chaotic, inconsistent, and mediocre.

One of my precepts is -- when I'm faced with a situation where I have no idea who to choose -- to go with the best possible athlete. It is primarily for that reason that I've chosen Mike Golic, though there is some other supporting evidence. This young man is now about 6'4" and 240# with outstanding athletic ability. In addition, he has John Storey as his coach -- for the past 10 years a superb molder of heavier weight wrestlers, and has a workout partner at home named, coincidentally Golic, who knows something about heavyweight wrestling. In addition, who wants to go back to his corner as a loser and face a brother like that. On the negative side, he has not wrestled a single match as of this writing because of a knee injury; and may eventually find that he cannot compete this year. If so, we have all lost the chance to see a potentially fine wrestler emerge.

D'Angelo, whose brother was 2nd at 185# last year, is short, squat, and hard to handle. There is not much to grab a hold of, and his fast feet can tap a merry tune. It's easy to be amused as he walks on the mat a half foot or more shorter than his opponent, it is not nearly so amusing to wrestle him. Foor (North Ridgeville) is an emerging star who may well blossom at District time.

The mammoth Allen -- at about 260# -- has come from nowhere to demolish virtually all of his opponents. A sub last year, he has developed into a potential champ;

and sports victories over his nearest district competition like the excellent Murphy and Lytton (Moeller) or Collins (Vandalia).

Crecilius should dominate the Toledo area, and his previous state experience should serve him well. I believe McDuffie will be at this weight. He will seem incredibly quick to the heavyweights, and as strong as many. The trend in collegiate wrestling has been to take a big 190 pounder and make him an NCAA champ ala Howard Harris. McDuffie may well try to follow that same script. In Columbus three top ten boys will compete for two spots. I favor Lee and Gant over state qualifier McGonigle. Gebbie (Reynoldsburg) and Drumm (Newark) will also eagerly await an opening.

In Akron, Seekins and possibly Powell (Beloit West Branch) look toward dominance. Gabel (Revere) has the right wrestling name, if not the correct spelling; and this all-state footballer has a chance to get a berth in this weak district. Tomak (Louisville) and Lowdermilk (Salem) may also figure closely in that competition.

TEAMS

1. St. Edwards -- Only one team, Maple Hts., has ever won four consecutive state titles. It seems clearcut that unless some awesome supernatural force intervenes, St. Edwards will become the second school to win four in a row. Returning almost twice as many state points as any other team scored last year, they have a line-up that contains as many as ten potential state qualifiers. The contest for everyone else will be for second place.
2. St. Joseph -- A team built around four upper-weight wrestlers all of whom could do well. Bartalone is, of course, one of the outstanding wrestlers in the state, while Kijauskas and Golic are excellent athletes and wrestlers. If Lestock could help and if even one of the lighter weights such as Mulhall qualify, this team will do real well.
3. Walsh -- This team returns more state points than any "AAA" team except St. Edwards. It is all embodied in Horning and Klempay; but this year they are joined by the excellent Robusto, Behm, and Welsh. Their big problems have been injuries -- Horning's thumb, Robusto's shoulder, and Klempay's mononucleosis. If they are healthy, they'll be a potent force at Columbus.
4. North Canton -- Every year this school turns out another well-balanced, well-coached squad with state potential. This year the top-flight junior Chris Mears should lead the way. He should get help from Bennett, Patterson, Gross, Cessna, and, maybe, even Wells and Michel. That's the one nice thing about this team -- except for Mears, they can take an upset and still have the "horses" to do well.
5. Nordonia -- A team that could go as high as second or as low as 22nd. They have a splendid line-up up to 145#, but little after that. Vance is excellent, but he's at a very difficult weight -- especially in his own district. Coghill still is not consistent, and Kline loses matches he should win. Elliott, Smith, and Glasscott can't be overlooked either because they all have state potential. A team with good potential that has the power to determine its' own fate.

6. North Olmsted -- Another team with a great history of team accomplishments at Columbus. This year, though, their depth is suspect. McFarland, Sinko, and Zingale all have placement potential, but there is a big drop off after that. People like Beaune, Lis, Sturm, and Ebert have got to help in a substantive way.
7. Maumee -- A nicely balanced team with a trio of outstanding individuals. Berry, Walczak, and McIntire all have placement potential, especially since the latter's move to the weaker 132# classification. If Weckie can do well at 185# they might even have a shot for the top five.
8. Troy -- Two finalists can collect upwards of 40 points and that'll put you in the top dozen teams -- easily. The question that remains is whether Thompson and Darbyshire are that good because there is precious little else to help them. However, Renner, Pinefrock, and Riley might make a difference -- especially Renner who is at a weak weight class.
9. West Chester Lakota -- A team that didn't have a finalist at Brecksville, but which I believe has grown because of that experience. I still feel that Farber and Helsingner can place, and that Chandler and Bell can qualify. After that we'll see how mentally tough they can be.
10. Galloway Westland -- Strictly a three man operation with Edwards, Worthington, and Linville. With 105 and 167 so weak this team has a nice fit with the realities of state competition. However, if Edwards fails, they'll drop out of sight.
11. Copley -- A team that I have a lot of trouble getting a good fix on. Wenger is consistently good, but both Parker and Musser keep surprising me in both positive and negative ways. If Roe or Haramis comes through, it will give the team a broader base.
12. Southview -- A team you just can't overlook. Somehow the dreams of December often fall apart for this team when March rolls around so, again, this may be a long shot selection. Romero and Robinson can both be finalists if they don't fall to senioritis that strikes so hard at Southview. State qualifier Morales will really have to "go" to get back to Columbus, but Gonzales may pick up the slack.

"AA"

For the second consecutive year, the "AA" classification is the most competitive category in the state. Almost every weight class will be a dogfight, and the number of recruitable wrestlers is probably just about equivalent to "AAA". One notable change is the loss, after only one year, of the third qualifier in the Central District. This is unfortunate because this area is a hotbed of wrestling activity in the "AA" classification. It will particularly hurt teams like Watterson and DeSales who will be striving for high state ranking. That extra state berth goes to the Southwest -- now giving them four places. While that area is improving (as witnessed by the fact that three or my first four selections are from that location), real depth is still not there.

98#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Mike Caughell (Milton Union)

TOP CONTENDERS

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 2. Huston (Oak Harbor) | 7. Hanson (Loveland) |
| 3. DeLisio (Olmsted Falls) | 8. Brant (Vincent Warren) |
| 4. Mossing (Swanton) | 9. Hammond (Bishop Wehrle) |
| 5. Ryba (Chanel) | 10. Gerome (Aurora) |
| 6. Leonard (Highland) | 11. Rosen (Clyde) |
| | 12. Henry (Versailles) |

As is often the case at 98#, many of the top competitors are in their first year of varsity wrestling with little past performance on which to base an evaluation. In addition, this has been a topsy-turvy year with very few consistent patterns emerging. One of those, though, is the continued fine performance of Mike Caughell. A state semi-finalist last year, he won the Miami Valley Holiday Invitational at 105# before moving down. While he is my top choice, he is certainly far from upset proof; and will need four solid performances to win at Columbus. Hanson and Henry have had outstanding years, too, with the former undefeated and the latter a recent winner of the Licking Hts. Invitational. They should exit the Southwest District, too. One other intriguing possibility is Gierach (North College Hill), with a 17-0 record including 13 falls. However, their schedule is suspect, so it's difficult to make a good evaluation.

Huston didn't get to the Districts last year, but has really done well so far this year. Two of his losses were "AAA" state qualifier Jim Peters. Mossing took my "AAA" choice, Dave McFarland, into overtime and generally was very impressive at Medina. He should push Huston. Rosen and Tinnel (Milan Edison) are two others in that district that will do well.

In the Cleveland area, six performers will vie for the four available spots. My top choice in this area is a boy who has wrestled but once this year, and that at 105#. However, Scott DeLisio lost a close two point match in the District quarter-finals to end a fine freshman year on a sad note. So far this year he's been stymied by the great lower weights at Olmsted Falls, but will finally make 98# in February. Besides being a skilled wrestler, he will be a huge 98. One other advantage is that he should be relatively fresh since he hasn't

had to make weight all year until now. Ryba, another sophomore, looked excellent at Brunswick and should be in the hunt for a place. Chanel, incidentally, is blessed with two fine 98#ers -- the other being Karl Jaeger. Leonard and Gerome are my two choices for the other state berths. Leonard runs hot and cold; but when right, he can be most difficult to handle. One person none of the above four can overlook is Long (Perry). This lad was one match from the state in 1980, and beat Gerome in overtime last year. Becks (Navarre Fairless) was brought to my attention by a long time wrestling aficionado and his 20-1 record commands respect.

Hammond leads the Central District contingent, but Herbert (Olentangy) and Wilson (Marion Pleasant) are solid. Yet it's difficult to see any of them placing in the state meet. A complete unknown in this area is Jim Brant, but his outstanding and consistent performances in the Southeast are noteworthy. He might surprise an unwary first-round foe.

105#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Jeff Jordan (St. Paris Graham)

TOP CONTENDERS

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 2. Urry (Olmsted Falls) | 7. France (Kenston) |
| 3. Mariola (Chanel) | 8. Dunner (Warrensville Hts.) |
| 4. Claprood (Utica) | 9. Herbert (Loveland) |
| 5. Samuels (Orange) | 10. Harrington (Sandusky St. Mary's) |
| 6. Haeuptle (Milan Edison) | 11. Wöhrle (Bishop Ready) |

State champion Jimmy Jordan, now in his sophomore year, moves up to 105# to try for his second consecutive title. Almost all of his serious competition will come from the Cleveland area. Yet Jordan seems to have the mental toughness to pull it out again. To my eyes, at least, both Jordans seem to stall on top, but the referees have so far seen it differently, and that has helped both boys immeasurably. This year with the tightening of rules on stalling, the Jordans may have to be more aggressive.

Both Urry and Mariola will be much bigger than Jordan. They have cut a lot of weight and on second days of tourneys they will be mammoth. I really like Mike Urry, and one-on-one with Jordan he could well defeat him. The question is whether he can develop the consistency that will take him through three weeks of tourney action. One thing that could hurt the entire Cleveland contingent is the aura that a state champ like Jordan seems to exude. In my opinion, Jordan would never compile the fabulous record he has if he had to face the constant tough competition that this area produces.

Mariola looked, frankly, "crummy" at 112#; but when he gets his confidence back he'll be formidable. Samuels and France are former state qualifiers who have both won in Columbus and have shown great improvement. The fifth contender -- and the "odd man" out right now -- is Richard Dunner. One match from the state last year, he is another very strong 105. His only flaw is the tendency to wrestle on his side and thus go to his back too easily.

Claprood lost to Jordan 4-2 in the semi-finals last year, and will be a strong

threat once again. So much will depend on the draw down there. Wohrle will probably be the second qualifier out of the Columbus area, though watch out for Howison (Olentangy). Herbert and Beatty (Brookville) should be two of Jordan's district colleagues at Columbus. They'll have trouble placing.

The Toledo area's top threats should be Haeuptle and Harrington. It's difficult to evaluate how they'll do this year. Harrington was third at 98#, in "A", while Haeuptle lost a criteria decision in the District and never got out. He could be a big help for Milan Edison's team chances. The rest of this district looks to be definitely on the mediocre side.

112#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Brian Bartz (Kenston)

TOP CONTENDERS

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2. Rodriguez (Cardinal Stritch) | 8. DelViscio (Swanton) |
| 3. DiCola (Akron Hoban) | 9. French (Olmsted Falls) |
| 4. Behnken (Brookville) | 10. Owens (St. Paris Graham) |
| 5. DeMore (Sandusky Perkins) | 11. Wood (Columbus DeSales) |
| 6. Chang (Wyoming) | 12. Hardy (Eastwood) |
| 7. Strickland (Hannibal River) | 13. Bodine (Olentangy) |
| | 14. Koenig (Hillsboro) |

This is a very crowded weight. There are probably 25 boys within four points or less of one another. Each district has four or six or eight wrestlers who could conceivably place at the state meet. With this kind of parity the district week-end takes on added significance. Nobody is guaranteed a place at Columbus, and everyone realizes that if they just can qualify for the state meet they have as good a chance as anyone of placing.

My choice is Brian Bartz, third last year, and a one point loser to Jim Jordan in the semis. A match notable for the lack of aggression shown by both participants. Bartz should be one of the few wrestlers at this weight who can dominate some of my top 20. Rich DiCola, a great freshman last year, is beginning to mature into a really fine wrestler. He and Bartz seem to stand a little ahead of the rest of this district. After them it's close to chaos. French, Gnabah (Aurora), and Gainer (Manchester) seem to be on the next tier of competitors, but there are plenty of people right below them. Two interesting cases are Howard (Oberlin) and Florian (Highland). Howard is extremely erratic. He lost by one point to State "AAA" runner-up Pat McCarthy and then lost badly to an unknown. He is someone to be wary of. Florian has beaten French and Gnabah and knows how to win close matches. Illness will keep him out for as long as four weeks, and its effect on him could either boost him to Columbus or drop him out in Sectional competition.

The Toledo area is in much the same condition as Cleveland. I put Rodriguez second to Bartz despite his less than sensational record this year. I just have too much respect for his fine coach, and his runner-up state performance last year. But DeMore, Delviscio, and Hardy all stand ready to vault over Rodriguez. Two competitors with only faint chances of qualifying are 1980 state qualifier DeWulf (Wauseon) and Burns (Milan Edison). However, Burns has recently done quite well, and has dramatically shortened the odds on his qualification.

Bodine has made real progress in the Central District, and he and Wood are now the favorites to make St. John's Arena. However, "A" qualifier Boyer cannot yet be written off. It's just another case of essential parity within an area.

The same is true in the Southwest where Behnken, Chang, and Owens seem like the best of a large group. This is one weight where that extra qualifier gained this year will be useful. Competitors like Tackett (Milton-Union) and Berger (Versailles) still have a chance in this situation.

Even in the East and Southeast we see returning state veterans. Strickland was fourth last year at 98#, while Koenig and Boney (Belpre) also have state experience. Another such prospect is Wilson (Washington Court House).

119#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Jim Jordan (St. Paris Graham)

TOP CONTENDERS

2. Doug Blay (Oak Harbor)
3. Dieckman (Olmsted Falls)
4. Eberly (Orrville)
5. Luke DiSabato (Bishop Ready)
6. Irvine (Wyoming)
7. Engert (Columbus DeSales)
8. Amato (Akron St. Vincent)
9. Mike Derr (Cardinal Stritch)
10. Chamberlain (Huron)
11. Baker (Philo)

An excellent weight class that should keep fans excited throughout the tourney. While I may have doubts there is just no way I can pick against two-time state champ Jim Jordan. I've admired the way he has stood in there against more physically imposing upper classmen and won those close decisions. This year he'll face more of that same situation.

Doug Blay, three times a state qualifier, has suffered from some discouraging injuries during his career. Yet this year he has never looked better and has been hammering his Toledo opposition. This is his last chance for a state title that seemed so much in his future three years ago. I expect to see an all-out aggressive performance at Columbus. State place-winner Derr and Chamberlain look to be the two other Toledo qualifiers, and they are both savvy seniors. They'll be pushed by Finney (Delta) and Avila (Castalia Margareta) -- who last year caught and pinned Chamberlain in the first round of the districts.

The Cleveland District is also tough. Dieckman has been Olmsted Falls most devastating and most consistent wrestler. When he has everything working he is murderous as witness a 12-1 victory over "A" champ Hanson and 12-3 over Derr. If Jordan or Blay catch him in that kind of mood they'll be in a fight for their very life. On the other hand, Eberly beat Dieckman by the incredible score of 17-4 at the district, so there is obviously two sides to the Olmsted Falls star. One thing about both he and Eberly are their size -- they are big 119's. State place-winner Amato is also at this weight and he should qualify. The fourth spot is wide open with a host of possibilities including Andrews (Akron Hoban) and Bennett (Coventry).

Some solid boys will compete out of the Columbus. You've got to respect anybody with the DiSabato surname, and Luke is ranked number one in the Columbus area.

He and Engert, a Brecksville runner-up, are solid, but not spectacular. My guess is that a low place is about the best they can hope for.

Jordan, of course, heads a good Southwest delegation. A former state qualifier, Bryan Irvine was 30-0 last year until upset 9-8 in a first round district match. This year he has one loss, but has been solid, otherwise. Shappie (Versailles), Pultz (Oakwood), and Meyer (Dayton Carroll) are all candidates for other qualifying spots. The last boy, in particular, could be a real sleeper.

126#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Ricky Burton (Highland)

TOP CONTENDERS

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| 2. Bowman (Fostoria) | 8. Ghezzi (Watterson) |
| 3. Schneider (Wauseon) | 9. Marx (Bethel-Tate) |
| 4. J. Urry (Olmsted Falls) | 10. Schroeck (Bishop Ready) |
| 5. Bright (Carrollton) | 11. M. Gainer (Manchester) |
| 6. Dan Blay (Oak Harbor) | 12. Studebaker (Springfield Northwestern) |
| 7. Dowdell (Wellington) | 13. Woodruff (Vincent Warren) |

This is another wide-open weight class with no one standing out as a possible champ. Since I'm allowed at least one "way out" choice, I've decided to use it here with Ricky Burton. Twice a state place winner, this Highland junior is up two weight classes this year. He's been incapacitated all year with a broken ankle, and is just now beginning to wrestle. So he'll be fresh for the tourneys and anxious to make up for a non-existent start. He's now at the right weight, and can win against this competition.

Other Cleveland qualifiers should be the always "kind of" injured Urry, the unknown Dowdell, and the rugged Gainer. Browning (Brooklyn) is also very good; but he, Dowdell, Urry, and Burton are in the same sectional and he may get trapped in a bad half-bracket.

The Toledo area has a wonderful assortment of 126's. I've gone with Bowman, Schneider, and Blay, but I'm not totally convinced I've done the right thing. There are four other top-notch contenders. The blonde Beverick (Sandusky St. Marys) is twice an "A" place winner and is now back at his best weight. Papst (Ontario), Hiemstra (Milan Edison) and Kasten (Swanton) are also in the "hunt". This last wrestler, in particular, looked very good at the Medina Tourney. It should be a real shoot-out in that area.

Schroeck is also an "A" place winner -- and he and Ghezzi should be the two Central District qualifiers. However, Panico (Olentangy) cannot be overlooked after a number of fine performances.

The Southwest area looks weak this year, and I don't see much after Marx and Studebaker. However, Thome (Milton-Union) could be a factor. Don't look for anyone from this area to place.

This is one weight class where some of the Southeastern schools have some stand-out competitors. Bright, I believe, has the potential to beat anyone -- however, most of his bouts end 10-9 and you're bound to lose some that way. Last year, for example, in "AAA", he lost to state runner-up Sabatino 19-10.

Woodruff, Rickard (South Point), and Strickland (Hannibal River) are three other boys from those two districts who might win a match in Columbus.

132#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Scott Duncan (Marion Pleasant)

TOP CONTENDERS

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2. Winter (Highland) | 6. Carson (Kenston) |
| 3. Wiley (Aurora) | 7. Cooper (Jon. Alder) |
| 4. Townsend (Marion River Valley) | 8. Long (Milton-Union) |
| 5. Hohlbein (Holland Springfield) | 9. Kasten (Swanton) |
| | 10. DeLande (St. Clairsville) |

Todd Winter has already defeated Scott Duncan twice in the last year so many are going to find it strange to see Scott rated #1. The reason goes back to something called style. Winter, as good as he is, is still pretty much a counter-wrestler. At the state level, referees are harsh on this; and, in fact, it was a penalty point that made Winter state runner-up instead of state champ. Duncan's fast, aggressive style should prevail if they meet again.

However, Duncan will have to hustle to even qualify. State "A" champ Cooper won't exit quietly, and Townsend is very good. I expect him to beat out Cooper even though he suffered an overtime loss to him earlier in the year. Behind this trio is Gua (DeSales) trying to find a way to snag one of those two state berths.

Wiley is one of those warriors who doesn't get comfortable with the weight until February. Last year he lost his district opener and came back for a third, and then took a state fourth. His performance at Medina wasn't exactly heartening, but I expect he and Coach Bliss to turn it around for the tourney. Carson should take the third Cleveland state berth, and that leaves only one left for all the rest. State "A" place winner Hill (Kirtland) has the inside track on that one.

The Northwest area is weak here. Kasten and Hohlbein are alright, but nothing that special. Talbott (Cardinal Stritch) an overtime winner over Wiley is certainly a possibility as is Duncan (Norwalk) and Stoll (Milan Edison). I'm not sure you can expect too much out of this group.

In the Southwest we find much the same story. Long heads the weak field with people like Brenner (Cincy Reading) or Kirk (North College Hill) looking to qualify. Not much here.

DeLande is a tall, very slender, former state qualifier with real tenaciousness. He uses his legs well, and can pin at any time. He might win a match or two.

138#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Wes Hines (Marion Pleasant)

TOP CONTENDERS

2. Savely (Watterson)
3. Hochstetler (Orrville)
4. Laughman (Casstown Miami East)
5. Marshall (Fostoria)
6. Goldberg (Beachwood)
7. Jackson (Brookville)
8. Corrigan (Norwalk)
9. Rhonehouse (Holland Springfield)
10. Krebs (Tipp City)
11. Zaskiewicz (Steubenville Central Catholic)

It looks like it'll come down to the two Central District stars for the state title. They've met several times this year with Hines always winning. Actually, I'd pick Savely except he always seems to have a bunch of nagging injuries, and Hines manages to "gut it out" to a victory. I think he'll do it one more time, though, Savely beat him in last year's district. Pierce (Teays Valley) and Joseph (Pickerington) will be shut out of this two-man district, and that's a shame because they deserve a shot at a state place.

Hochstetler leads the Northeast delegation and he has been outstanding this year. Extremely strong, he'll be a tough competitor with everyone -- including the two I chose ahead of him. State place-winner Goldberg never looks that great, but he continually surprises me with important victories. He may place again. After that the Cleveland area looks very thin, with possibly Sellman (Twinsburg) and Nichols (Kenston) slight favorites for the last two spots. There's a real opportunity open here for some "gutty" 138's.

The Southwest is also strong with Laughman, a state qualifier at 145# last year, leading the way. With four spots open, Jackson and Krebs should get state berths and possibly low places in Columbus. That leaves Malley (Lewistown Indian Lake), Wright (Wyoming), and Baker (Versailles) fighting for that last spot. This group of four qualifiers will do well in Columbus.

The Northwest features Marshall -- a very strong and physical 138. He can place. Corrigan and Rhonehouse look like the other two qualifiers, but they are certainly not untouchable. Colatruglio (Huron) and Knous (St. Marys Memorial) are certainly good enough to make the top three.

145#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Tim Timmons (Highland)

TOP CONTENDERS

2. Mincheff (Oak Harbor)
3. C. Klein (Pickerington)
4. Lann (Akron Hoban)
5. Gillis (Springboro)
6. Dunn (Eastwood)
7. Briggs (Bishop Hartley)
8. Ewald (Aurora)
9. Noble (Carrollton)
10. Scott (Sycamore Mohawk)
11. Miller (Coventry)
12. Haeuptle (Milan Edison)

This is a very good weight class. It features a pair of defending state champs -- Timmons and Mincheff. Both are very big 145's, but Timmons is stronger and probably just as quick. If he can avoid the big four or five point move (which cost his team-mate Jeff Miller the crown last year), he should beat Mincheff.

He'll just grind him into the mat. One thing Timmons will have to prepare for is a full six minutes of wrestling. He can't let weight loss divide his concentration or sap his stamina. He may be vulnerable on first days of tournaments.

Joining Timmons from this district should be the excellent Lann, and a pair of 155's just down to this weight -- Ewald and Miller. I look for Pete Klein (Kenston) and possibly Gershon (Manchester) to challenge.

Mincheff is, of course, a stand out in the western part of the state. However, the Toledo area is very strong at this weight. State qualifier Dunn and state alternate Scott will be favored for the other two state spots. However, Haeuptle and Derr (Cardinal Stritch) will be very stubborn foes. If Milan Edison's lower weights have good success, it may give upper weights like Haeuptle a lot of momentum.

Briggs and Klein are my choices to escape the Columbus District. State qualifier Seiter (Marion Pleasant) will be at this weight, but he is too small. If he could beat Duncan or Hines, he'd be at least one weight class lower.

The Southwest area doesn't seem that strong. Gillis, a state qualifier, is good; but there doesn't seem to be much depth. Bates (Bethel-Tate) and Aspery (Greenhills) could be two of the qualifiers, but they're not exactly household names.

Watch out for Noble out of the Eastern District. Last year in "AAA" he lost a 10-9 decision to the excellent Doug Ogilvie in the go-to-state match. He may well surprise several people.

155#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Butch Lapsley (Beachwood)

TOP CONTENDERS

2. Miller (Highland)
3. Melchiorre (Watterson)
4. Zieber (Clyde)
5. Klemp (Coventry)
6. Zang (Columbus DeSales)
7. Flory (Napoleon)
8. Briscoe (Harrison)
9. Reed (Ravenna Southeast)
10. Brogan (Eastwood)
11. Maxwell (Uhrichsville Claymont)

Probably the most awaited match at Columbus will be the Lapsley-Miller final. Twice before, Miller has nipped Lapsley by a point including the titanic 11-10 struggle last year in the semi-finals. These are two very recruitable wrestlers who can pin at any time. Miller is one of the few wrestlers not intimidated by Lapsley, and he is also one of few who can go upper-body with him. I anticipate that if it works out that they're the district final, too, one or the other will forfeit saving it all for Columbus. I'm going with Lapsley this time on no more substantial ground than that this time it may be his turn to win. If either boy has a trick up his sleeve, they'll be saving it for Columbus, so watch for fireworks.

The Cleveland District also features last year's runner-up at this weight Rick Klemp. He is totally opposite of the first two mentioned -- being a solid, low-risk type competitor. I don't see him able "to go" with either Lapsley or Miller. In addition, his separated shoulder has clearly bothered him up to this point

in the season. Whether he'll be at 100% for the tournaments is still not clear. Ready to push him are Reed, Chiochetti (Kenston), Harold (Olmsted Falls), and Bulgrin (Manchester).

The Columbus area also features two premier wrestlers. Both Melchiorre and Zang can place at the state level. Melchiorre, in particular, is impressive, but he'll have to keep away from pinning himself (like he did in the Licking Hts. Tourney). Byers (Bishop Hartley) may be their most serious challenger.

Zieber, Flory, and Brogan head my Northwest District list. Yet, I believe that the competition there will be very close with at least one upset. Smithy (Eastwood), Voisard (St. Mary's Memorial) and Field (Milan Edison) are all capable of a big win. If Kearns (Clear Fork) comes down to this weight, he could spark a whole string of upsets. He upset my projected champ at this weight in the first round of districts last year.

167#

PROJECTED CHAMP: John Potts (Coventry)

TOP CONTENDERS

2. DiFeo (Akron St. Vincent)
3. Sheehe (Ontario)
4. Leahy (Circleville)
5. Burrer (Oberlin)
6. Miller (Metamora Evergreen)
7. Brooks (Cadiz)
8. Roy (Columbus DeSales)
9. Tolin (Beachwood)
10. Scott (Millbury Lake)
11. Shipley (Orange)
12. Neff (Watterson)
13. Cope (Germantown Valley View)

I'll say this for the Potts brothers, they sure can come through in the clutch. This year John can provide the family with quite an honor. For years the Hoppel brothers have headed the list, with the boys bringing home a total of six state titles. They were followed by the Milkovich clan (Mike's sons) who won five. Well, if John Potts were to repeat at 167#, it would be the sixth title for the Potts brothers -- quite an achievement for Bill, Mike, and John.

I don't really know how John was able to pull it off last year, but he'll face a lot more stiff competition this year. Starting in his own district, he must defeat DiFeo (who he beat by one point at Revere), Burrer, and Tolin for starters. Burrer, in particular, can be very difficult. He'll be one of the few boys Potts will wrestle who is taller and nobody is more unorthodox. But it works as defending State "AAA" champ Jeff Mey found out during a loss to Burrer. Shipley (Orange) and Bailey (Ravenna Southeast) are others who could challenge for a state spot.

The Toledo area also has some rugged customers. Sheehe had two first period pins at state last year as a sophomore, before ending up in fifth place. Miller, also a state qualifier as a sophomore, is less of a pinner; but very consistent. Scott, if he's at this weight, may be undervalued in my ratings, and could place. Another solid possibility is Cubberty (Eastwood).

The Southeast is weak with Courson (Hillsboro) the best bet for a state berth, and so is the Southwest District. Besides state qualifier Cope, people like

Goudy (Milton-Union), Northern (Greenhills), and Chambers (Harrison) are potential state qualifiers. They aren't worrying anybody.

However the Columbus duo of Leahy, fifth at this weight last year, and Roy, a sectional champ at 185# in 1980, should cause some tremors. They may be challenged by Neff (Watterson), but I don't believe too severely so. Both of these boys have placement possibilities.

For a change the Eastern District is solid. In fact, three state calibre wrestlers will be going for only two qualifying places. Brooks is an interesting case. He looks like close to nothing out on the mat, and yet he was fourth last year at this weight, and lost a narrow 6-5 bout with Potts. Still, both Workman and Cleveland (Uhrichsville Claymont) have outstanding records, too. Workman, for example, beat the Columbus area's #1 ranked "AAA" 167 by a 13-1 count in December.

175#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Joe Dellisanti (Milan Edison)

TOP CONTENDERS

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 2. Parvin (Coventry) | 8. Dukes (Aurora) |
| 3. Celek (Port Clinton) | 9. Cyphers (Tipp City) |
| 4. O'Conner (Columbus DeSales) | 10. Bogan (Carlisle) |
| 5. Render (Warrensville Hts.) | 11. Rickard (South Point) |
| 6. Randolph (Milton-Union) | 12. Pittman (New Concord John Glenn) |
| 7. Munro (Akron Hoban) | 13. D. Moss (Highland) |
| | 14. Eramo (Bishop Hartley) |

This is the last of the 39 weight classes that I completed. I have a list with 24 names of wrestlers who would seem to have state potential -- including nine in the Northeast District. A major complicating factor is that a number of them are just down from 185#, so they can't be evaluated against common opponents. On top of that, the wrestler I intend to choose just lost a 22-11 major decision to an "A" wrestler.

I'm just going to chalk that score up to the flu or bad luck or something, and hope that Joe Dellisanti will do the same. Last year at 185#, he pinned "A" champ Todd Wycoff and qualified for the state. This year -- before 22-11 -- he had been extremely impressive. I'm weighting a year and a half of strong performances much more heavily than one upset loss. He'll have to be sharp because Celek and Wegesin (Delphos St. John) are both good. Celek, in particular, has the potential to win it all.

In the Central area, O'Conner should dominate. Now I saw him at the Brecksville Tourney, and it wasn't exactly like looking at the spectre of devastation. He looked very shaky and didn't place. However, again the weight of statistical evidence is heavily slanted on his side. Another Eramo -- Mark, in this case -- should be the second qualifier.

The Southwest is loaded with state calibre 175's. Randolph and Bogan qualified last year, and Cyphers has been excellent. Jacoby (Greenhills) is a strong contender for the fourth spot, along with the mellifluous duo of Payne (Trenton Edgewood) and Cain (St. Paris Graham)

Rickard got his state spot by one point over Peters (Hillsboro). Both are back, and it'll be interesting to see which one prevails this time.

Finally this brings us down to the very complicated Cleveland District. State place winner Parvin finished fifth last year with two default wins and a forfeit triumph. This year he won't need that kind of good fortune to place high. Render is incredibly strong and will challenge anyone. No one is immune to his threat. Munro and Dukes are both excellent and should get the last two available spots. That would leave out Moss, state-placer Trecao (Akron St. Vincent), Skonieczny (Streetsboro), Zody (Triway), and Diehl (Jefferson). It will be a zany District with this many potential state qualifiers.

185#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Paul Richards (Columbus DeSales)

TOP CONTENDERS

2. Caris (Millbury Lake)
3. Simon (Ravenna Southeast)
4. Loy (Chagrin Falls)
5. Colon (Cincy Greenhills)
6. Swanger (Shelby)
8. Slusher (Trenton Edgewood)
9. Uhl (Millersberg West Holmes)
10. Current (Casstown Miami East)
11. Davis (Nelsonville-York)
12. Seidenwand (Trinity)
13. Thornton (Warrenssville)

This looks to be strictly a two-man contest -- Richards vs. Caris. Both are outstanding, both have previous state experience, and both outclass the rest of the field. I've chosen Richards because it is just so hard to do anything to him. I think Caris will find that you can try a lot of things, but not much works against the massive Richards. Finally, a mistake is made, and Richards is ahead by at least two.

Richards stands way above the Central District competition. The second spot could go to "A" qualifier Thompson (Bishop Ready) or perhaps Stanich (Watterson).

Likewise Caris dominates the Northwest District. However, Swanger is a solid performer who could garner a low place at Columbus. The third qualifier will probably be an unknown who has a hot week-end during district competition.

As is so often the case, the most difficult district to forecast is the Northeast one. Simon and Loy look to be the best, but who can forget that the #1 seeded Loy won not a sectional bout last year. Simon has some impressive losses -- including a one point overtime defeat to Blanc of St. Edwards. Moss is a state qualifier at this weight with a penchant for first period pins -- although not always to his advantage. Thornton and Seidenwand would appear to be the chief rivals for that fourth spot.

Colon has good credentials from the Southwest area. He has had an impressive season. Because Cincinnati is far away some stories, by the time they get to Cleveland, are exaggerated and embroidered. That must be the case with Slusher -- for if I were to accept all that I've heard, he would be rated in the top three. Whatever the case, his written record speaks well of his efforts and he may place. Current should also form part of the Southwest delegation.

State qualifier Uhl will lead a two-man Eastern contingent with Yurjevic (Coshocton) having a good shot as the second spot. Last year Davis defeated a Hillsboro wrestler to nail down his state berth, and he'll have to do it again when he goes against Hastings (Hillsboro) this year in his District.

HVY.

PROJECTED CHAMP: Victor Cales (Washington Court House)

TOP CONTENDERS

2. Hartnagel (Orrville)
3. Lucas (Liberty)
4. Reiner (Swanton)
5. McDonald (Springfield Northeast)
6. Ludwig (Otsego)
6. Weatherbee (Wellington)
7. Frericks (Circleville)
8. Miller (Zoarville Tuscarawas Valley)
9. Bondurant (Casstown Miami East)
10. Ousley (Willard)

The first three heavyweights on this list are all such prolific pinners that it's almost a case of who grabs who first. The obvious choice is Hartnagel, who was fourth last year, and has an unblemished record except for an injury forfeit to Crecilius in the finals of the Wayne County Tournament. Yet the mountainous Cales (though more svelte than last year) is so strong that if he can keep his concentration it's hard to see him being beat. Cales is even more of a pinner than Hartnagel although neither has wrestled much stubborn opposition. Lucas, on the other hand, has wrestled a lot of good people; and hasn't always won -- but it should help in the long run. His first two wins at Columbus last year lasted a total of 104 seconds.

I look for Hartnagel, Lucas, and Weatherbee to represent the Cleveland District, along with a wrestler to be named later. Candidates for that fourth spot include the erratic Smith (Olmsted Falls), Febel (Jefferson), Sovacool (Akron Hoban), and Holloway (Orange). If Smith is right, he could qualify and really help his team.

Toledo is brimming with possible contenders. I was impressed with Reiner at the Medina Tourney and see him as a challenger. Not much of a pinner, he looks to have a "cool" head in close matches. Ludwig and Ousley will be favorites in my book for the other two spots, even though Harmon (Ontario) seems to get a lot of media support in that area.

Frericks leads a weak Central District with, perhaps, Stellar (Watterson) a second choice. There must be better people than that down there. Maybe O'Brien (DeSales) can spring a few more upsets and qualify. Miller and possibly Yurina (Byesville Meadowbrook) are likely Eastern District qualifiers.

Strong competition should occur in the Southwest. All-state football player Dale McDonald seems a clear first choice. Bondurant has done well, but after that there's plenty of confusion. Everybody else has taken turns beating each other. Look for Ullery (Brookville), Bailey (Harrison), and Elliott (Wyoming) as contenders for the last two spots.

TEAMS

1. Highland -- Last year should have been their year; but a combination of bad

- luck, disappointments, and fine Coventry wrestling stymied them. This year they have to be favored again. The nucleus of Burton, Winter, Timmons, and Miller can't be matched; and there's more with the two Moss boys, Leonard, and Florian.
2. Olmsted Falls -- This is a difficult team to place so high, because no one on the team has any previous state experience. Who knows what will happen in late district competition or at Columbus? Still, the talent of the Urry brothers and Dieckman is overwhelming, and they should do awfully well. The key is DeLisio, who must do well at 98#; and the trio of French, Harold, and Smith, who could be a source of real help.
 3. Columbus DeSales -- I was impressed with this team at the Brecksville tourney. Richards is a team leader, and many of their better wrestlers are at upper weights which are not that strong. Thus Zang, Roy, O'Conner, and O'Brien could prove crucial point getters. Cua is at an awful tough weight; but Engert and Wood can, perhaps, help.
 4. Oak Harbor -- This team lacks the depth of former years, but the quality is first rate. The Blays, Mincheff, and Huston could all be top placers; but there is no one else to chip in. If injuries or upsets appear, this team could disappear from the Top Twenty.
 5. Coventry -- I placed them about here last year, and they instead exploded to third consecutive state title. If they do it again, they're real miracle workers. Potts and Parvin have been excellent, but not untouchable; while Klemp has really struggled coming back from his injury. Miller and Bennett might help, but probably won't. Another team on the precipice of a big drop.
 6. St. Paris Graham -- This team may no longer be a two-man, one family entity. Obviously, the Jordans are great, and will probably score over 40 points. However, that extra qualifier may bring up some of their teammates.
 7. Marion Pleasant -- Duncan and Hines should be finalists. After that, there are only faint hopes and fantastic dreams. Still, two superstars can bring home a lot of points.
 8. Watterson -- A team on the brink of real upward movement. With all the right breaks, they could make the top five or even the top three. But that would mean outstanding work from Ghezzi, Savelly, and Melchiorre, with help from Neff, Sagan, Stanich, or Stellar.
 9. Milan Edison -- This a sensational dual meet team. Except for Highland, I believe they could take any other "AA" team in a dual. Unfortunately, many of their wrestlers are boys who'll just fail to get out of their District, or lose real early at State. Reminds me a lot of the Stritch teams of the last half-dozen years or so -- gorgeous balance, but few superstars.
 10. Aurora -- Another nice dual meet team looking for tourney points. The weight switching may help -- but in both cases (Ewald and Dukes), the competition will be just as fierce down below. They need someone who can guarantee them a finalist.
 11. Kenston -- This could be the surprise team of the tournament. Bartz, France, and Carson all have place potential; and there's another half dozen on the team who could, with luck, get to Columbus.

"A"

As I mentioned in the introduction, this classification has been severely weakened by the departure of five fine teams to "AA". What this has done in the Central District, in particular, has destroyed the balance of power -- and allowed one team to dominate. I would not be surprised to see two or three teams qualify eight or nine wrestlers for Columbus.

Nonetheless, we should see a lot of spirited wrestling featuring several blue-chip prospects; and a number of others who certainly have collegiate potential. More than that, there are a number of very competitive weight classes which should provide plenty of excitement.

98#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Mark Adkins (Richmond Hts.)

TOP CONTENDERS

2. Pinter (Cuyahoga Hts.)
3. Noel (Arcadia)
4. Kress (Jewett-Scio)
5. Riggle (Elmore Woodmore)
6. Cramer (Bluifton)
7. Lancaster (Grand Valley)

One of the toughest decisions in the entire 39 weights is the choice between Adkins and Pinter. Pinter, a rugged upperclassman, is a physically tough boy who missed the state tourney by two points last year. He always gave state champion Sweress a real tussle at this weight. The younger Adkins is slick and quick, but can he counter the power of Pinter? Well, I believe he can -- if not in the districts, certainly in the state meet. Somehow my heart says Pinter, but my head keeps thinking that Adkins will find a way to win.

This is a very weak weight class around the state except for the Northwest. Noel is the only possible challenge to Pinter and Adkins, and he should win his district. Riggle seems a safe bet for Columbus, but that third qualifying ticket is wide open. I favor Cramer, but Long (Liberty Center) and Winan (Bloomdale Elmwood) will be challengers. Noel, however, had defeated all of these boys during the past two years.

With Pinter and Adkins sewing up the Cleveland District, potential state qualifiers like Lancaster, Szakal (Mogadore), and Kerr (Lutheran West) will have to wait for next year. The one possible Columbus qualifier is probably Block (Academy), but it won't make any difference in the long run. The Southwest District is always an unknown quantity, but Frietch (St. Bernard) and Bourke (Springfield Central Catholic) are possibilities.

105#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Mike Hartman (Hamler Patrick Henry)

TOP CONTENDERS

2. Weaver (Liberty Center)
3. Miller (Barnesville)
4. Clair (Archbold)
5. Ward (Berkshire)
6. Haydock (Cincy County Day)
7. Roberts (Richmond Hts.)
8. Border (Caldwell)
9. Shell (Gibsonburg)

The Northwest District should really dominate this weight, and it sets up another tough decision -- Hartman vs. Weaver. I've gone with state runner-up Hartman (who I picked last year and won't give up on) because he is tenacious, determined, and resourceful. I'd trade tenacious, though, for a better take-down. Weaver, a state qualifier, at this weight has but one loss; and should qualify again out of this tough district. That leaves only one spot for Clair, an "AA" state qualifier last year, Shell, and Herman (Edgerton). It should be quite a battle.

The Cleveland area is very confused. I've gone with Ward, since he has victories over Yarian (Newbury), Hampson (Lutheran-West), and Roberts during the last two years. Russo (Cuyahoga Hts.), a young freshman, has shown rapid improvement, but may be too young. A solid long-shot is Velotta (Independence). Actually, it'll be tough for any of these boys to place. I like Roberts; but he has been pinned 10 times, which obviously means he goes to his back much too easily.

Not much turns up in Columbus with Kardulis (New Albany), Richards (Glouster-Trimble), and Gischler (Licking Hts.) all that's around. Haydock qualified for States out of the Southwest last year, but may have trouble with the weight. Miller (Springfield Central Catholic), Heath (West Liberty Salem), or Tullis (Mechanicsburg) might have a chance in that case.

Usually the Southeast is pretty weak, but I like three boys at this weight. Unfortunately, with only one qualifying spot, Border and Foster (Jewett-Scio) will be shut out by Miller.

112#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Jamie Kasser (Licking Hts.)

TOP CONTENDERS

None

OTHER CONTENDERS

2. Strimpfel (Norwalk St. Paul)
3. Sweress (Independence)
4. Stantz (Liberty Center)
5. Parrish (Caldwell)
6. White (Black River)
7. Hart (Gibsonburg)
8. Acerter (Hopewell-Loudon)
9. Frankmann (Hawken)
10. Johnson (Elmore Woodmore)

This is an excellent "A" weight class featuring two state champs, a state runner-up, a state fourth, and two other state qualifiers. It makes no difference.

Kasser is so superior that he won't have a close match. Easily the best "A" wrestler in the state, he has dominated "AA" and "AAA" foes for two years. Probably the only 112#er with a chance of beating him is Don Horning -- maybe.

State champ Sweress and state runner-up Strimpfel will fight it out for second place with the boy drawing away from Kasser -- if one does -- having the best shot. Both of these wrestlers are excellent competitors, and would win many other years at this weight. Stantz and Hart should join Strimpfel out of the Northwest District, while White will be with Sweress out of Cleveland. There are many excellent wrestlers around the state here; but if Kasser stays healthy, their goal will be second place.

119#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Tim Hanson (Richmond Hts.)

TOP CONTENDERS

2. Ferguson (Caldwell)
3. Minister (Columbus Academy)
4. Derikito (Black River)
5. Clair (Archbold)
6. Cruz (Fremont St. Joe)
7. Durham (Mississinawa Valley)
8. Bendle (Bergholz Springfield)
9. Hokes (Norwalk St. Paul)

Defending state champ Tim Hanson seems like a solid choice at this weight. It's true he's been beaten a couple of times, but never by an "A" competitor; and it's just all part of Mike Papouras' toughening up process. Fourth place finisher Derikito has also had an excellent year, and should join Hanson out of the Cleveland District. However, in a head-to-head situation, Derikito would be a long shot to beat Hanson.

Generally, the Southeast qualifier is one you hope that you'll draw in the first round. At this weight that would be very bad strategy, indeed. Except for a loss to Hanson, Ferguson won three bouts at Columbus -- two by fall with the first 90 seconds of the contest. I believe he'll give Hanson a much better match than last year. Spender Bendle is in my top ten -- he lost to Hanson by just one point two years ago -- but he'll be stymied in his district by Ferguson.

Minister should brush aside the challenge of Phipps (North Union); but Durham, my Southwest District qualifying choice, will have heavy going. This is particularly true if state qualifier Hammaker (Tri-Valley) is at this weight -- as expected. Callard (Cincy County Day) is also good.

As is true in almost every weight class, the Northwest District will be the site of heavy and sustained warfare. In this case, though, I don't believe that the survivors will mount much of a threat for the title. The one exception might be Clair -- down from "AA" -- who is an active and tough competitor. The other two spots should fall to Cruz and Hokes. State qualifier Daron (Plymouth) and Mike Perkins (New London) look to be left out in the cold. Perkins is rated #1 in that District right now, but I don't believe he'll sustain that spot. He will be a key figure in the team competition, because he looms as a possibility for yet one more state qualifier for the powerful New London team.

PROJECTED CHAMP: Ed Young (Norwalk St. Paul)

TOP CONTENDERS

2. Schirtzinger (Licking Hts.)
3. Clark (Barnesville)
4. Kadas (Cuyahoga Hts.)
5. Hendricks (Edgerton)
6. Strouth (Jamestown Greenview)
7. Allen (Bloomdale Elmwood)
8. Wycoff (New London)
9. McClellan (Richmond Hts.)
10. Frank (Stryker)
11. Lynn (Caldwell)

Last year many people, including myself, were amazed at the ease with which Ed Young cruised to the state title. This year he has grown even more into a solid, hard-to-beat competitor. I think that his only real competition will come from Schirtzinger. Licking Hts. wrestles so many tournaments all over the state, that their wrestlers really become battle hardened and tough. If Young is just a little off against Schirtzinger, the penalty is likely to be failure to repeat as champion.

I expect Young to lead a strong Northwest contingent. Allen recently beat Wycoff 12-10, and won the Outstanding Wrestler award at the Van Buren Tourney, and both boys should qualify. Again, Wycoff is an important link in New London's team chances, and he appears to be "on the bubble". 1980 state qualifier Hendricks just moved down to 126#. An odd strategy, since 132# is a much weaker weight class.

Clark made the state semi-finals last year at this weight, and he should be a strong contender for a low place. Lynn will push him in that District. State qualifier Strouth will also have plenty of headaches with McDonald (Mechanicsburg) and Gentry (St. Bernard) in his district, but should prevail for his third trip to Columbus.

The Cleveland area will be led by Mick Kadas. Somehow this boy has never quite gotten the success he appears to deserve. This is his last chance; and so far he has made the most of it, burying most opponents. He could prove to be a pivotal factor at Columbus because he is capable of upsetting anyone. McClellan is well coached and impressive; but as a first year varsity wrestler, he may suffer some jitters.

PROJECTED CHAMP: Tom Richards (Richmond Hts.)

TOP CONTENDERS

2. Wills (Licking Hts.)
3. Murphy (Mogadore)
4. Furr (Beallsville)
5. Mathewson (Blufton)
6. Jaworski (Norwalk St. Paul)
7. Riaper (Batavia)
8. Hoffman (Newbury)
9. Kern (Waterford)
10. Bodenbender (Liberty Center)

This is a relatively weak class with no one dominant figure standing above all

the rest. That's really the reason I chose Richards, because, I think, he'll thrive in this very competitive atmosphere. He may not be the most talented wrestler at Richmond Hts. (or even in his family), but he wrestles with a lot of heart. If he can keep that intensity and concentration despite weight problems, he should eke out a number of close wins to take the title.

He'll face stiff competition in his own District, with 1979 State champ Murphy a very strong threat. Also, Hoffman, Loze (Cardinal), and Rogers (Mapleton) possess upset capabilities. The district draw should be an important consideration here.

The Northwest District is very competitive, but not strong at this weight. I

believe that Jaworski and Mathewson should qualify, but Bodenbender faces a number of challenges.

Robert Patrick (Carey) and Damschroeder (Elmore Woodmore) will be tough competition, but don't overlook Wolford (New London). If New London gets hot in the District, it could rev this boy up to a qualifying level.

I'm not sure that state qualifier Furr is at this weight; but, if he is, he'll be a stern threat. He lost to state champ Cooper last year 12-9 in the first round. Kern would probably be the qualifier if Furr is not at this weight, but it's hard to see him winning a match at Columbus.

Riaper may be a surprise out of the Southwest District. He is above average for that area, but he will be pushed even there by Tipton (St. Bernard). Willis will dominate the Columbus area, and should be a real threat in the State Meet.

138#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Mitch Landers (Caldwell)

TOP CONTENDERS

2. Carpenter (Liberty Center)
3. Potokar (Richmond Hts.)
4. Terry (Licking Hts.)
5. Kieffer (Arcadia)
6. Seletzky (Lutheran West)
7. Brockway (Berkshire)
8. Kimmel (Mt. Blanchard Riverdale)
9. Trayter (Jeromesville Hillsdale)

Another uninspiring weight class that will generate excitement only because it promises close matches -- if little else. I've gone with Mitch Landers in the interest of justice, since he lost to a referee's decision in the state finals last year. He doesn't benefit from a year-long rugged schedule, but his ability and experience should carry him through this year.

State runner-up (at 132#) Kevin Carpenter is a solid pinner with lots of experience. However, he's already been beaten twice this year, including an 8-7 decision to Joe Kieffer of Arcadia. These two should fight it out for the Northwest District title. Kimmel and Giesige (Columbus Grove) could be the two top challengers for that third spot. However, Yoder (Stryker) might also be a long-shot there.

I can't seem to find anyone in the Southeast with any possible state chances with Allen (Jamestown Greenview) as the possible qualifier. You'll want to be paired with that District qualifier in the first round. Terry, on the other hand, will be a real handful for any "A" 138. He should move by Langston (New Albany) in his district.

That leaves the Northeast District, which figures to send John Potokar and Dwight Seletzky. They met last year in the go-to-state match with Potokar gaining a 2-1 nod. Brockway and Trayter are experienced district wrestlers, and will be waiting for an opportunity to get that state berth. Their best hope would be a sectional upset, which would put Potokar and Seletzky in the same half of the draw once again.

145#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Richard Luft (Licking Hts.)

TOP CONTENDERS

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2. Yoor (Columbiana) | 7. Hanthorn (Elmore Woodmore) |
| 3. Grilley (Mapleton) | 8. Eades (Mechanicsburg) |
| 4. Hale (New London) | 9. Weible (Ayersville) |
| 5. M. Richards (Richmond Hts.) | 10. Edwards (Blufton) |
| 6. Dave Seletzky (Lutheran West) | 11. Lang (Waterford) |

This is a deep and exciting weight which promises great wrestling at both the state and district levels. There is a real diversity of body types and styles that should make for splendid competition and real excitement. The Cleveland District really seems to dominate this weight; but I think Richard Luft, state runner-up, will overcome that depth to take the state title. He faces virtually no competition in the Columbus area, so he should come to the state meet fresh and ready to wrestle the three great matches he'll need to win.

The Cleveland District has four boys in my top six, and the real shame is that only two will qualify for St. John's Arena. I really think the tall, lanky Bruce Yoor may be the best 145# in "A", but coaching changes and a relatively weak schedule will work against him. He may be a recruitable college wrestler, however. He was third last year at 132#. Grilley was also third, at 145#, and is very experienced. He owns victories over Hale and Seletzky this year. Marty Richards and Dave Seletzky have brothers at lower weights who figure to qualify, and that may get them pumped up to produce an upset. Not that it would be much of one, since they are both excellent wrestlers with important wins to their credit (like Richard's victory over Musser of Copley). The district pairings will probably work out so that Yoor faces Seletzky, and Grilley goes against Richards in the go-to-state match. In that configuration, Grilley might be the victim of an upset. Certainly Richards could score at the state level, if he can get there, which will help Richmond Hts.' team chances.

State qualifier Hale heads the Northwest District, but he is not a sure winner there. Hanthorn finished fourth at 145# last year in this district -- one place and three points from a state berth. Early in the year I thought that Edwards would be in my top five, but now he faces an uphill struggle to qualify. Weible has been strong, and Thiel (Edgerton) could be a threat, too.

Finally, we come to the Southeast "A" District which is the weakest of the five that feed the state tourney. At this weight there is real depth -- though how the champion will match up with qualifiers from other areas is hard to judge. My choice, as that champ, is Shawn Eades; but he will face enormous competition. State qualifier Tisdale (Covington) is expected at this weight, while Stuard (Williamsburg) has had a big year with tourney victories at Lockland and Madeira

(where he was voted outstanding wrestling). Callard (Cincinnati County Day) is 13-1 with nine falls and his only loss was a 14-12 thriller to Stuard. It should be an outstanding district.

155#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Mike O'Brien (Newbury)

TOP CONTENDERS

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2. Ziegler (Cardinal) | 6. S. Smith (Bluffton) |
| 3. Davis (Mogadore) | 7. Scaggs (Cuyahoga Hts.) |
| 4. Bradshaw (Lincolnview) | 8. Fee (Williamsburg) |
| 3. E. Smith (Bergholz Springfield) | 9. Wisener (Licking Hts.) |
| | 10. Sherman (Elmore Woodmore) |

This is undoubtedly the weakest weight class in the "A" category. In fact, it's so confusing that even the individual districts are difficult to sort out. I anticipate plenty of upsets with any of a dozen people capable of being champion. Based on all this, I have absolutely no idea as to whom to choose. Because there are eight solid wrestlers in the Cleveland District which will make it, incidentally, a much better competition than the state meet, I've decided to go with the Cleveland winner as champ. By a torturous process of deduction, that eventually comes to Joe O'Brien, third at 138#, last year. His experience is the only reason he can be chosen over first year varsity wrestler Ziegler. Both boys can expect tremendous competition from state qualifier Davis, Scaggs, and Martin (Berkshire). Even after that, Hopkins (Richmond Hts.) and Warner (Hawken) are legitimate contenders. This will be a real donnybrook at the sectionals -- as they scramble for favorable district pairings -- and then at the district where the two qualifier format allows for no errors.

In the Northwest, Bradshaw is not even rated locally; but he holds a decision over the tough Sherman. Smith will be an important element in Bluffton's team's chances, and I expect that circumstance to propel him to Columbus. State qualifier Coleman (Fremont St. Joe) and Patton (Arcadia) thus will need an upset to get a state berth. Leininger (Archbold), down from "AA", may well be a long-shot to qualify.

Ed Smith has just this one last chance to qualify after three years of disappointment. Fee and Wisener should be the representatives from their respective districts. Will Roberts (North Union) could upset Wisener; however, Fee, a junior whom I like, might get some competition from Massey (Springfield Central Catholic).

167#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Mark Falk (Bluffton)

TOP CONTENDERS

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2. Porter (Cardinal) | 6. Conkle (McComb) |
| 3. Scheerer (New London) | 7. Wells (Sarahsville Shendoah) |
| 4. Hood (Richmond Hts.) | 8. Mulhall (Middletown Fenwick) |
| 5. Rosenlieb (Cuyahoga Hts.) | 9. Cullen (Fremont St. Joseph) |

This is a good, solid weight class; but the sparkling junior, Mark Falk, should win easily. He has beaten some outstanding wrestlers like Sheehe (from "AA"), and his only two losses were to St. Edwards "AAA" runner-up John Zingales (one loss was only by a couple of points). He is just plain excellent.

Scheerer, who was fourth last year, and Conkle head the rest of the Northwest contingent; but Falk will handle each easily, as demonstrated by his recent 13-4 win over Conkle. Watch for Cullen and possibly Widmer (Gibsonburg) as outside threats.

Brian Porter was state champ at this weight last year, and his brother Ray is Falk's top competition. However, remember that Falk beat him 14-7 in the first round of states last year. Hood and Rosenlieb are very close for the second Cleveland qualifying spot. Both have placement ability if they can get to Columbus.

The Central District has absolutely no one that I know of that can compete at this level. Their qualifier will be first round "hamburger". Wells and Mulhall from the two Southern Districts might win a match, but won't place.

175#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Brian Brooks (Arcadia)

TOP CONTENDERS

2. Shannon (Bluffton)
3. Edmondson (Newbury)
4. Darr (Fremont St. Joe)
5. Smith (Barresville)
6. Strickland (Bloomdate Elmwood)
7. Fedders (Middletown Fenwick)
8. Kutsko (Jackson-Milton)
9. Sanning (Cincy County Day)
10. Fisher (Hawken)

This was a super quality weight last year, but it is not nearly as strong this year. My top two choices, in fact four of my first six, are from the Northwest District. Brooks, just down from 185#, is an All-State football player with tremendous natural ability. He recently beat Dellisanti from "AA" Milan Edison 22-11, and has shown great improvement. Shannon, at 185# last year because of Alt and Aller, is now at his right weight. Even so, he qualified for Columbus last year, and beat Brooks in the process. He is not as talented, but his great desire and tenacity could well see him repeat that victory. Darr placed at this weight last year, and Strickland might this year if he can get by his murderous district.

In Cleveland, Keith Edmondson has come down from 185# and should sweep through the District. He is a very physical wrestler; and with the weight as unsettled as it is, he could possibly take the title.

My second choice is Mike Kutsko -- also very physical and strong. Both boys are not that far ahead of Shlowaza (Richmond Hts.) and Fisher (Hawken). I think Edmondson made the right move in certifying at 175, because he has a chance of winning it all at this weight; but he is too small to beat the 185's like Wycoff.

Cordle (Licking Hts.) probably will represent the Central District, but he won't win a bout in Columbus. A much stronger contender is Smith who was runner-up

at 167# last year. That may have been slightly deceptive, since Aller's injury 20 seconds into his opening bout was the key to that result.

The Southeast District features two-time state qualifier Jim Fedders. He has never won a bout in Columbus, and maybe he's due. He'll be pushed in his own District by Sanning (Cincy County Day) who is 14-0 with 12 falls this year.

185#

PROJECTED CHAMP: Todd Wycoff (New London)

TOP CONTENDERS

2. Courtney (Fremont St. Joseph)
3. Kidwell (North Union)
4. Shinkle (Williamsburg)
5. Keller (Pioneer North Central)
6. Mack (Cuyahoga Hts.)
7. Elliott (Bergholz Springfield)
8. Haputa (Lutheran West)

Almost all the best 185's compete in the Northwest District. Three of my top five choices are from that area. Defending state champion Todd Wycoff is a great athlete -- all-state in football, state champ in wrestling, and state place winner in track. Last year, though, he tightened up at the state meet winning his last two bouts 2-1 and 1-0. This year he'll have to go all out in his own District. He beat Courtney 6-4 in a dual, and the big senior from Fremont St. Joe has made steady progress. Keller, another fine senior, is extremely powerful; and, in fact, wrestled at heavyweight as a sophomore. As good as this trio is, they are not immune to upsets. Hernandez (Stryker) and Miller (Columbus Grove) have good credentials and some important victories. Hernandez, for example, recently upset Keller at the Findlay "A" classic.

Kidwell and Shinkle should dominate their two respective districts, and will fight for the place behind my Northwest trio. Elliott is my best shot in the Southeast area, but I don't have a real good "handle" on that area at 185. In any case, it's unlikely their qualifier will pose much of a challenge.

What's really unusual is the poor quality at 185# in the Cleveland area. It seems likely that the two that qualify here will serve as cannon fodder for the other districts. Based on recent performances, Mack may be the best 185 in this area; but that may not be saying too much. Haputa might be a very small step behind. I wouldn't be surprised to see Shiowaza (Richmond Hts.) move up to this weight class.

HVY.

PROJECTED CHAMP: Bill Nye (Grand Valley)

TOP CONTENDERS

2. Foos (Fremont St. Joe)
3. Weaks (Liberty Center)
4. Faber (Carey)
5. Lewis (Licking Hts.)
6. McGaskill (Jackson-Milton)
7. Aldridge (Springfield Central Catholic)
8. Lloyd (Stryker)
9. DeLong (Bergholz Springfield)

It should be defending state champ "Boog" Nye versus the challengers from the West this year at heavyweight. Nye did a sensational job last year; and I think the challenge of Foss, Weaks, and Faber will not bother him at all. Foss should be his toughest match, but Weaks is tough, too. Yes, I know Faber nipped Weaks at the Findlay Tourney, but I don't think it'll happen again. Each of this Toledo trio was a district qualifier last year, and Foss was one match from Columbus. It's a tough group, and Lloyd -- my number eight man -- really has little chance of moving up to a state berth.

McGaskill should join Nye at Columbus from the Cleveland area. He is a rugged customer and might break into that Columbus contingent and grab another place for the Cleveland District. I don't see any potential challengers to this Cleveland duo, although Pete May (Black River) may have a different opinion.

Aldridge is a very good heavy from the Southwest, which has never done well in this weight class. It's difficult to ascertain his overall potential because of the schedule he wrestles. Another question mark is Billy Lewis out of the Central District. He'll be the smallest "A" heavyweight, but he has good skills. He has had an erratic high school career, and I'm not sure what to expect from him. He'll have to be very careful when he wrestles the big horses like Foss or Nye. His hope is to "outclick" the big boys for a place. Nauman (North Union) will qualify in that area if Lewis should stumble.

Bradley Nolan dominated the Southeast District the past two years, but that 295 pounder has graduated. DeLong, who was runner-up to him last year, automatically moves into the favorite role. But the rapidly improving Davis (Caldwell) could pose a serious threat for him.

TEAMS

1. Richmond Hts. -- Coach Mike Papouras is shooting for his third straight state title, but it may turn out to be a real tight squeeze. At the start, anyway, Licking Hts. is likely to have the advantage of numbers, but Adkins, Hanson, Tom Richards, and Potokar will help make that up. The real key, though, will be if Marty Richards can beat out Yoor or Grilley for a state spot, and if McClellan can score at the state level. A real bonus would be the emergence of Hood, Hopkins, or Roberts as a state scorer. It's interesting that this team, with a little luck, could be state champs, and yet a dual meet between this team and the '79 champs from Richmond Hts. would be a rout. This team might take two or three bouts. I'm not sure what the moral of this story is, but the reader may want to take "a stab" at one.
2. Licking Hts. -- This team could take as many as 10 wrestlers to St. John's Arena. However, the heart of the team is the superb Kasser, Schirtzinger, Wills, and Luft. I've placed them second, but if Terry can place and Wisener, Cordle, and Lewis can score, it's all over for Richmond Hts. The final de-termination might not be made too late in the final round Saturday night.
3. New London -- Early in the season, I thought this team might challenge the two powerhouses rated above them, but it won't happen now. Sure, T. Wycoff, Scheerer, and Hale are good; but only Wycoff can take it all. Besides Perkins, Wolford, S. Wycoff, and Staschke haven't looked as good as anticipated. I almost placed Blufton ahead of this team.

4. Blufton -- Coach Bill Lodermeier has done a superb job at this small school producing outstanding wrestlers every year. The incomparable Falk and Shannon could be back-to-back champs, but the key for a real high finish lies elsewhere. Mathewson and Smith are at weak weights and they could help the Blufton cause immeasurably by making it to Columbus and scoring there. Edwards is excellent, but the fates have placed him at a rugged weight which could stymie him. Cramer and Ziessler could really surprise if they helped out.
5. Fremont St. Josephs -- The bottom dropped out for this team last year, but they'll be tough again in 1981. The "A" classification usually is not really strong in the upper weights and Fremont St. Joe has the talent to take advantage of this. Darr, Courtney, and Fooks all have the potential to be finalists. To move up they'll need contributions from Cruz, Gotttron, Coleman, and Cullen.
6. Liberty Center -- This team moved up to fourth last year, but it will be difficult to sustain that level. The nucleus of the squad is Weaver, Carpenter, Weaks, and Stantz. Except for Bodenbender, though, I don't see anybody else who can help them except for, perhaps, Knapp at 126#. But that will be a tough district to get out of at that weight.
7. Norwalk St. Paul -- The fifth consecutive Northwestern District team that I've chosen. However, this will be less a team effort and more the work of several individuals. Young should repeat as champ; and, if Strimpfel draws away from Kasser, he could be second. After that, it's up to Hokes or Jaworski to help out.
8. Caldwell -- The Southeastern squad slipped into the Top Ten last year, and should retain that plateau this year. Landers and Ferguson are the touchstones of this effort, but Parrish could help out, too. If Border, Lynn, and Davis can get out of that one-man district, this team could move even higher.
9. Cuyahoga Hts. -- A team that could finish 5th or 50th. Pinter and Kadas really should do well; and if Scaggs and Rosenlieb get out of the District, this team will be in the top six. Throw in a Russo or Mack and it could be an impressive showing. Unfortunately, this team has always had District troubles.
10. Newbury -- The key here will be O'Brien at 155#. If he can get out of the district, he'll take the states on a hot weekend. Edmondson should do well at 175#, and Hoffman and Yarian could possibly help.
11. Barnesville -- The real important element here is Smith's success at 175#. Given that and some good wrestling from Miller and Clark, this team could easily move into the Top Ten.
12. Arcadia -- Their very first wrestler, John Noel, is the one they have to have come through. Mix in Kieffer and Brooks, and you have up to 40 points at Columbus. Their other big hope is Patton at 155# --- a weak weight where a "hot" could catapult him into a low place.