

1973

High School Wrestling

Forecast

(2nd Annual Edition)

**Written By
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Last January I predicted from seven to nine state titles for the Cleveland District, and indeed, eight were actually won. What no one could have predicted were the additional gain of ten second-place and ten third-place awards. It was, without a doubt, one of the most impressive displays of the strength on the Cleveland District since the early 1960's. The 28 of 39 top prize garnered by the Cleveland District (over 70%) will not be repeated in 1973 as a close look at each weight class will soon make evident.

The last three years has seen the 98# weight class dominated by one wrestler -- first it was Ron Aiello, then Myron Shapiro, and finally Dave Kenney. In 1973, for the first time, we should have a wide-open battle for this title by, from six to eight contenders. Probably the best of these is Robbie Taylor from Fairfield, a quarter-finalist in last year's state tourney. Taylor easily won the huge Dayton Christmas Tourney and is undefeated this year. Last year he pinned Garfield Hts.' strong Mike Picone and this year he appears even better. Two Toledo area entries also appear strong. Bob Hogle and Ralph Aiello are both undefeated and have wide experience. Hogle qualified for the State Meet last year as a sophomore, while Aiello has won numerous tourneys. The two top favorites from Cleveland are Ken Redd from Elyria and Deany Pilarczyk from Bedford. While neither boy made it to the state last year both of these seniors fell short by only one match. Redd in particular has been impressive and Pilarczyk has looked great in the few matches he has wrestled. I would rate the above five as the most likely to succeed Dave Kenney, but right behind them are Branham (Franklin Hts.), ~~McCrath~~ (Padua), and perhaps McCrath (Dayton Wayne).

As in 1972, the 105# weight class appears to be one of the strongest in the state. Again I would rate a Cincinnati Bobby Longmire as a thin favorite. Longmire finished 3rd in the 98# class last year at Columbus, and over the summer was crowned National AAU Junior Champion. I'm not sure of his certification weight, but he has wrestled at 105#. Perhaps almost an equal favorite would be Ron Duebel of Maple Hts. He beat Longmire last year by doing a magnificent job of finessing Longmire on takedowns and never letting him use his strength on the mat. I'm not sure that he can get away with that again because Longmire has improved tremendously. Below these two stand really fine wrestlers like Bob Liptak (Mentor), Gerald Reid (Cuyahoga Falls), and Bill McClintock (Brunswick) who during a weaker year would be favorites for the state title. Tom Edwards (Westland) fourth in the state last year has been injured, but if he recovers he could also be a factor at this weight. Other good wrestlers are Nathan DePugh (Chillicothe), Milan Yakovich (Normandy), and Sam Kleiter (Brush).

The 112# class does not seem as strong as in previous years. This is particularly true in the Cleveland area where I see Kim Victor (Mentor) as the only contender for a state title. There are a lot of reasonably good wrestlers who might beat him for one reason or another, but reasonably good wrestlers don't win state titles. Several strong contenders are Don Burgoon (N. Canton), fourth in the state last year, two-time state qualifier Bruce Hambrick (Delaware Hayes), and Dayton champ Fred Perry (Fairborn Park). Also with possibilities for places in this wide-open field are Warren Meade (Walnut Ridge), Frank Borgelt (Toledo St. Francis), and Tom Brainard (Toledo St. John). A dark-horse might be Gene Madison of Elyria.

If he is eligible, Sean Garel should demolish the field at 119#. This defending state champion is just too good to be handled by what looks like a good field. ~~Bill Karpiak~~ (John Marshall) has looked about next after Garel in this area, with Ronnie Davis (Eastlake North), Nick Cipollo (Brush), and John Corsek (Fairview) behind him. Downstate, Steve Maxwell (Fairfield) won the Dayton Christmas Tourney by defeating two-time state qualifier Steve Hohl, 12-0 and won the best wrestler award. He could be hard to beat for everyone but Garel. Ernie Ferguson (Sandusky), 6th at this weight a year ago, has already been beaten and will be lucky to place. However, Kavin Barrino (Canton McKinley) and John Reid (Guyahoga Falls) should both do very well in Columbus.

The 126# weight class is not strong at all this year. This appears to be a good weight "to be at." Frankly, the Brecksville Tourney had the first three places go to A-AA wrestlers and that kind of tells the story. As a favorite I would choose Mike Chinn^{132#} of Grove City, state quarter-finalist last year and the North Canton Holiday Champ. John Steele from #1 in Cincinnati, Oakhills, has done fairly well, but two other 1972 state qualifiers Jeff Sweitzer (N. Canton) and Mike Dillard (Canton McKinley) have been disappointing. In Cleveland, I kind of like Kerry Burke (Mentor) and Rich Palivoda (N. Royalton), but who will qualify from this district is certainly a mammoth question mark.

~~John Blazek~~ should be the favorite to capture the 132# title. Already twice a state place finisher, he has the right style to win consistently -- an excellent rider and good on takedowns. Tough competition in this area could come from Pete DeLuca (John Marshall), who may be too short to handle ~~Blazek~~, Tim Pazyniak (Brush), Jim Greer (Fairview), ~~Greg Anthony~~ (Mentor), and Sam Pace (Valley Forge).

Its a good crop of wrestlers and there will be strong competition in this area. Downstate, Brian Jeffers (Kent Roosevelt), Paul DeNeis (Toledo St. Francis), and Brent McDonald (Worthington) appear very good. Jeffers, in particular, could be very tough. DeNeis has led Toledo St. Francis this year, as they just recently won their 116th straight dual meet. Dark horse candidates might be Ed Mallarnee (Canton Lincoln) and Bill Gehring (Toledo Whitmer) if he is not at 138#.

The 138# class does not have many strong contenders from 1972 returning. Besides Gehring, Rich Henning of Toledo Clay, and Shelton Lee of Akron Garfield also qualified for the state tourney and should be experienced. Lee qualified at 145# and could be tough (but I doubt it). I think the best 138's are probably from Cleveland, with ~~Glenn Ferguson~~ (Valley Forge), ~~Dave Swarsegar~~ (Eastlake North), Keith Sobieski (Maple Hts.), ~~Ed Soto~~ (Southview), and maybe even freshman Mike DeAnna of Bay Village^{AHD} should be hard for the rest of the state to handle. ~~Ferguson~~ and ~~Swarsegar~~, in particular, are very strong, impressive-looking wrestlers who should go far. A possible dark-horse Dave Wolfe (Toledo St. Francis) who after a 19-0 shellacking in the Brecksville 145# finals moved down to 138#.

Last year the 145# class was one of the strongest and most interesting weights in Ohio, and this year should be more of the same. Last year the best 138-pounder in the state was sophomore Jimmy Perko who badly beat state runner-up Cecil Bergen in the Sectionals, but failed to get out of the District. Perko is probably the best 145# wrestler, but again, it is unlikely that he will win the championship.

Like Sam McDowell, Perko doesn't want to just win, he wants to win elegantly -- with style and grace. And he often does, but occasionally he gets muscled down during some aesthetically pleasing move and can't get away. He's good, maybe even great, but he's not solid. Other

145's I like are ~~Carl Manzano~~ (Brecksville), Mike Sittinger (Elyria),

Jim Horning (Valley Forge), and the very erratic ~~Horrie Thompson~~ (Parma).

~~Bob Lancaster~~ (John Marshall) has been sensational, but has never been

really tested and Senate wrestlers like that are always a little sus-

pect (but remember Dave Kenney). Downstate, Tim Shoemaker (Canton

Oakwood) made the state quarter-finals in '72 and has looked sensational

this year. His exciting style makes him an equal favorite with the

Cleveland boys and so does Marvin Henderson from Reynoldsburg. Henderson

qualified last year at 155# and down a weight has been untouchable in

the Columbus area. Very strong, he might be very difficult to beat

except that he has had some problems making weight, but even a weak

Henderson should be formidable. Also watch for Rick Haas, 5th at 126

last year. Up 3 weight classes and still only a junior, he's rated as the best in Cincinnati-Dayton area.

At 155# there are a number of really fabulous wrestlers -- unfortunately none are from Cleveland. Toledo boasts three strong boys,

Rayner, Copus, and Kiel, but only two can qualify. Rayner looks to be

the toughest even though Copus has state experience. Jerry Haddad and

Darrell Hill from Canton South, and Timken respectively are also state

qualifiers as is Carl Beck from Akron East. Yet, while all of these

six are tough -- the co-favorites must be defending state champ Ethan

Reeve from Lancaster and the sensational Dave Shulay from Cincy Elder.

Reeve, of course, beat our toughest 145's last year while Shular lost out only on a tough riding-time loss to Jamic Kurtz. Reeve may be somewhat stronger, but Shular is lightning quick and has 10 pins in his 13 consecutive victories. Both boys are just great. In Cleveland, the workmanlike Mike Sustersic (Brecksville) looks like the best -- with maybe ~~Bruce Jankura~~ (Bedford) and ~~John Colak~~ (Mentor) challenging. Not a strong weight class in this area.

At 167# most everyone who qualified for the state is gone. Only 3 of the 16 qualifiers were juniors last year and while those three are back this year, none of them made it through the first round. Dave Wickline out of Reynoldsburg may be good enough for a place finish and the same for Dave Brown from Centerville, but its hard to see these two boys winning it all. With perhaps a real shot at it is Ron "Oggie" Miller from Toledo Clay. He has beaten some tough boys in Toledo, and could win with a "hot" weekend. In Cleveland, I like ~~Foster Shaw~~ and ~~Koch Padua~~. However, this is probably a weight where an unknown will win. If so, watch for Dale Thompson from Canton South.

Maybe it's because I'm not looking in the right places, but I can't seem to find many good 175's around the rest of the state. Maybe Greenleaf (Stow), MacLean (Worthington) and Zabetakis (Beaver Creek) are pretty good, but the Cleveland boys look strong. Led by ~~Kevin Kigore~~, ~~Derrell Yezzy~~, ~~Al Nozak~~, and ~~Calvin Miller~~ they should do real well.

Unless somebody comes "out of the woodwork" Cleveland should take this title.

At 185# though, there should be a real dog fight. In Toledo, Hendrix (Bowsher) and Solarz (Maumee) are both back from last year and tough.

Thomas (Brunswick) should lead the Akron contingent and he is also hard to beat. One of the best boys this year should be Ike Emerson from Oakhills. A fifth-place finisher last year, he has come on strong with a 12-0 record and 9 pins. Two other strong contenders could be Will Page of Dover, and Phil Wilcox from Lima Shawnee. Wilcox won a strong tourney in Canton just two weeks ago. His problem, though, will be to beat out Solarz and Hendrix in that Toledo District. He is defending District champ there, but will be hard pressed to repeat. In Cleveland, ~~Jody Chesbro~~ and Joe Hasenohrl have been great. Both are aggressive wrestlers always looking for the pin. In fact, they may be upset just because they are so aggressive that they make mistakes. If so, Wolf (Midpark), ~~Evans (DPK)~~, ~~Skidlarz (Padua)~~, and ~~Kawick~~ (Willoughby South) might slip in. A very competitive weight.

Probably the strongest weight in the state this year is at heavyweight. Eight of last year's 16 qualifiers return and they are joined by several other good boys. Heavyweight is a tough weight to repeat at, but if anyone can do it, Mark Totten would seem to possess the tools. Unless injured he should win. However, remember last year he was 15 seconds from being eliminated by Ralph Starr of West Tech before getting a lightning fast takedown and pin. It could happen again. Remember Totten has never really faced anybody as big and close to as quick as he. When he does this year, it should be interesting to see how he does. Still he should defend easily. However, watch for Stepanowich (North-Royalton), ~~Zielak (Admiral King)~~, Granata (Wormandy), and maybe even Kotowski (South) in this area. The Akron District has Thomas (Firestone), Kazee (Brunswick) and the very, very good Mitchell (Glennwood). Toledo has returning qualifier Hendricks (Bowsber) while Columbus has Wills (Whetstone).

During the past two years, interest and excitement has increased in the small school classification. This year I've listed the top six contenders at each weight class with my top choice listed first. Because many of the participants in this classification are from areas where high school wrestling receives little coverage, no text accompanies these ratings. Future reports may expand to correct this defect.

- 98# - Hanson (Richmond Hts.)
Meade (Olentangy)
Imke (Clyde)
Haynes (Stritch)
Stone (Beachwood)
Kollman (Twinsburg)
- 105# - Cale (Beachwood)
Neal (DeSales)
Holland (Minerva)
Richardson (Cuy. Hts.)
Skelton (Coshocton)
Riggs (Coventry)
- 112# - Bauer (DeSales)
Rayfield (Perrysburg)
Taylor (Chardon)
Murphy (Ravenna SE)
Heisser (Fostoria)
Sorkin (Beachwood)
- 119# - Evangelista (Richmond Hts.)
Heffernan (Watterson)
Tompkins (Mogadore)
Pelleschi (Brooklyn)
Shipman (Cardinal)
Leuger (Brookville)
- 126# - DiSabato (DeSales)
Solomon (W. Hts.)
McConnell (Hudson)
Lang (Brooklyn)
Leugers (Brookville)
Shannon (Huron)
- 132# - Webb (Circleville)
Howell (Oakwood)
Renton (Brooklyn)
Sanchez (Stritch)
Turle (Twinsburg)
Oswalt (Crestview)
- 138# - Kemp (Chardon)
Metcalf (Perrysburg)
Bush (Reading)
Russell (Kenston)
Kallai (Coventry)
Biggert (Oak Harbor)
- 145# - Luther (Stritch)
Engel (Reading)
Rooney (Solon)
Shandel (Carrollton)
Johnson (Oberlin)
Monter (Minerva)
- 155# - Clark (Oberlin)
Althans (Kenston)
Bihn (Stritch)
Bowman (Warrensville)
Luchette (Brookfield)
Ackerman (Martins Ferry)
- 167# - Jindra (Aurora)
Schaeffer (Buckeye)
Suriano (Martins Ferry)
Hegedish (Twinsburg)
Marx (Bethel Tate)
Berthold (Columbia Sta.)
- 175# - Bowman (Orrville)
Hissa (Berskire)
Streight (Wyoming)
Abnor (Cuy. Falls)
Scott (Aurora)
Lewis (Licking Hts.)
- 185# - Lowe (Licking Hts.)
Polzin (Rossford)
Writtenberry (Ravenna/SE)
Yerkic (Richmond Hts.)
Mulvin (Perkins)
DiFeo (ASV)

Hvy. - Rodhe (Crestwood)
Applegate (Deer Park)
Polhemus (Solon)
Fredericks (Circleville)
Fennell (H. Springfield)
Ohlemacher (Norwalk)