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H I G H S C H O O L W R E S T L I N G

F O R E C A S T

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INTRODUCTION

The object of these annual reports encompasses two basic goals. First, is to acquaint everyone with the basic character of each weight class, and identify the participants who are likely to play a major role in its resolution. In addition, each regional is examined as to whom its representatives might be. Second, is to stimulate interest in the whole state tournament process throughout Ohio. Naturally, accuracy is also of primary concern so care is taken to develop the most comprehensive list possible of outstanding wrestlers, though of necessity, the evaluation of their final place is, in part, subjective.

In terms of calibre of wrestling, Ohio has probably been blessed with the strongest group of seniors since the halcyon days of 1982 when Heffernan, Elinsky, Jordan and a number of other outstanding wrestlers matriculated. There are, for example, three outstanding wrestlers who seemed destined to win their fourth state titles (Burnett, Hanson and Ramsey) thereby doubling the number accomplishing this feat during the past 50 years. In addition, other high-powered seniors like Palker, Taylor, Landolfo and Genovese are potential All-Americans with outstanding potential. There is good depth behind this group with a number of high-quality performers at most "AAA" weight classes. Mix this "dynamite" class with a solid set of juniors and the year's tournaments should be exceptionally entertaining.

One of the exciting elements of the 1987 season is the quest by three wrestlers to capture their fourth state crown. Substantial media attention will be focused on this trio as they bid to double (in just one year) the number of four-time champs produced within the state. It is interesting to reflect on this phenomenon and place it within some kind of historical context. Ohio started crowning state champs in 1938 and it was more than forty years before Mark Zimmer broke the barrier and won four state titles. Since that time the Jordan brothers both took four championships, and this year it seems likely that Burnett, Hanson and Ramsey will all accomplish that feat. All six of these wrestlers are "AA" or "A" competitors and, while it can never be proven, there is reason to believe that no Ohio wrestler has been the absolute best at his weight class for four successive years. (In my mind Mark Zimmer comes closest to that standard.) No "AAA" wrestler has, since the classification split, made a serious run at four successive titles although Mike DeAnna had a 4th and three championships (even then a senior Lee Kemp was the "AA" state champ at DeAnna's weight when he won as a sophomore). Prior to the split when an undisputed champ was crowned each year, Carl Hoppel finished 1-3-1-1 only a semi-final loss his sophomore year preventing him from four overall state titles.

I've often used these reports as a forum to discuss ways in which wrestling in Ohio could be improved--particularly in the context of the individual wrestler. This year there are four issues that need addressing:

1. Again, equivalently sized regionals are important elements in providing fair competition for both teams and individuals. Clearly, the "A" regional set-up this year is a classic example of inequity and, as discussed in the "A" section, probably will be the single largest factor in determining the team outcome. A system which penalizes either teams or individuals because of the accident of geography ought to be changed as rapidly as possible. There would appear to be many solutions to this problem, and, perhaps a blue-ribbon panel should be assigned the task of discovering the best alternative.
2. As I said last year, we ought to be reevaluating the wrestle-back system used at the district, regional and state level. The requirement of losing to a finalist before being allowed in the consolation rounds is archaic and unfair. It is unlikely that anyone in the state receives more tournament bracket sheets than I do. Yet during the past two years, I did not receive even one 16-team tourney brackets that conducted consolation rounds in the same manner as at the district, regional and state level. Instead, everyone has opted for, at the minimum, the much fairer procedure of permitting wrestlers into the consolations if the competitor defeating them makes the semi-finals. It adds only one round to the tournament, but pays off in fairer placements. The state tournament system has been developed as a way of recognizing the outstanding performance of individuals. A low cost/no cost alternative such as this that so dramatically increases the fairness of the tourney system ought to be adopted in record time--and yet it isn't. Why doesn't the coaches' organization do something to make this happen?
3. New studies need to be made to upgrade the quality of competition at the "A" level. Instead of treating that group as an unwanted step-child, alternatives need to be discussed as to improving the number of schools in that category.
4. The weight certification rules are in need of revamping. In the past, wrestlers certified in December and were then given two pounds in January, and one pound in each succeeding month as a "growth" factor. Now we do not certify until the end of January, but we still give the weight allowance although the original reason for it has changed. It seems to me that all this system does is seduce wrestlers into losing even more weight at certification time because they are so close to the next lower weight class. For example, a wrestler who has competed at 138# all year is terribly tempted to lose just 4 more pounds to make 134#. So instead of a growth factor virtually everyone cuts even more weight as the season progresses. A better system might be the original Holiday Season certification with the subsequent growth factors or to provide growth factors only after certification in January at the scratch weight.

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

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AAA

There has been some discussions as to whether the Northeastern District still dominates "AAA" wrestling as it did in the past. While that certainly remains a matter of opinion it is relevant to note that 22 of last year's 26 finalists emerged from Northeast District schools. That figure suggests old patterns are difficult to eradicate.

98#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: KEITH SMITH (NORTH OLMSTED)

TOP CONDENTERS:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 2. ¹ Nelson (North Royalton) | 11. McLain (Sidney) |
| 3. ³ Emmerling (East Liverpool) | 12. Bell (Dublin) |
| 4. ⁵ Castellana (St. Edward) | 13. Bruseau (Anthony Wayne) |
| 5. ² Kynard (Toledo St. Francis) | 14. Williams (West Chester Lakota) |
| 6. Eberhardt (Cincinnati Purcell) | 15. Monachino (Maple Hts.) |
| 7. Canitano (Solon) | 16. Murray (Fairfield) |
| 8. Newsome (Toledo St. John) | 17. Karrenbauer (Massillon) |
| 9. Prendergast (Minerva) | 18. Roche/McChrystal (St. Ignatius) |
| 10. White (Shelby) | 19. Bjorkstein (North Canton) |
| | 20. Baker (Grove City) |

This should be one of the tightest, most hotly contested weight classes in "AAA" this year. During the last several weeks, a number of highly ranked 105's have moved down to 98# to improve an already strong weight class. It also provides a number of strong contrasts with regards to style, age and, even, size. As always at this weight, most of the best contestants come from the Mentor Regional, but each regional has at least one strong candidate for state success. My choice is the amazingly quick takedown artist Keith Smith who has not been tested so far this year. Injured at regionals last year, he missed sure qualification then, but has come back with a vengeance. His major problem will be his size--he'll be the smallest 98# in my top half-dozen choices. He'll neutralize that disadvntage with speed, conditioning and coaching.

Smith will find exceptional competition at Mentor. Nelson was 5th last year losing only to Elsass and Fried, and he will have a size advantage over Smith. He, too, has not been tested this year and it's almost like the irresistible force and the immovable object. There are just as many good reasons to pick Nelson as Smith. Castellana is another outstanding wrestler in this regional who has not lost in Ohio. Very good in the top position, he may lack that natural quickness of Smith or Nelson. Canitano is my fourth choice here, but I'm beginning to have some doubts. His results have deteriorated in January and it may be the strain of making 98#. He lost to Castellana at North Canton, but wrestled well in that bout. His recent setbacks have not been against as highly rated opponents. The pairings should

be good since these boys exit--two at a time--from Midview and Normandy. However, at Normandy, there are a myriad of other contenders. Both Roche/McChrystal and Monachino are there and they could really challenge Canitano, but probably not Nelson. Roche, just a freshman, has been solid but lost big to Nelson and Castellana. Mihalic (St. Joseph) has had some strong tourney successes, but is a real long-shot to place at regionals, while Robertson (Warrensville Hts.) is probably just a little bit further behind.

Smith and Nelson will be severely tested by Emmerling--6th last year following a 2-0 loss to Nelson. He'll be a huge 98# and is an exceptional rider. However, twice last year he chose up in the 2nd period and had his opponent select down in the 3rd and rode the entire four minutes only to lose to a first period takedown. He must not expect to turn the really good 98's and, thus, must do better on his feet. He'll face relatively weak competition at the Massillon Regional with Prendergast, Karrenbauer and Bjorkstein as main competitors. None of this group except Prendergast reached regional competition last year, and Emmerling pinned him early. Other possibilities like Turner (Nordonia) and Whitmer (Uniontown Lake) have even less chance to contend anywhere, but here.

At Toledo, state qualifier Kynard should dominate and certainly has a good chance of placing at the state level. Tremendously strong and quick, he can be "outslicked" by the better boys. Newsome would seem to be second best, but was majored by Castellana's back-up. Only a freshman Newsome may just have been the victim of a bad beginning. White, Bruseau and Bell are also strong contenders with Baker as a possibility. After Kynard, this group will have real difficulty at the state level.

The Southwest Regional also lacks a lot of top talent. Eberhardt was a state qualifier last year, but did not distinguish himself there. McLain has notched some solid tournament victories while Williams and Murray have been inconsistent. I anticipated a strong year from Williams, but that so far has not happened.

In summary, the top five at this weight class are all outstanding and should provoke exceptional interest. The question mark will be the final ordering and whether an outsider like Canitano or Eberhardt can break into this top group.

PROJECTED CHAMPION: MIKE ELSASS (NORTH CANTON) ①

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2. ② J. Laflin (Fairfield) | 11. McWhorter (Grove City) |
| 3. ③ Minadeo (Solon) | 12. King (Euclid) |
| 4. ④ Cameron (Hilliard) | 13. Miller (New Philadelphia) |
| 5. Ramirez (Waite) | 14. Drake (Nordonia) |
| 6. Yackin (Valley Forge) | 15. Ehlinger (Defiance) |
| 7. Biehl (Uniontown Lake) | 16. Palermo (Cincinnati Moeller) |
| 8. Boulton (Lebanon) | 17. Russo (Amherst) |
| 9. Combs (Fairborn) | 18. Croft (Lima Shawnee) |
| 10. Henessey (Cincinnati Elder) | 19. Taylor (Miami Trace) |
| | 20. Arnold (Upper Arlington) |

Last year, Mike Elsass pulled off a monumental upset by wrestling an exquisite tactical match to upset Alan Fried 8-6 in the semi-finals. Then he had a number of things go wrong, not the least of which was the officiating, and lost his potential state crown in overtime. This time I think he'll retain his aggressiveness and his concentration to grab the 105# title. He has already defeated the next two rated boys, although Minadeo beat him last year for the state crown. It is Minadeo's only win over Elsass in three bouts.

Elsass emerges from a solid regional at Massillon. I've been impressed with Biehl who has lost only to top-rated foes. Last year in the regional, he lost by one point to state champ Minadeo and two points to state placer Emmerling. Miller and Drake are both large 105's with good skills with the former a past regional qualifier. There are a whole host of other possible candidates with Taylor, Lewis (Ravenna) and state qualifier McGhee (Steubenville) three of the top possibilities.

However, Elsass' major foe is likely to come from the Dayton Regional where the rapidly improving Laflin competes. Although he has lost to Minadeo at North Canton, his results would indicate that that is unlikely to occur again. He is an impressive wrestler for just a sophomore and while he may not win it this year, a state crown has to be on the horizon. However, he'll have tough competition at Dayton. State qualifiers Boulton, Combs and Henessey are all at this weight, and although none of them really won a match at Columbus (Henessey advanced on an injury disqualification), they should do better the second time around. Palermo and Cooper (Vandalia-Butler) are other possibilities.

State champion Minadeo leads the Mentor Regional. Minadeo is a master at winning the tight, low-scoring bout, but he cannot afford any slip-ups. Like last year, he has lost several bouts already, but he is so tough to score on that he is in every bout. State qualifier Yackin returns at this weight, but he takes chances and Minadeo will penalize him for those errors every time. This is probably the weakest of the four regionals--at least in terms of depth--with King and Russo my choice for the last two spots. There will be opportunities for state qualification at this weight for the opportunistic performer. Expect at least one unknown to cash in on that fact.

The Toldeo Regional will be a real shoot-out. Two-time state qualifier Cameron has just moved down to 105# where he'll be a force to be reckoned with. Last year, sporting a 30-1 record and a regional title, he fell completely apart in the first round and lost on a technical fall to Topoly. The first round problem may recur if he has problems making 105#. Ramirez lost a quarter-final state match to Fried and then was eliminated on Fried's upset loss due to the poor consolation system. He will place this year with an outside chance as a finalist. McWhorter and Ehlinger have had good seasons, but lack extensive experience and could be ripe for an upset. Croft and Arnold are two such possibilities since their drop from 112#. However, the last two qualifiers will be eagerly sought first-round opponents in Columbus.

112#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: ALAN FRIED (ST. EDWARD) ⁽¹⁾

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 2. ⁽⁴⁾ Kintner (Galion) | 11. Lemon (GlenOak) |
| 3. ⁽²⁾ Pattie (Elyria) | 12. Rhodes (Eastlake North) |
| 4. Pergram (Middletown) | 13. Mattingly (Uniontown Lake) |
| 5. ⁽³⁾ Deikun/Kaminski (Stow) | 14. Croft (Lima Shawnee) |
| 6. Shrock (Shelby) | 15. E. Laflin (Fairfield) |
| 7. Campbell (Westerville North) | 16. ⁽⁴⁾ Miller (Gahanna) |
| 8. Utt (Fairborn) | 17. Levine (Shaker Hts.) |
| 9. Alves (Anthony Wayne) | 18. Zipfel (Defiance) |
| 10. Manning (Willoughby South) | 19. Spangler (Sidney) |
| | 20. Kovacs (Strongsville) |

This is a tremendously strong weight class and it's difficult to figure out why since Alan Fried would seem to be such a dominant figure. After all Fried was one of the most highly touted freshmen in Ohio history last year and over the summer beat two defending champs on his way to the USWF national title. Besides Fried finished with a 35-1 record and a 3rd place medal last year and has not yet gone the distance this season in winning over 20 bouts.

Still many will remember a nervous and strangely passive Fried at Columbus and hope for a recurrence, and they know he is really a 105# and by state time will be smaller than many of his best competition. It's also true that all of St. Ed's 25 state champs in the last 9 years have been juniors or seniors and no sophomore has ever won a title for them. Nonetheless, Fried this year will win that crown, and he'll do it by wrestling strongly and aggressively at Columbus in contrast to last season.

The Mentor Regional is loaded. Fried, of course, is the target, but many, I believe, aim for qualification knowing they wouldn't see Fried until the finals at Columbus. Pattie is extremely quick and strong and demolished tough competition at Medina. He will be big-time college material as a senior and could wrestle Fried three weekends in a row. If so he might "catch" him at least once. Manning and Rhodes were both one bout from state qualification last year, and will be strong regional contenders. Manning looked excellent at Brecksville and took Burnett down twice in the finals. Rhodes started slowly at 119# but decisioned Manning recently. Levine also has regional experience and the moves to win at the state level if he can get there. State qualifier Atienza (Maple Hts.) looks to be shut out at this weight and may head for 119#. Three other excellent contenders are Lally (Solon), Priebe (Holy Name) and Carreras (Lorain Southview) and any of this trio could work his way into a ticket for Columbus.

The immensely strong Kintner should lead the very strong Toledo Regional which contains seven state qualifiers, and several other strong performers. Kintner was 5th as a sophomore and then was upset in first-round action last year by freshman sensation Cianciola. He has not quite improved to the level anticipated two years ago, but he is still a daunting competitor. Shrock was 6th last year (also losing to Cianciola) and has consistently placed behind Kintner this year. He wrestled with abandon at Columbus and showed some fine moves. One of them pinned two-time state qualifier Campbell who returns at this weight looking for a state place. Tall and clever, Campbell has a style that can be difficult to confront. Alves is one of those wrestlers who has seemingly never quite cashed in on his immense talent. When he is right, he can be an outstanding wrestler capable of defeating anyone in this regional. Croft and Miller are experienced former state qualifiers who may not be quite strong enough to qualify out of this fierce competition. Both are seniors with outstanding records, but have never had much luck winning the big match. Zupfel is also a state qualifier and, in fact, won a bout at Columbus last year. However, the Defiance wrestlers have not shown the improvement in recent years that is required to reach the state level. For example, Croft already holds a 6-2 decision over Zipfel. Two other possibilities are Bland (Tiffin Columbian) the Outstanding Wrestler at the Tiffin Invitational and Doud (Sandusky) who is a dynamo in search of a little better technique. Boroff (Dublin) has beaten Miller and could cause a bit of a ruckus at this weight class, too.

It's much the same story at Dayton with a bracket-full of strong contenders. State qualifier Pergram is outstanding, but wrestles a weak schedule. He may not be ready for the very best. Utt and the other Laflin twin are excellent, but Pergram beat the latter 15-0 last year. It suggests that Utt may be the stronger contender. Spangler looks like the best bet for

the fourth spot, but Curry (Lakota), always a close loser to Laflin, will battle not to be left out. Other possibilities are Nice (Milford), state alternate Bolton (Tecumseh) and Miller (Xenia).

The Massillon Regional is really confused now that Deikun appears to be going at 112#. He has wrestled extremely well at 119# including the Brunswick title and certainly would merit strong consideration for state placement. Lemon and Mattingly both have had good seasons and look ready for state competition. Neither of them could go with Deikun. Kenston champ Kovacs was also a district champion last year, but was unable to compete at the regional level. He is not well-known so he may sneak up on a number of folks. This should be the four qualifiers, but Clarke (Ravenna) has strong potential for an upset while the freshman Andrassy (Nordonia) is a free-style wizard with an assortment of big moves. He cannot be relaxed against without serious jeopardy.

119#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: BILL VIANCOURT (ST. EDWARD) ①

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 2. Hoskins (Xenia) | 11. Clasen (Perrysburg) |
| 3. Topoly (Lake Catholic) | 12. ② Hunter (Lima Sr.) |
| 4. ④ DeWeese (Amelia) | 13. Pagniano (Upper Arlington) |
| 5. ③ Gillmor (Nordonia) | 14. Richner (Painesville Riverside) |
| 6. Marinis (Fremont Ross) | 15. Picolo (Springfield North) |
| 7. Baudendistel (Dayton Wayne) | 16. Petti (Mentor) |
| 8. Parker (Centerville) | 17. Pfaff (Whitehall) |
| 9. Kopp (Lorain Southview) | 18. Huff (Miami Trace) |
| 10. ② Hamm (Solon) | 19. Murray (Minerva) |
| | 20. Nadeau (Massillon Jackson) |

The way this report is constructed centers around writing 39 short reports (one for each weight class) over a six or seven day period. There is no reason to write them in any particular order (thanks to the word processor) so I start first with those that seem easiest--like ones that contain names such as Burnett, Holman or Hanson. That gives me a little more time to collect information on the difficult weight classes hoping something will turn up that will make things clearer. Gradually they all get done until I'm left with the single most difficult case--and this is it.

Viancourt is, clearly, the obvious choice with an unblemished record in Ohio and two victories over the tenacious Topoly. And, yet, I feel most uneasy about the choice because of Viancourt's tournament inexperience (see the 126# report) and the rash of upsets that have occurred all season in this weight class. Unlike some St. Edward's wrestlers, Viancourt is an excellent rider along with the usual quota of takedown wizardry. He seems relatively cool and unruffled and has the patience to wrestle down-tempo people like Topoly or Hoskins.

The Mentor Regional will provide Viancourt with plenty of challenges. Topoly was 3rd at 105# in 1986 and he is an intense competitor. Last year he was literally choked into unconsciousness, but hung on to a leg to grab 3rd place honors. He is difficult to score against and has an assortment of nice takedowns. He also has a history of doing better each time he wrestles a particular opponent--a thought that cannot comfort Viancourt. State qualifiers Kopp and Hamm were both first-round losers last year, but they may be able to improve on that--if they can repeat at the regional level. Both Richner and Petti are very good and are in their third varsity year. Petti has had a lot of ill-fortune in his career and may be due for some good luck. Other possibilities are Dagati (North Olmsted) and Griggs (Lisbon Beaver Local).

The toughest regional at this weight, though, is at Dayton. There are just so many high-quality wrestlers that some may re-certify (as Duncan has already done in going to 132#). Hoskins (4th) and DeWeese (3rd) were both state place winners last year and return with outstanding 1987 records. DeWeese was the real surprise. He came out of nowhere to snare a regional title and then wrestled beautifully to capture 3rd in Columbus. This, in spite of a schedule that fails to provide many challenges. Somehow, I believe he'll have trouble repeating that success this season now that everyone will be peaking for him. Hoskins is always good and could be a finalist while Parker may be the same kind of surprise DeWeese was last year. Baudendistel, a strong contender for longest last name, should also qualify based on his quality performances this year. Still both he and Parker will face a lot of competition here with Picolo, Klumb (Cincinnati Elder) and Utt (Fairborn Baker) all having solid credentials. There are several other top-notch underclassmen, as well, in what should be the best weight class in Dayton.

In contrast, the Massillon Regional is very weak especially now that Deikun has moved to 112#. He and Gillmor would dominate the regional together, but now the young sophomore is all alone. Gillmor was tremendous last year in a magnificent regional battle with state runner-up Kundtz only losing in overtime. He has the flash and brilliance of an exceptional athlete. The big problem seems to be a slow start that gets him 6 or 8 points down in the first three minutes. Then comes the mad dash to catch up which is not always successful. One other point--this boy is an exceptional pinner. After him the regional is frightfully undermanned with no clear favorites for qualification.

At Toledo, we'll have a battle of contrasting styles and skills. Marinis has been on the fringes of real success for some time and may be ready to finally break through. State qualifiers Clasen, Hunter and Pfaff all must be reckoned with and provide real depth at this class. A fast-rising star has been Pagniano who spent much of the year at 132#. Now at 119#, his devastating headlocks are racking an impressive quantity of pins. After this quintet are a boatload of other contenders the most prominent of which are Brandt (Westerville South), Shadler (Toledo Rogers), Borrer (Holland Springfield) and Cain (Shelby).

126#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: TIM McCLELLAN (UPPER ARLINGTON)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2. Hamad (Akron Firestone) | 12. Walendzak (Oregon Clay) |
| 3. Skelton (St. Edward) | 13. Robbins (Cincinnati St. X) |
| 4. Baker (Fairfield) | 14. Gluck (Holy Name) |
| 5. Roberto (Ravenna) | 15. Hartshorn (Minerva) |
| 6. Daher (Mayfield) | 16. Prusha (Maple Hts) |
| 7. Decker (Vandalia Butler) | 17. Rhodes (Cuyahoga Falls) |
| 8. Klever (Toledo St. John) | 18. Franklin (Marion Harding) |
| 9. Langfitt (Glen Oak) | 19. Berdysz/Del Rosa (Mentor) |
| 10. Ingle (Centerville) | 20. Jesse (West Chester Lakota) |
| 11. Lemon (Massillon Perry) | 21. Noble (Solon) |

This should be one of the most interesting struggles at the "AAA" level if only because of the psychology of the situation. In my mind, there are four principal contenders--three experienced seniors (McClellan, Hamad and Baker) all of whom have placed at the state level, and one exceptional senior (Skelton) who'll be making his first tournament appearance. Deep down I think Skelton is the best wrestler, but I don't think he will win the crown. Too often, I've seen St. Edward's wrestlers who've had to wait until their senior year to compete, fail to win the state title even, though, they were probably the best overall competitor. For example, Venesile and York last season or Terry Kennedy several years ago all should have won, but none did, all losing a close bout at a critical time. That's why I've gone with the steady McClellan who grinds out win after win in a methodical style. Last year, he defeated Auer in the state meet, the wrestler who kept Skelton out of the tournaments, and then lost a 2-point decision to state champion Malcuit. Interestingly, my top four all head a different regional.

McClellan and Klever should dominate the Toledo Regional. Klever, at 132# last year, was a regional quarter-finalist and has been successful this year at that same weight. If he can handle 126#, he will be large and tough.

Walendzak is a logical third choice, but the fourth spot is wide open. I've listed Franklin, but there are a number of other contenders--Bellows (Lima Shawnee), Kunze (Galion) and Harmon (Toledo St. Francis).

The enigmatic Hamad returns at 126# after beginning the year at 138#. A sensational 4th as a 105# sophomore two years ago, Hamad moved up three weight classes last year and did poorly in the regional and failed to qualify. This year he seems back in his old form and should be a real handful. He won the Norton and Hudson tourneys and slaughtered Gregan in the latter, and lost at Solon only to state runner-up Andrassy at 138#. His regional presents a lot of familiar faces. Roberto, a state qualifier as a sophomore, was sent to Mentor last year and also failed to qualify for a Columbus trip by one bout. This year he should have fewer problems. Langfitt also qualified as a sophomore and do you believe in coincidences didn't make it last year due to injury. The fourth state berth will be slippery to hang onto. Lemon has consistently placed well and could get that fourth Columbus ticket. However, state qualifier Hartshorn is now at this weight and will be a threat. When I saw him he kept getting headlocked to his back, but last year he was able to outscore his mistakes. Finally, Rhodes qualified for Columbus two years ago--and you guessed it--failed to go last year. This year he won't go again.

Skelton faces an uncharacteristically weak regional. Daher is a solid junior who dominated the Kenston Tournament, and is very tough, indeed. He could place. There is a big fall-off after him with Gluck and Prusha two possible choices. I think that Mentor's fine sophomore Berdysz--injured much of the year--could upend either of these two and, perhaps, qualify. However, he'll need to find consistency. Noble, another of Solon's fine lightweights, has a chance.

The Southwest Regional probably has the most depth. Baker, a former state place winner, is excellent, his only loss to Skelton at North Canton. State qualifier Decker is up two weight classes, but still performing well. He has 18 straight wins, all but five by fall. Ingle was strong at 132# and should be a "bear" at this weight. A tremendously impressive newcomer is the freshman, Robbins, who lost only to Baker by a single point in the Fairfield final. He will be a force for the next four years in Ohio wrestling. Jesse has been on the brink of success for some time, and he may have to wait longer at this weight. Widenhouse (Roger Bacon) and Carder (Trenton Edgewood) are other possibilities.

PROJECTED CHAMPION: JEFF LYONS (ELYRIA) ①

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2. ② Slevinski (Maple Hts) | 11. Barto (Solon) |
| 3. ⑤ Smith (Xenia) | 12. Furlong (Warren Howland) |
| 4. ④ Long (Galion) | 13. Navarre (Maumee) |
| 5. Brickey (Toledo Rogers) | 14. Victor (Mentor) |
| 6. Tomkovicz/Ciccarello (St. Edward) | 15. Duncan (Fairfield) |
| 7. Talley (Clayton Northmont) | 16. Heid (North Canton) |
| 8. Pinckney (Marion-Franklin) | 17. Burchfield (Gahenna) |
| 9. Voth (St. Ignatius) | 18. ⑥ Cuba (Massillon Jackson) |
| 10. Carpenter (Cincinnati Princeton) | 19. Ernst (Troy) |
| | 20. Jones (Louisville) |

Jeff Lyons has not been a lucky wrestler during his three-year Elyria career. As a sophomore, wrestling up a weight (because of state champ Saxton), he was a regional semi-finalist before twice losing and being eliminated. Last year, as one of the top favorites at 126#, he again reached the semis losing a close two-point struggle that could have gone either way to state runner-up Maddox and then being stalled to death in a 1-0 consolation loss. So, one of the best wrestlers in the state has not yet been to Columbus. This year, he won the power-packed 138# class at the Medina including a win over 3-time state champ Ken Ramsay and the Outstanding Wrestler award. Again, I've picked him to win a state title, but that can only occur if he escapes the Mentor Regional. This year that should happen and give the entire state a chance to enjoy his skills.

Lyon's most difficult challenge will be at Mentor. Slevinski has been totally awesome all year including a raft of technical falls against quality opponents. His skills have not been showcased as they should because Maple Hts. failed to schedule any strong tournaments. He attacks other people and that is the style Lyons also employs making their meetings potential barnburners. Tomkovicz will probably represent St. Edwards and he looked exceptional at their Quad. He is not as flashy as Ciccarello, but makes far fewer mistakes. He has placement potential. State qualifier Voth is a very shaky choice for that fourth qualifying spot based on past record and his St. X championship. However, both Barto and Senquiz (Lorain Southview) have defeated him, and they are only two of a number of possible contenders. Also included is the persistent Furlong, the still-recovering Victor and the freshman sensation Machovina (North Olmsted). Lyons will not lack for competition at this regional.

Smith qualified for Columbus as a sophomore last year and he is a potential state finalist. He'll totally overpower his regional, and almost everybody else but the very best three or four. It is not out of the question that he could win the whole thing. Talley beat Smith last year, but never will it happen again. However, he should qualify--as he did last year--and, possibly, place. Both he and Smith were quarter-finalists last year. Carpenter won the Fairfield Invitational and looks like the third best at the weight. What will be interesting to watch is the course of Duncan's campaign for a state berth. He went to 119# when Baker dropped, but it was obviously too much. So he has moved to 132#. One of two things is likely to happen--either he'll be overpowered or he'll feel so good that he'll begin using the excellent moves he hasn't been employing and he'll do very well. Ernst is a more conventional choice for that fourth qualifying spot.

Long heads a strong Toledo regional. Like Lyons, he has never qualified even though last year he was very highly rated. He dropped a pair of one-point decisions at the regional and went home early. This year, should he choose to really focus on Columbus, he should qualify and place. State qualifier Brickey is right behind him. He was impressive in a win over Schetter at Columbus before being bombed by state champion Chaddock. This year he had won the Rogers Inv. and lost at Medina to the excellent Hamad at 138#. He'll do well. Right behind this duo is the strong and determined Pinckney--the best in the Columbus area at this weight. He missed state qualification by two points last year. There is a big drop in quality at this level with Navarre and Burchfield a respectful distance behind. For example, Pinckney beat Navarre 18-5 at last year's regional.

The Massillon Regional is very weak. I have had substantial trouble unearthing any name that might have the ring of state qualifier attached to them. Sadly, I failed in that effort so it's clear that all the survivors of this struggle are likely to be little-known. They'll remain that way in Columbus.

138#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: JOE ANDRASSY (NORDONIA) (1)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 2. Yetts (Steubenville) | 12. (4) Newcomb (Worthington) |
| 3. Sweeney (Toledo Maconber) | 13. Lauric (Lake Catholic) |
| 4. Haas (Louisville) | 14. (2) Womack (Akron Buchtel) |
| 5. (5) Helderman (St. Edward) | 15. Bratton (Clayton Northmont) |
| 6. Randleman (Sandusky) | 16. (3) Splete (Cleveland St. Joseph) |
| 7. Homewood (Lima Shawnee) | 17. Potter (Fremont Ross) |
| 8. Doll (Dayton Wayne) | 18. Chandler (Galion) |
| 9. Buckalew (Westerville North) | 19. Dosen (Holy Name) |
| 10. Ferguson (Ashland) | 20. Stanton (West Chester Lakota) |
| 11. Duffer (Toledo Waite) | 21. Walker (Xenia) |

Last year Joe Andrassy was one of the finest sophomore middleweights I had seen in years. He crushed state champion Chaddock and split a pair of bouts with the talented state champion Palker. His loss being in the state finals after capturing the regional title with his victory. Early this year he had gone from a "never-stop" wrestler to a "when are you going to start" competitor. It looked a little like sports burnout (he is an excellent football player, too), but now it seems to have corrected itself and Andrassy should grab the title. It may well be a two-man struggle with Andrassy meeting the superbly talented "AA" runner-up, Donyasha Yetts. Only a sophomore, Yetts is a superb athlete who reminds me a lot of Shawn Garel, but I think Andrassy will punish his every mistake and wear him down. Yetts takes "injury" timeouts to the limit in every tough bout he has which may indicate a conditioning problem, but he is so quick and strong that he "mentally cracks" tough opponents--as he did Helderman at North Canton.

Andrassy and Yetts head a regional that is rife with uncertainty. Haas, my third choice here, has just moved down from 145#, where he wrestled with uneven results. How he'll do at 138# is uncertain. Last year he was pinned in the first round of regionals. Womack has put together an undefeated season, but has not wrestled a strong schedule. Last year he did not compete in the state tourney process. Clearly, the possibility exists for darkhorses to grab a state berth. The question still unanswered is exactly who they might be.

The Toledo Regional has seven or eight high-quality performers most of whom are distinguished by the ability to score a lot of points and a tradition of uneven results. Sweeney and Randleman both fit that mold, but they also possess outstanding athletic ability. Sweeney is ready to show what he can do after some stops and starts while Randleman has already done some amazing things. Last year he wrestled on the freshman team until year's end when he (and several others) were brought up to fill some vacancies. He then qualified for the state tourney and came within a point of placing. Like many younger wrestlers, he has peaks and valleys. Homewood has probably been the main man on a strong Lima Shawnee team. He has won several major tourneys (Rogers and Tiffin) and has a solid chance of qualification. Ferguson, my fourth choice, has been a consistent performer all year, and will surprise a lot of better known people at this regional. Duffer, a possible fourth choice, recently upset Sweeney and has placed high in every tourney effort. The Columbus duo of Newcomb and Buckalew may not quite match up talent-wise, but they are steady performers. One or both could slip into the top four by taking advantage of small mistakes by the top group. Chandler and Potter would seem to have little chance here, but the latter has a way of placing in big tourneys. Watch out for him.

The Mentor Regional is not particularly strong since the defection of Slevinski and Barto to 132#. In fact, this is a real opportunity weight where some darkhorses can get to Columbus. Helderman has never been all that impressive, but he may be the best of this group. Dosen and Lauric are journeyman performers who can consistently beat the average wrestler, but have trouble with the top-echelon boys. The freshman Splete is on a high-impact learning curve, but few freshmen qualify for Columbus at the middle weights from this regional. It would not surprise me to see some of the fine 132's who look to get left out re-certify at this weight class.

There is much the same situation at the Southwestern Regional. Doll and Bratton head up what appears to be a very weak group with Stanton, perhaps, a half-step behind. Walker, who switched places with the redoubtable Smith, was a solid 132#, but how he'll do at this class is unclear. Look for some surprises here.

145#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: GUY PALKER (ST. EDWARD)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 2. J. Collins (St. Ignatius) | 12. Connors (Lake Catholic) |
| 3. ① R. Taylor (Lorain Southview) | 13. Brown (Massillon Perry) |
| 4. ② Schetter (Dayton Wayne) | 14. Burch (Mansfield) |
| 5. Mullen (Cincinnati Elder) | 15. DeNero (Galion) |
| 6. McFarland (Tiffin) | 16. Anderson/Herrara (Oregon Clay) |
| 7. Luebke (Clayton Northmont) | 17. ③ Holman (Lebanon) |
| 8. Legan (Willoughby South) | 18. Hutchings (Hillard) |
| 9. ④ Holder (Springfield South) | 19. Haefele (Worthington) |
| 10. Saultz (Amherst) | 20. Patterson (Norton) |
| 11. ⑤ Wilson (Stow) | 21. Lomano (Westerville South) |

Defending state champion Guy Palker is rated as one of the best seniors in Ohio, but he has, as of this writing, not wrestled a single bout this year. A dislocated elbow at an early scrimmage has sidelined him for eight weeks now and cast doubt on his ability to repeat as champion. Questions include conditioning and the lingering effects of an injury that often hampers wrestlers for up to a year or more. Nonetheless, Palker is so physical and determined that he still should control a weight class that boasts no one of his same stature. In some ways Palker's biggest foe may be himself as he must overcome the fears of re-injury.

The Mentor Regional is brutally strong at this weight class. Everybody will, of course, be watching and measuring Palker's progress, but many of the best 145's are here. Collins, down from 155#, is undefeated so far and has won the Solon, Brunswick, and St. X tourneys, defeating both Taylor and Schetter. Whether he can sustain the strong early performance is the only question. Taylor, a state qualifier last year, is a devastating thrower whose loss to Collins may have been more a matter of conditioning than ability. Also injured for much of the season, he needs to reach top form early because his district is loaded and one slip could cost him even a regional appearance. Legan has been on the fringes of greatness for some time, but has never cashed in on it. Should he be ready to go six hard minutes every time, he could well be the fourth qualifier. However, Brecksville champ Saultz is so strong and physical he cannot be overlooked while Connors was one match from Columbus last year. So far we've listed six high-quality performers all of whom are in the top dozen within the state and only four who will qualify. In addition, this regional features Sayre (Midpark), Ocheltree (Midview), Loy (Lakewood, Chonko (Padua, Maric (North Royalton) and Cardaman (Maple Hts.). All of these boys are quality performers who have been unlucky enough to fall into the wrong weight class.

The Southwest Regional is also strong, but not to the same level or depth as Mentor. Schetter, Luebke and Mullen were all state qualifiers last year although they were 0-4 at that competition. Schetter is probably the best of this trio although he has lost to Collins at St. X. Only a junior, he should place. Mullen was eliminated by Taylor last year but, again, he looks ready to claim a low place. The OCC should be an interesting test of his abilities. Luebke got a tough draw at Columbus last year and was outscored 38-7 in surrendering two technical falls. He will be far readier in 1987. The fourth spot should be a duel between Holder and Holman. I favor the former although Holman has made amazing progress.

At Toledo, there are a lot of wrestlers who are equivalent to the second echelon at Mentor, but here they'll have a chance at qualifying. I like McFarland the best and I see him in the hunt for a low place. After that, it's chaos with the potential for a real donnybrook. Burch and DeNero were both state qualifiers last year although neither of them lasted six full minutes there. They have their own private war based on geographical proximity. Anderson (or maybe Herrera) will be here and both scored regional wins before being eliminated last year. The Columbus area's Hutching, Haefele and Lomano are long-shots at this class, but have the possibility of qualification. Ramirez (Fremont Ross) is another darkhorse possibility.

The Massillon Regional is the weakest of the four, and, is also wide open. I've listed Wilson and Brown as nominal favorites, but their results do not lend real confidence to this assessment. Wilson was 5th at Brunswick, for example, while Brown was 5th at North Canton. Patterson is another possibility as is Lenzo (Kent Roosevelt), but we're not talking heavy-duty here. This regional's qualifiers will never see the second round at Columbus.

PROJECTED CHAMPION: JAY LANDOLFO (ST. EDWARD)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 2. ② Mayse (Marion Harding) | 11. Cone (Clayton Northmont) |
| 3. Fringer (Medina) | 12. Chamberlin (New Philadelphia) |
| 4. Morgan (Normandy) | 13. Orazen (Upper Arlington) |
| 5. ② M. Collins (St. Ignatius) | 14. Miller (Milford) |
| 6. ④ Alspaugh (Sylvania Northview) | 15. Lovelace (Cleveland Hts) |
| 7. Jarvis (Uniontown Lake) | 16. Karns (Fairborn) |
| 8. ④ Gibbs (North Canton) | 17. Haely (Defiance) |
| 9. Shaut (Cincinnati Oakhills) | 18. Hoppel (Lisbon Beaver Local) |
| 10. ⑤ Doss (Gahanna) | 19. Christian (Fairfield) |
| | 20. Shattuck (Valley Forge) |

Winning individual state titles at adjacent weight classes is an unusual achievement for any "AAA" team. Since 1981, for example, only two schools have accomplished that feat -- Walsh Jesuit once and St. Edward's five times including rare triples three times. Again this year it seems likely to happen once more with Palker and Jay Landolfo. Indeed the weak link in this chain is probably Palker since Landolfo towers over this field and should win comfortably. Last year he finished 36-1 -- his only loss in the state semi-finals to Dave Walters. While not exactly an upset the final 14-5 margin was startling and suggests that Landolfo lost his concentration when behind. This year that is not likely to happen.

One of Landolfo's chief concerns is Mayse who has twice captured a state 3rd place medal at 145#. Still Gucciardo handled him last year and Landolfo likely surpasses that standard this season. Mayse, so far, has remained undefeated and should remain unblemished till meeting Landolfo. Also at Toledo are state qualifier Alspaugh, the powerful Doss, and the improving Orazen. None of the trio is upset-proof, as they have recently proven, and any or all of them could be knocked out of regional competition. The tag team of Anderson/Herrera are a potential threat while Haely and Law are strong WBL wrestlers. The last three openings should provoke strenuous competition.

State qualifier Fringer is a blocky, powerful competitor who has cruised to an undefeated record including a big win over Collins. Last year he lost a one-point overtime battle to state champion Schmidt, but Landolfo will probably beat him badly on his feet. His regional is a rugged one. Gibbs won the North Canton and wrestles an unorthodox pell-mell style that is tough to contain. I haven't seen many North Canton wrestlers use this approach, but it seems to work for Gibbs. Jarvis is strong and rather defensively oriented. Landolfo had trouble scoring on him at North Canton (when they were both at 167#) and only beat him 4-1. Chamberlin is a dominant force south of Canton and should be the fourth qualifier. Former state qualifier Ice (East Liverpool) has not been rated because of his infrequent appearances, but should he be at this weight and in shape he could well be a factor.

The Mentor Regional has three outstanding candidates and then lapses into mediocrity. After Landolfo, state qualifier Morgan has matured into a fine wrestler. Mayse crushed him last year, but its likely to be much closer this year. Morgan, an exceptional student, uses that intelligence to good advantage in his wrestling as well. The other Collins twin has won the Solon, Brunswick, and St. X titles which has included wins over Gibbs, Orazen, and Shaut. His only defeats were to Landolfo and Fringer, and this junior looks ready for state competition. The fourth state berth is certainly available. Lovelace is strong and has some lovely upper-body throws, but may lack consistency. However, he is very dangerous in every individual encounter. Hoppel and Shattuck are also potential qualifiers, but people like Benson (Amherst) Chenelle (Lake Catholic) and Weiner (Shaker Hts) are, too. The pairings will be so crucial since wrestlers in the same half-bracket with two of my top three are basically out of the picture. Thus, a district title at Mayfield or Fitch is the best hope for a solid opportunity.

The Southwestern Regional doesn't appear ready to make much impact at this weight class. Shaut was a match from state qualification at 132#, and, was a solid 3rd at Fairfield this year. He's probably the best in the area. Cone and Miller have had solid seasons and could be factors at the regional level (but assuredly not at the state meet). State qualifier Karns is a question mark and will have to hustle to qualify once again. Christian, a loser to Karns in his go-to-state bout, and Ramey (Springfield South) are other possibilities.

167#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: G. T. TAYLOR (LORAIN SOUTHVIEW)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 2. ⁽²⁾ S. Buddie (St. Ignatius) | 11. Klusman (Cincinnati Elder) |
| 3. Dudgeon (Xenia) | 12. Evert (Marion Harding) |
| 4. M. Foley (Worthington) | 13. Talley (Clayton Northmont) |
| 5. Brunner (Beloit West Branch) | 14. Cullum (Holland Springfield) |
| 6. ⁽⁶⁾ Fickes (Centerville) | 15. Lewis (Colerain) |
| 7. ⁽⁴⁾ Wiewora (Toledo St. Francis) | 16. O'Conner (Warren Howland) |
| 8. Lackner (Madison) | 17. Hatzarides (GlenOak) |
| 9. ⁽³⁾ DelRosa (Nordonia) | 18. Filiaggi (Elyria) |
| 10. ⁽⁵⁾ Akers (Tiffin) | 19. Staats (Norton) |
| | 20. S. Ramirez (Fremont Ross) |

This is the best and most exciting weight class in "AAA" this year, and is one that fans from all-around the state look forward to with great anticipation. It features some of the best senior talent in the state and is likely to produce some enduring masterpieces that will be woven into the memories of longtime spectators. My choice is G. T. Taylor the superstar from Lorain Southview who was 3rd last year after a mild semi-final upset.

Sensationally quick and strong, Taylor will be a college All-American as early as his freshman season, but he is no cinch to win here. I do believe he can beat anyone willing to attack and wrestle, but has trouble with those who back and stall hoping for a break. He can become impatient and over-extend himself. Steve Buddie has had a great year after finishing 4th last season at 145#. He has already defeated Dudgeon and Foley and has a dazzling assortment of moves. He will be far taller than Taylor -- as much as 6 or 8 inches. Defending state champion Dudgeon is a cautious counter-wrestler who seems to wrestle just well enough to win. While everyone watched Taylor and Genovese last year he came away with the big prize, and could well do so again. Taylor does not match up well with his style. Foley had a won match over Buddie at the St. X which he threw away, but he is very good. He captured the North Canton title at 175#, and was a state qualifier at 185# last season. Brunner and Fickes wrestled for 5th last year at this weight with Brunner winning by a point. In an average season these boys -- with normal improvement -- would be weight class favorites. This year they'll have a difficult time improving on their last year's finish.

Taylor and Buddie should dominate the Mentor Regional with their great scoring ability. Lackner is undefeated and crushed every foe at Kenston, but he is not nearly good enough to match up with the top two. There is a major fall-off after him with people like Filiaggi, O'Conner, and Zarzycki (Holy Name) as possible fourth qualifiers. Anderson had he remained at this weight would have been a challenger to Lackner and an almost sure qualifier, but he seems destined to wrestle at 175#.

Defending state champion Dudgeon must deal with Fickes at the Dayton Regional. Both these boys favor low-scoring, strategical bouts which Dudgeon always wins. Fickes will have to adopt a different approach to close the gap that now exists between them. State qualifier Klusman has missed part of the year, but should be favored for the third qualifying berth. After him Talley, Lewis, and Heineman (Talawanda) are possible fourth choices. They will be over-matched at the state level.

Foley will have solid competition at Toledo. Akers missed state competition by two points last year while Wiewora is equally good. They have split a pair of bouts this year and given the unfairness of the consolation system could possibly capture a low place. Evert is a good fourth choice, but Collum and Ramirez will challenge him. Thompson (Upper Arlington) could help his team's chances with a qualification at this weight.

The Massillon Regional will focus on state place winner Brunner and two-time Brecksville champ DelRosa. Brunner was a state semi-finalist last year losing a 5-2 bout to Dudgeon and then getting nicked by a one-point upset the next round. DelRosa had two one-point upset losses at the district level last year in a complete turnabout from his fine regular season performance. However, he was only a sophomore then and has mentally matured to the point where he'll be Brunner's main competition. The rest of the field is extremely weak with Staats or Hatzarides as possibilities.

PROJECTED CHAMPION: BOB GENOVESE (1) (SOLON)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2. (2) Kerr (Toledo Waite) | 11. (2) Everetts (Gahanna) |
| 3. (3) M. Buddie (St. Ignatius) | 12. Beier (Toledo St. John) |
| 4. Hart (Worthington) | 13. LeForce (Franklin) |
| 5. Ferguson (West Chester Lakota) | 14. Bryant (Lorain) |
| 6. Crawford (North Canton) | 15. House (Toledo Rogers) |
| 7. Ferguson (Cincinnati Princeton) | 16. Lowery (New Philadelphia) |
| 8. Fee (St. Edward) | 17. Parsons (Beloit West Brnach) |
| 9. (4) Keenan (Steubenville) | 18. Ford (Lebanon) |
| 10. Anderson/Eddie (Euclid) | 19. Saleeba (Fairfield) |
| | 20. Huffman (Lexington) |

This is yet another weight class where I'm picking against the defending state champion -- the third time already. However, there is just no way I can not choose Genovese based on his unblemished record and his dominating performances so far. In actuality, Genovese lost intensity after beating old rival Taylor in the semi-finals last year or he, too, would be defending a title. Already he has won the Solon, Kenston, and North Canton tourneys (all at 185#) without really being challenged. He already has the attributes of a big-time collegiate wrestler. However, it may not be all that easy. Kerr is the defending titlist here and he may surprise me again this year just as he did last season when he beat York and Bryan in consecutive appearances. He has had some injury problems, but seems healthy now, and although he has lost twice at 185# he will not lose easily at this weight. He seems to frustrate opponents and force them into errors that they don't generally make. Right behind this duo is the fabulous sophomore Mike Buddie with an undeniable talent so large that he may start cashing it in for state titles as early as this year. Last year he was a regional semi-finalist as a freshman, and this year is only defeats have been administered by Genovese and Holman.

The Mentor Regional should be dominated by Buddie and Genovese who emerge from the same district and thus should be bracketed apart. Fee and Anderson are a quantum jump behind them and will have to wrestle well to qualify. Fee is a stubborn competitor absent many of the moves of his lighter colleagues, but he can be difficult to beat. Anderson is flashier, but prone to the unfortunate mistake. Behind them are Brecksville champ Bryant and a myriad of other hopefuls. Clearly this weight class divides into two unequal classes at Mentor -- Genovese and Buddie and everybody else.

Kerr, will have to contend with some powerful competition in Toledo. Hart missed the early part of the season, but showed well on his return winning the strong St. X tourney. He was a state qualifier at this weight last year and so he should be very strong. His only loss was to Buddie by the surprisingly one-sided score of 9-1. Again as at Mentor there is a real chasm between this duo and the rest of the field. Everetts was a regional quarter-finalist before being pinned by state champion Kerr, and on the latter's upset loss disappeared because of the "time-saving" consolation system. Regional qualifiers Beier, House, and Campbell (Galion) are other possibilities along with the rapidly improving Huffman. This latter boy is the twin of the more successful 185# and came into his own at the Gorman Inv. pinning his way through the tourney including a fall over Campbell.

The Southwest is dominated by the two unrelated Fergusons who have dominated the Cincinnati area. It is still a question mark, though, as to how they'll match up to the northern boys. Again there is a big drop-off after this twosome with LeForce, Ford, and maybe, Saleeba the next best group. However, several other possibilities exist and all three may be vulnerable.

Crawford and the rapidly improving Keenan are the top choices at Massillon, but this is a weak regional and even the top two will have trouble placing at Columbus. Keenan may soon be a clear factor better as he keeps showing increasing improvement. Lowery, the powerful sophomore, is a possible third choice, but his reaction to regional pressure is unclear. Parsons and Robbins (Massillon Perry) are other choices, but this is not a strong group at all.

185#

PROJECTED CHAMPION: REX HOLMAN (UPPER ARLINGTON)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 2. ³ Bryan (St. Ignatius) | 12. Huffman (Lexington) |
| 3. ⁴ Walczak (Maumee) | 13. Smith (Akron Firestone) |
| 4. Mullins (Dayton Chaminade) | 14. ² Randolph (Wadsworth) |
| 5. ⁶ Heidemann (Cincinnati Elder) | 15. Baker (Trotwood Madison) |
| 6. Hawkins (Austintown Fitch) | 16. Dreger (Ravenna) |
| 7. Dyar (Cincinnati Northwestern) | 17. Gold (Logan) |
| 8. Monroe (Marion-Franklin) | 18. Vanover (Fairfield) |
| 9. ⁵ P. Foley (Worthington) | 19. Smith (GlenOak) |
| 10. Eyler (Galion) | 20. Bright (Chardon) |
| 11. Reid (Cleveland St. Joseph) | 21. Howard (Westerville North) |

In the future when we look back at the decade of the 1980's one of the distinguishing characteristics of Ohio wrestling will be development of a number of outstanding big men. Davies, Funk, Coleman, Potokar, and some others will be remembered, but then everyone will agree that the greatest of them all was Rex Holman. Bold words for someone who has yet to win his first state crown, but the big junior from Upper Arlington is a devastating force. He faces reasonably tough opposition, but I don't think it'll make any real difference. Bryan, who eliminated him in the semi-finals last year, should be his top competition, but this time their individual outcome will come out differently. My longest "AAA" winning streak is at this weight where I've chosen five champs in a row. Its kind of comforting to realize that Holman is carrying my standard here in 1987.

Some of Holman's top competition will be at Toledo. Walczak was a semi-finalist last year lost to Mitchell, suffered an injury, and defaulted down to 6th place. In a normal season he might be looking at a possible title, but his best hope is second -- and since he'll draw away from Holman at Columbus that is a distinct possibility. Monroe is a sensational all-around athlete just coming into his own in this sport. His recent victory over Kerr solidifies his stature in the Top Ten and suggests he may move even higher. This is the kind of competitor who when he becomes confident becomes very difficult to defeat. Foley got stuck wrestling heavyweight last year, but even so made it to the regional quarter-finals. This season at 185# he should check in as the fourth qualifier. However, there is still other top quality competition. State qualifier Huffman crushed Monroe last year, and will certainly be difficult to brush aside at this weight. He could easily creep into the favored four with a single mild upset. Eyler pinned Huffman at the Gorman and has been on a prolonged pinning streak. He, too, will challenge the top four at this regional.

Bryan, a state runner-up last year, has been at heavyweight all year. I don't think it has helped him any since he tried only his most basic, safest moves against the big boys. Now back at 185# he'll need to adjust to the faster, more mobile big men. Already Foley has upset him, but I expect him to be in better form by tourney time. Besides the Mentor Regional isn't all that tough, although it cannot be taken for granted either. Hawkins is an amazing physical specimen, but Genovese totally out-slicked him when he was at 185#. Do not go upper-body with this wrestler. State qualifier Reid has lost to Bryan and Hawkins and drew with Foley and is not a sure-shot for qualification. However, only people like Bright, Vennis (Warren Howland), and Vranesevic (Normandy) are competitive making the last spot very wide-open.

There is a lot of placement material at the Dayton Regional. Mullins, Heidemann, and Dyar are all rock-solid performers with good credentials. Dyar lost an overtime criteria bout at regionals last year while Heidemann was eliminated in that same round. Mullins, however, is a state qualifier. This year Dyar beat Mullins on criteria and gave Holman his closest bout to date. Heidemann won the Cincinnati Holiday Tourney and the trio, all told, is very strong. Vanover and Baker are also good 185#ers and should have the inside track for that fourth spot. Harmon (Dayton Stebbins) is another possibility.

In contrast to the other sites the Massillon Regional is defenseless. Nobody in that area has been all that impressive with Randolph and Smith, perhaps, being the best. Nobody here has to have the slightest thought about where on the mantelpiece to put their state medal. In fact, the entire qualifying quartet will be fortunate to win a bout at Columbus.

HVY.

PROJECTED CHAMPION: PAUL LONG (MAYFIELD)

TOP CONTENDERS:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 2. (4) Frimel (North Olmsted) | 13. (3) Vaseaney (Holy Name) |
| 3. Shade (Mansfield Madison) | 14. Conner (Toledo Rogers) |
| 4. Rutledge (Dayton Meadowdale) | 15. Harder (Upper Arlington) |
| 5. Boon (North Canton) | 16. Ford (Lebanon) |
| 6. Wolf (West Carrollton) | 17. Shilling (Massillon) |
| 7. (6) Whatmore (Toledo Start) | 18. Kowalski (Toledo Central Catholic) |
| 8. (5) Kintz (Canton McKinley) | 19. Brewer (Euclid) |
| 9. Henthorn (Ashland) | 20. Frazier (Gahanna) |
| 10. (7) Gill (Watkins Memorial) | 21. Baird (Cincinnati LaSalle) |
| 11. Davis (Milford) | 22. Lahr (Pickerington) |
| 12. Edwards (Alliance) | 23. Ramsey (E. Liverpool) |
| | 24. Phillips (Nordonia) |

Letters and cards have been pouring in from big men all over the state begging me not to choose them for the heavyweight title. Fear of the famed Brakeman Jinx has been known to cause 275# behemoths to shake uncontrollably when confronted with its awful reality. Stephen Spielberg is considering a new horror film called "Brian Brakeman and the Arena of Doom" based on some of my more recent picks. After all, only once in the past ten years has my choice actually been crowned champ (Vaughn Broadnax in 1980) and even then had the bout been five seconds longer he would have lost. I've had outstanding choices lose to freak pins, first-round falls (when ahead 9-0), poor officiating, broken ankles, one-point screamers, and California move-ins. This year I feel very confident (gulp!) that Paul Long will exorcise this jinx once and for all with a triumphant march to the crown. The last of five wrestling brothers (all heavyweights) at Mayfield he has the size, speed, and strength to win. A fifth place finisher last year, Long lost a 10-10, 6-5 ot bout that would have been the key to a state final appearance.

Long's chief threat would appear to be Frimel a beautifully proportioned 215#er with outstanding atheletic ability. Like Long he is big-time football, but he has also wrestled most of his life as so that he is skilled craftsman on the mat. Long probably is 20 pounds heavier and that could well be the difference. Nobody else in the regional has the remotest chance for a state place and, in fact, the last two qualifiers are likely to remain a mystery until the regionals are completed. I've listed Brewer and Vaseaney, but other possibilities are Aborn (Willoughby South), Pruitt (Lorain), Setta (St. Edward and Bobish (Maple Hts).

At Toledo, Schade seems to have pulled ahead of a number of other long-term foes to become #1 in this area. A state qualifier last year he has defeated a number of other regional headliners and could challenge everyone in this competition. His regional is crowded with solid candidates that are so even its difficult to differentiate them. Whatmore, Conner, and Kowalski are all from Toledo schools and all collected regional wins last year -- with Conner making it to States and a first-round loss to Long. The mobile Whatmore seems best this year with the fast-improving Kowalski a real threat. The Columbus contingent consists of Gill, Harder, Frazier, and Lahr again all were regional competitors last year, but none came close to state qualification. Gill seems strongest, but they are not that far apart. Then Henthorn and Stetter (Defiance) represent the outlying areas both having regional losses to Shade last year -- Henthorn's in overtime in the go-to-state bout. All in all, this will be a manic competition for just four spots.

Rutledge surprised nearly everyone last year by rolling (and I mean that literally) into the state semi-finals. He then was pinned 3 straight times (twice under a minute) and finished 6th. Wrestlers in the Dayton city schools don't always get a lot of good competition, but Rutledge continues to improve in spite of it. His big weapon is a cute little roll that has provided him with a boatload of falls. State qualifier Wolf may be a better all around wrestler and his 1-0 loss to Long last year indicates solid achievement. He'll be a threat to anyone. Davis was a district champ and regional quarter-finalist last year, but an unlikely draw kept him out of the consolation picture. Ford and Baird are other possibilities with Newell (Xenia) a darkhorse. Good, solid competition here.

Massillon is beset with question marks. The mammoth Boon is an inexperienced wrestler with outstanding tools. Winner of the North Canton, Medina, and St. X tourneys he should be a handful for anyone. Still heavyweights lacking experience are prime victims of the fluky fall at heavyweight. Kintz seems unknown to most, but he missed state qualification by a single point last year. Again a weak schedule hampers him and he, too, is the type wrestler who is a candidate for the upset loss. Edwards has made substantial improvement and may be better than originally projected. The rest of the crop here is very weak unless we get some quick move-ins from the Toledo Regional. Schilling, Ramsey, Phillips, Burwell (Massillon Perry), and Powell (Beloit West Branch) are only state candidates because this is a weak regional.

TEAMS

1. **St. Edward** -- Ten consecutive state titles is a magnificent achievement that would have seemed totally impossible a decade ago. It will tie St. Edward's with Maple Hts. for most team titles and could push their number of individual titles during this time span to nearly 30. However, it may not come quite as easily as anticipated especially since St. Ed's has not wrestled up to its potential in the last two state meets. While Landolfo and Fried have performed admirably all year and should win, it has been

people like Skelton and Viancourt that have had problems in Columbus. Should that happen again only Castellana looks able to pick up the slack although Tomkovicz, Helderman, and Fee have some potential to score. The big question mark is Palker who if he can author a successful return will not only win at 145#, but inspire his teammates.

2. ST. IGNATIUS -- An upper-weight juggernaut that could still give Ed's a thrill or two. Both Collins twins should place with Steve Buddie and Bryan as possible finalist. Mike Buddie, a sophomore phenomenon at 175#, may lose the last bout of his high school career at States or he may not lose at all. The big problems will be to get scoring from any of the low weights including state qualifier Voth, and an easy transition back to 185# for Bryan.
3. UPPER ARLINGTON -- Holman is so good it is scary and he gives Upper Arlington a sure champion. McLellan could also win a title, but after that scoring points will be tough. The suddenly fierce Pagniano could help as might Orazen or Stout.
4. SOLO -- A group of exceptional lightweights and the marvelous Genovese make for an outstanding team. I can't quite see Minadeo repeating as champ, but should that happen and Hamm, Canitano, and Lally pitch in this team might have the runner-up trophy.
5. NORTH CANTON HOOVER -- Elsass is exceptional while Boon and Gibbs could both score heavily at the state. They'll need help from people like Crawford and Heid if they want to move even one place higher, however.
6. FAIRFIELD -- The lighter Laflin could well be a finalist while Baker has the same potential. If the other Laflin and Murray can qualify and a couple of the big men like Christian or Saleeba get lucky this team could roll. The big question mark is how Duncan will do at 132#.
7. LORAIN SOUTHVIEW -- G. T. Taylor may be one of the five best seniors in the state and he'll have plenty of help from his teammates as well. His brother Robert, if healthy, should place high at 145# while Kopp has the potential to do well at the unsettled 119# class. If Carreras, Senquiz, or Bermudez can chip in this team could make the top five.
8. XENIA -- This looks pretty much like a three-man team, but what a sensational trio. State champ Dudgeon always seems to do whatever is needed to win while Hoskins and Smith could be finalists.
9. NORDONIA -- A team that will benefit from the regional shifting which now puts them at Massillon. State finalist Andrassy will score in double figures, and Gillmor and DelRosa have the potential to do the same. What they need is help from Drake, Jim Andrassy, or Phillips in order to move up.

10. GALION -- A physically strong team that is laden with experienced seniors. Long and Kintner are the twin hubs while Eyler has done exceedingly well so far. If state qualifier DeNero and Chandler can pitch in this team will easily be in the Top Ten.
11. WORTHINGTON -- The team revolves around the upper weight troika of the two Foleys and Hart. However, Newcomb has been solid at 138# and Miller, if he is ready, could score at 155#. A typical well-balanced Worthington squad.
12. MAPLE HTS. -- Really more of a dual meet squad than a tourney team. However, Slevinski is flat-out excellent and could be state champ. Whether people like Prusha, Atienza, Monachino, and Cardaman can contribute is problematical, and, if not, this team will fall out of the top twenty.
13. NORTH OLMSTED -- Two finalists score a lot of points, but both Smith and Primel will have to really battle to get there. Machovina is a great freshman and Kasler a solid junior, but they both may be a year away. If Cianciola returns this team will be dynamite in 1988.