

2021 Ranger Report

Kentucky High School State Wrestling Championship Preview

I never thought this day would come, but it is here. My final walk onto a high school wrestling mat with one of my sons competing. Even more painful knowing how much we missed out on due to the pandemic compounded with the grade reclassification. Oh well, that is just my selfish sadness of anticipating missing the thousands of hours spent together preparing for success and seeing them set crazy high goals and do the work to reach them. And yes, I have no problem admitting my boys were way better than I ever was before they even finished middle school. We all know wrestling teaches us to grind through the pain and adversity and struggles of life, but I can't be too upset with the great opportunities wrestling has given my boys beyond high school and I now have the chance to follow those journeys at the next level.

While I'm not on the "just be happy we had a season" train, I do think we should have some gratitude that we have been able to make it to this point in our wrestling season. Many of us have seen that it could be done and watched it happen in all the states around us and at large national events. But sometimes those in leadership positions aren't willing to do the work required to make the right things happen so we must settle for something less and "be happy" we got more than nothing because that's what happened to someone else. We all need to keep these things in mind when we have the chance to vote for our leaders and put men/women of action into those positions and not just figureheads who act like puppets for the status quo. This is the greatest sport on the planet. I don't care about popularity or numbers, it just is. We have some of the best people involved and if we get out of their way and let them do what they do best, Kentucky wrestling can flourish and we will have the opportunity to see college all americans and national champions from all around our state. Or we can continue the insanity and keep doing what we've done for years and HOPE for different results. Let me tell you, it ain't happening.

I have to call out a few men who fit right in to the mold of the fabulous people involved in our sport. Great coaches and even better men. These guys have done tremendous work for years and years and continue to help our kids get better on the mat AND off. They are humble, selfless, Christian men who gladly help any kid who walks into their room no matter who they are or where they come from. Joe Burroughs and Isaac Knable have supported me in so many ways over the last decade or so I can't say thank you enough. They simply ask how they can help without expectation of anything in return for their service. Also Rusty Parks and FCA wrestling. I've probably told this story a few times before, but growing up in Harrison County we were taught to hate everything Woodford County. So I naturally had to hate Rusty until I actually met him and talked to him as a coach and a person. Totally changed my perspective on how competitive we are in this sport and how often we limit our own progress by these crazy traditions. All of these men have contributed and helped me put together our usual state finalist package. Be on the lookout after semis on Saturday.

On to the event. I didn't feel it was right to change my picks based on the semi-state results. After all it is the same tournament. So I simply used part 2 of this report to highlight things that happened last weekend and point out items of interest for tomorrow. We saw a lot of really good wrestlers have their season end a week ago. Some were 3rd or 4th best in the state, but happened to be 3rd best in their semi-state. Unfortunately, some were seniors and won't get that next chance. But that's what happens when people who don't understand our sport try to set up the structure for how our season will play out. It's not the end of the world and some people will argue the purpose of the state series is to crown the champion. That is one purpose. Wrestling is about much more than that and making those steps to qualify and place are huge in development and progression in the sport. Also, the current setup takes away one of the biggest displays of courage and guts and mental toughness an athlete can show when you come with only one goal in mind (to take home gold) but come up short and battle back for a third place finish. That is grit and toughness and heart that is sometimes even more impressive than winning it all.

I definitely felt the absense of my man Brandon this year. I really need to find a way to loop him in from Florida. Or maybe I need to head to the beach once a month for ranking updates. Anyway, all mistakes or wrong picks get blamed on Brandon, ha ha.

106 lbs.

Favorite: Colin Tucker (11, Wayne Co)

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| 2. Jordyn Raney (7, Union Co) | 14. Jeremiah Wilbers (10, Campbell Co) |
| 3. Breydan Whorton (9, Larue Co) | 15. Troy Gardner (10, Ashland Blazer) |
| 4. Brandon Bruner (12, Bryan Station) | 16. Malik Porter (10, Central) |
| 5. Miller Brown (8, Oldham Co) | 17. JaRi Campbell (10, Christian Co) |
| 6. TJ Meyer (8, Walton Verona) | 18. Sebastian Vega (9, Conner) |
| 7. Morgan Frederick (9, Trinity (Louisville)) | 19. Moses Navaro (10, McCreary Central) |
| 8. Jack Willard (8, Bullitt East) | 20. Nicholas Hiland (10, St. Xavier) |
| 9. Amari Hardin (10, John Hardin) | 21. Jacob McDonald (9, Taylor Co) |
| 10. Johnny Nance (9, Ryle) | 22. Ethan Davis (8, Grant Co) |
| 11. James Morris (8, Johnson Central) | 23. Aydn Funkhouser (11, Harrison Co) |
| 12. Alexander Green (12, Valley) | 24. Anayah Rivas (12, North Bullitt) |
| 13. Trushawn Matt (10, Hopkinsville) | 25. Anthony Condi (8, Frederick Douglas) |

Returning placers: Colin Tucker 5th @ 106, Amari Hardin 7th @ 106

Surprise placers: No one really; simply swap Morris for Bruner which was a highlight matchup for last weekend

Who didn't make it: Bruner was upset in round 1 of semi-state and Morris stepped right in to grab a placement spot for Johnson Central.

Team title race implications: Morris should finish top 6 this weekend to give some momentum for Johnson to make a push for the team race

Best first round match: #6 Brown v #3 Whorton should be interesting in the 4/5 slot

General notes: No real surprises from semi-state. Ranking wise Meyer upset Brown, but that was 6v7. The top 5-6 guys here are all tough and could have some wild matches.

113 lbs.

Favorite: Matthew Meyer (12, St. Xavier)

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| 2. Adam Williams (12, Johnson Central) | 14. Cole Harrod (10, Anderson Co) |
| 3. Mason Orth (10, Campbell Co) | 15. Steven Smith (11, Frederick Douglas) |
| 4. Hunter Jenkins (8, Union Co) | 16. Kai Delacruz (10, Pleasure Ridge Park) |
| 5. Rider Trumble (8, Ryle) | 17. Maximus Beltran (12, Central Hardin) |
| 6. Leland Reeves (9, Taylor Co) | 18. TJ Sulfsted (9, Walton Verona) |
| 7. Jeremiah Baird (11, McCreary Central) | 19. Leydon Nelson (10, Harrison Co) |
| 8. Hunter Luttrell (9, Fairdale) | 20. Tristan Bryant (10, Fern Creek) |
| 9. Collin Teutsch (10, Caldwell Co) | 21. Aiden Marquis (10, Conner) |
| 10. Kelton Bailey (9, Western Hills) | 22. Holden Schneider (9, Hopkinsville) |
| 11. Aidan Cook (8, Lafayette) | 23. Jaxon Staggs (9, Great Crossing) |
| 12. Nico Plumeri (10, Trinity (Louisville)) | 24. Davin Skinner (9, West Carter) |
| 13. David Griffith (12, Meade Co) | 25. Clayton Bradley (8, Montgomery Co) |

Returning placers: Matthew Meyer 3rd @ 113, Adam Williams 2nd @ 106, Leland Reeves 3rd @ 106, Collin Teutsch 6th @ 106

Surprise placers: None

Who didn't make it: As expected

Team title race implications: Jenkins and Trumble coming out of the 5/6 seeds could make some noise by advancing to the semis and making a run for a top 4 placement.

Best first round match: #3 Orth v #4 Jenkins is huge in the 4/5 slot, this is a rematch from late January where Orth won 9-5. #6 Trumble v #7 Reeves could also be interesting with Ryle looking to make up points in the team race.

General notes: This is a weight where it feels like the top 2 have separated themselves from the pack. Meyer has been a top competitor for a few years now and as a senior comes in as the favorite. Williams, who lost in the finals last year at 106, is looking to take that next step, but will need to avenge his only loss of the season to Meyer by a score of 5-1.

120 lbs.

Favorite: Spencer Moore (12, Walton Verona)

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| 2. Trayce Eckman (11, Union Co) | 14. Brayden Wells (10, Campbell Co) |
| 3. Rowdy Benner (9, Great Crossing) | 15. Brock Messer (9, Martin County) |
| 4. Timmy Nichols (9, Caldwell Co) | 16. Alex Sauss (9, Bullitt East) |
| 5. Max Speaker (9, St. Xavier) | 17. Tyler Lattin (9, Meade Co) |
| 6. Elijah Baird (10, McCreary Central) | 18. Noah Stanley (12, Holmes) |
| 7. Patrick Meek (11, Johnson Central) | 19. Braedon Kelley (8, Madison Southern) |
| 8. Joe Lampe (8, Male) | 20. Isaac Ogle (11, Bullitt Central) |
| 9. Parker McKee (12, McCracken County) | 21. Daemeion Leavell (7, Christian Co) |
| 10. Joey Sander (11, Ryle) | 22. Noah Toomey (11, Grant Co) |
| 11. Bryce Zumwalt (12, Harrison Co) | 23. Keaton Shott (11, Paul Dunbar) |
| 12. Mason Davis (11, Valley) | 24. Tony Tricase (9, Trinity (Louisville)) |
| 13. Ryan Portwood (12, North Hardin) | 25. Connor Metcalf (9, Larue Co) |

Returning placers: Spencer Moore 1st @ 106, Trayce Eckman 1st @ 113, Joey Sander 8th @ 113

Surprise placers: No one really; simply swap Sander for Benner which was a highlight matchup for last weekend

Who didn't make it: Benner lost in the semis of semi-state as Sander stepped up big time to get Ryle another placer.

Team title race implications: Sander and Meek could be wild card in the consis. Sander has been there and done it before so I have more confidence in him pulling that high placement out this weekend.

Best first round match: #4 Nichols v #6 Sander in the 3/6 slot seems to be a real toss up

General notes: Sets up to be one of the highlight finals match-ups. Battle of two defending state champs with Union County looking to add to their title count and seal the deal on the team race. Yes Spencer skipped a grade so he can't pass big brother's title count, but will have to win a big one here to catch Ryan.

126 lbs.

Favorite: Cole Thomas (11, Ryle)

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| 2. Braedon Herron (10, North Hardin) | 14. Caleb Barnes (9, Johnson Central) |
| 3. Gage Fowler (12, Christian Co) | 15. Ethan Caldwell (9, Anderson Co) |
| 4. George Feree (10, Trinity (Louisville)) | 16. Korrey Mattingly (10, Male) |
| 5. Jason Holden (11, Campbell Co) | 17. Lucas Ricketts (7, Union Co) |
| 6. Evan Browning (10, Boyle Co) | 18. Frank Armstrong (9, Simon Kenton) |
| 7. Keelan Dick (12, Wayne Co) | 19. Chase Bowlin (11, McCreary Central) |
| 8. Bryant Faucett (9, Bullitt East) | 20. Eli Mattingly-Neal (12, St. Xavier) |
| 9. Jayden Frazier (11, Paducah Tilghman) | 21. Cofy Walls (10, Caldwell Co) |
| 10. Landon Crafton (12, Madison Central) | 22. Caleb Lovin (11, Ashland Blazer) |
| 11. Nick Armentano (10, Great Crossing) | 23. Kyle Wojcicki (9, North Oldham) |
| 12. Aiden Roe (11, Central) | 24. Berechiah Hatchett (10, Fern Creek) |
| 13. Charlie Tucker (11, John Hardin) | 25. David Gerkin (12, Apollo) |

Returning placers: Cole Thomas 1st @ 120, Braedon Herron 4th @ 120, Gage Fowler 2nd @ 113, George Feree 4th @ 113

Surprise placers: One of the biggest surprises of semi-state weekend was #23 Caleb Lovin making a wild run through semi-state 4. Continuing the Caleb theme, #18 Caleb Barnes earned JC another kid on the podium by upsetting the top seed last weekend.

Who didn't make it: Fowler would have come into the weekend as one of the guys to possibly make a run to the finals, but instead the senior had to medical forfeit out of semi-state. Browning and Dick were victims of the aforementioned Calebs that got hot at the right time of year.

Team title race implications: Trinity brought a big group to the party, but they are banking on a few guys to carry them on Saturday. Ferree is one of those guys and they need him to make a run to the finals, but pulling off the HUGE upset in the finals would be a game changer.

Best first round match: #4 Frazier v #6 Holden in the 4/5 is a total clash of styles; the other 3 quarters appear to be ranking mis-matches

General notes: Will Lovin continue on his heater this weekend? With 5 of the top 6 ranked wrestlers in the bracket it may be a little tougher this go around. The first of the Paducah Tilghman wrestlers making a run after the year off. Can he make it interesting in the top half of the bracket?

132 lbs.

Favorite: Thomas Hoppes (12, Larue Co)

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| 2. Isaac Thornton (11, Walton Verona) | 14. Chris Begley (10, Madison Southern) |
| 3. Eli Peyton (12, Paducah Tilghman) | 15. Glenn Mayes (10, Union Co) |
| 4. Jacob Cain (11, Johnson Central) | 16. Jaiden Haskins (10, Dupont Manual) |
| 5. Jonah Bowers (11, Campbell Co) | 17. Gus Roberts (10, Great Crossing) |
| 6. Robert Nardelli (10, Madison Central) | 18. Justin Kubiwimanan (10, Lafayette) |
| 7. Ayden Lehman (9, Trinity (Louisville)) | 19. Jacob Fulkerson (10, Central Hardin) |
| 8. Caleb Jarvis (10, Fairdale) | 20. Eli Williams (9, Male) |
| 9. Colin Ross (10, Ryle) | 21. Jeremiah Thomas (11, Conner) |
| 10. Elijah Fields (12, Belfry) | 22. Hunter Hawthorne (9, McCracken County) |
| 11. Riley Johnson (11, Caldwell Co) | 23. Xavier Tello (10, Wayne Co) |
| 12. Dylan Walls (9, Bullitt Central) | 24. Kyle Muoy (11, Bullitt East) |
| 13. Nolan Banfield (10, Woodford Co) | 25. John McDowell (12, South Oldham) |

Returning placers: Thomas Hoppes 2nd @ 126, Isaac Thornton 2nd @ 120, Jacob Cain 4th @ 132, Riley Johnson 7th @ 113, Nolan Banfield 6th @ 120

Surprise placers: No one really, but a semi match that I figured would be tight was won by Begley 8-3 over Nardelli at semi-state

Who didn't make it: Nardelli and Begley entered semi-state ranked #10/#11 and one wasn't making it

Team title race implications: The youngster Lehman doesn't have the best draw to score major points; Cain got the 3 spot and with a semi-state final rematch should get to the semis where he would likely see Thorton who beat him 4-2 in Isaac's first weekend back on the mat.

Best first round match: #5 Bowers v #3 Peyton in the 4/5 should be fun to watch

General notes: One of the seeding mysteries of the weekend. While I can't figure out how they arrived where they are, I believe the general setup of the bracket is as it should be (just flipped) with Thorton on one side as the undefeated returning state runner-up and Hoppes/Peyton on the other side. That top side semi should be a fire matchup.

138 lbs.

Favorite: Devon Herron (11, North Hardin)

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| 2. Austin Grant-Hall (12, Christian Co) | 14. Luke Oliveros (10, South Oldham) |
| 3. Jamison Smith (11, Ryle) | 15. Lucas Hutchison (9, Madison Central) |
| 4. Bryant Beane (10, Trinity (Louisville)) | 16. Logan Wells (10, Bullitt East) |
| 5. Gavin Andreoni (11, Woodford Co) | 17. Mason Schweitzer (10, Walton Verona) |
| 6. Lee Florexille (12, Central) | 18. Mason Polston (11, Central Hardin) |
| 7. Seth Davis (8, Johnson Central) | 19. Xavier Rogers (12, Pike Co Central) |
| 8. Jackson Gonzales (12, Frederick Douglas) | 20. Jaylus Green (10, Fairdale) |
| 9. Keaton Elliot (12, Calloway Co) | 21. Hunter Sproles (11, Cooper) |
| 10. Eric Johnson (12, Simon Kenton) | 22. Gavin Ricketts (10, Union Co) |
| 11. Scotty Villums (12, Male) | 23. Dakota Karr (10, Wayne Co) |
| 12. Cainon Akemon (12, Bourbon Co) | 24. Ayden Puckett (10, Doss) |
| 13. Levi Stull (11, Meade Co) | 25. Jack James (9, Paducah Tilghman) |

Returning placers: Devon Herron 1st @ 126, Austin Grant-Hall 4th @ 138, Keaton Elliot 5th @ 132, Jamison Smith 7th @ 126, Jack James 6th @ 113, Clayton Shaddix 8th @ 106

Surprise placers: A few of these guys came out of semi-state 4; Akemon with the mild upset of Gonzalez in the semis; Villums with the close win over Florexille 8-6 after losing to him twice during the year

Who didn't make it: Florexille and Gonzalez with mild upsets in the semis

Team title race implications: Another weight where one of Trinity's big guns has to show up, Beane pulls the 4 seed, so he should hit defending champ Herron in the semis. But he does have to beat Villums right out of the gate; a match that went 5-3 in the semi-state final. Similar for Ryle as Smith pulled the 3 seed, but hits Andreoni who beat him in the final last weekend.

Best first round match: Both the 4/5 and 3/6 matches (semi-state rematches) look to be barnburners with #5 Beane v #14 Villums and #4 Smith v #6 Andreoni

General notes: This weight was also a little hard to figure out the seeding, but I will admit I didn't dig into them as much as I did last weekend. Most seemed to make sense or at least separate the right kids. This one I think the top 6 are right, just not sure how the order should have gone.

145 lbs.

Favorite: Zac Cowan (12, Madison Central)

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| 2. Malachi Rider (9, Paducah Tilghman) | 14. Hunter Creech (11, Simon Kenton) |
| 3. Reece Goss (11, Johnson Central) | 15. Trayton Stargill (10, Taylor Co) |
| 4. Sam Grandstaff (12, Conner) | 16. Nate Jackson (12, Trinity (Louisville)) |
| 5. Rusty Craddock (12, Ryle) | 17. Ethan Montgomery (9, Boyle Co) |
| 6. Justin Krebs (10, St. Xavier) | 18. Trey Cranfill (10, Oldham Co) |
| 7. Johnathan Bennem (11, Atherton) | 19. JT King (12, Bardstown) |
| 8. Gabe Fortier (10, Larue Co) | 20. Jayden Grays (11, Fern Creek) |
| 9. Micah Bowers (11, Campbell Co) | 21. Caden Rodriguez (10, Meade Co) |
| 10. Julian Cruz (12, McCreary Central) | 22. Michael Watts (10, Harrison Co) |
| 11. Mason Kellett (10, Christian Co) | 23. Payton Votaw (12, Fairdale) |
| 12. Elijah Phan (12, Male) | 24. Alex Hall (11, South Oldham) |
| 13. Luke Chapman (11, Lafayette) | 25. Ronald McGee (12, Hopkinsville) |

Returning placers: Zac Cowan 3rd @ 138, Charlie McKune 2nd @ 132, Malachi Rider 6th @ 138, Reece Goss 7th @ 145, Luke Chapman 7th @ 132, Trevor Villums 8th @ 132

Surprise placers: None

Who didn't make it: As expected

Team title race implications: I feel like Craddock is way better than the 8 here and that could hurt Ryle; I do think he will show that by winning a couple matches on the day and finish top 5, but the bracket is not set up nicely for him. Similarly, Goss pulled the 3 seed, but Grandstaff has been hot after a slow start to the season and that is a rough way to begin the day.

Best first round match: One of the best matches of the opening round #3 Goss v #4 Grandstaff, they met back in January and it was decided in sudden victory. This one should be another battle.

General notes: Assuming Goss navigates his way past Grandstaff again, he will hit a big on in the semis with the freshman Rider. Big team points on the line there to make the finals and a potential 4th match against Cowan.

152 lbs.

Favorite: Ty Lehman (12, Trinity (Louisville))

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| 2. Payne Carr (12, Union Co) | 14. Colton Smallwood (12, McCracken County) |
| 3. Jeffrey Kinley (11, Madison Central) | 15. Blake Botts (10, McCreary Central) |
| 4. Jeffery Parker (12, Western Hills) | 16. Tae'sean Wilson (11, Western) |
| 5. Carter Messerly (11, Ryle) | 17. Andrew Kartner (11, Woodford Co) |
| 6. David Conner (12, Paducah Tilghman) | 18. Caleb Baumgardner (11, Central Hardin) |
| 7. Jude Powell (10, Fairdale) | 19. Jackson Burger (9, Boyle Co) |
| 8. Logan Castle (9, Johnson Central) | 20. Blade Sotelo (12, Fern Creek) |
| 9. Jacob Grandstaff (12, Conner) | 21. Grant Holland (12, Pikeville) |
| 10. Ethan Futrell (12, Calloway Co) | 22. Nick Avery (12, Owensboro) |
| 11. Kolby Sparks (11, Martin County) | 23. Christian Sanders (11, Campbell Co) |
| 12. Kevin Reyes (10, Southern) | 24. Jacob Ragsdale (9, Dupont Manual) |
| 13. Brennon Conrad (12, Simon Kenton) | 25. Joshua Strayer (9, Great Crossing) |

Returning placers: Ty Lehman 1st @ 145, Payne Carr 2nd @ 152, Jeffrey Kinley 3rd @ 126, Jeffrey Parker 4th @ 152, Jacob Grandstaff 4th @ 145, Brennon Conrad 6th @ 145, David Conner 5th @ 152

Surprise placers: #17 Botts pulled off two upset pins at semi-state to make the podium

Who didn't make it: Parker was upset by Conrad in the semis of a hammer bracket at semi-state and Castle fell victim to Botts (along with Sparks)

Team title race implications: #2 Carr is one of those kids who feels like he has been around forever and always in the mix. If seeds and rankings hold he would get a rematch with #3 Kinley in the semis. Kinley won that January matchup 6-4. Lehman has an ever so slightly easier path on the top, but that semi will be exciting as well with either potential foe and could be extra heated if it happens to be Messerly and we have a Trinity-Ryle head-to-head match-up.

Best first round match: Both the 4/5 and 3/6 matches are fire here with #5 Messerly v #7 Conner and #3 Kinley v #8 Conrad

General notes: The seeding here was HUGE as the top 3 feel like they have a slight edge on the field and have the crazy A beat B, B beat C, C beat A scenario. So getting the 1 seed was big for Lehman. But Ty has a way of making matches exciting so keep your eyes peeled when he is on the mat as anything could happen.

160 lbs.

Favorite: Tom Ketchen-Carter (12, Campbell Co)

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|---|--|
| 2. Cole Nance (12, Anderson Co) | 14. Connor Geise (11, Meade Co) |
| 3. Brayden Giannone (11, Lafayette) | 15. Brandon Burchett (9, Fairdale) |
| 4. Quinten Cox (12, Union Co) | 16. Jerome Johnson (10, Danville) |
| 5. Zack McCourt (9, Johnson Central) | 17. Elijah Baysinger (12, Scott Co) |
| 6. Jonathan Phillips (11, Trinity (Louisville)) | 18. Marcus Hutchison (12, Madison Central) |
| 7. Matthew Hendricks (12, Bullitt East) | 19. Jacob Newby (11, Christian Co) |
| 8. Seth Slayton (12, Paducah Tilghman) | 20. Andre Jackson (10, Central) |
| 9. Dylan Preston (12, Woodford Co) | 21. Vincent Stefani (11, Cooper) |
| 10. Javine Crowley (12, Perry Co Central) | 22. Jaris Bloom-Doyle (11, Paul Dunbar) |
| 11. Austin Shaeffer (12, Larue Co) | 23. Jybari Springs (12, John Hardin) |
| 12. Herve Blode (12, Fern Creek) | 24. Shaedyn Kennedy (11, DeSales) |
| 13. Donovan Taylor (11, Conner) | 25. Jacob Wolfe (9, Frederick Douglas) |

Returning placers: Tom Ketchen-Carter 8th @ 160, Cole Nance 4th @ 160, Dylan Preston 3rd @ 152, Brayden Giannone 1st @ 152

Surprise placers: #15 Burchett knocked off Phillips in the semis to punch his ticket

Who didn't make it: Phillips could have scored big points for Trinity this weekend, especially with the late bracket changes we have seen today

Team title race implications: With the late scratch for Lafayette, Cox is not in a spot to solidify that top 4 finish. Also key for either Cox or McCourt is with the bye they will be guaranteed top 6.

Best first round match: #5 Cox v #6 McCourt is not only a big match-up from a rankings perspective in round 1, but also in the team race.

General notes: I don't have any information on the Giannone scratch (not that I would necessarily share it any way), but hate to hear it. Plenty of folks this off season have heard me say that I might pick Brayden to win in any weight up through heavy and that he is pound for pound one of the best in the state. And even after his loss late in the season I was still expecting him to make a title run. But it won't happen this year. With that and based on what I saw last weekend from Cole Nance he is definitely coming in as the favorite. That kid looked phenomenal against TKC. We could definitely be looking at a rematch Saturday.

170 lbs.

Favorite: Noah Duke (11, Ryle)

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| 2. Dalton Russelburg (12, Union Co) | 14. Kyle Richmond (10, Campbell Co) |
| 3. Dylan Walls (11, Caldwell Co) | 15. Benicio Mariscal Carter (11, John Hardin) |
| 4. Anthony Kopp (12, Dixie Heights) | 16. Jaystin Johnson (12, Male) |
| 5. Lane Kiser (9, Trinity (Louisville)) | 17. Melvin Call (12, East Jessamine) |
| 6. Randy Kinser (12, Martin County) | 18. Wesley Rios-Lara (11, Oldham Co) |
| 7. Azariah Saunier (12, Lafayette) | 19. Tanner Coyle (12, Pleasure Ridge Park) |
| 8. Wesley Walls (12, Bullitt Central) | 20. Christopher Mooney (10, Paducah Tilghman) |
| 9. Cameron Baker (12, Apollo) | 21. Joey McCarthy (12, Woodford Co) |
| 10. Nick Stapleton (12, Johnson Central) | 22. Caileb Hills (12, Meade Co) |
| 11. Jack McCubbin (10, South Oldham) | 23. Matthew Wyatt (11, Montgomery Co) |
| 12. Kashiku Hutcheson (12, St. Xavier) | 24. Isaiah Murphy (10, Fern Creek) |
| 13. Kurtis Karr (12, Wayne Co) | 25. Zane Drury (12, Anderson Co) |

Returning placers: Noah Duke 3rd @ 182, Dylan Walls 8th @ 126, Dalton Russelburg 1st @ 160, Bryce Spickler 6th @ 152

Surprise placers: In an oddly seeded bracket for semi-state 2, the 3 and 8 advance, with Hutcheson knocking off the 1 seed Walls in round 1. McCubbin won a razor thin 3-2 match over Kopp in the semis.

Who didn't make it: Kopp is the biggest surprise. After a weird seeding situation in region left him finishing 3rd, it looked like he was set up to make it out of the semi-state bracket. But a late (after the final buzzer) takedown call left him just short of a state medal.

Team title race implications: This appears to be a collision course for Duke and Russelburg. BUT not so fast. They have to get their first. Duke has been nursing a bad injury the last couple weeks (and still pinning kids) that may impact these tough placement matches. And Russelburg has split matches with Walls this season.

Best first round match: #3 Walls v #6 Kiser is a solid early match

General notes: A lot of these top matchups have already happened this season so a lot of the final placement will be about health and making adjustments from early season battles. With the bye, Duke definitely has a more favorable draw (which he earned this year) that should put limited stress on his injury.

182 lbs.

Favorite: Stephen Little (11, Union Co)

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| 2. Everett Marret (12, St. Xavier) | 14. Jack Latherow (12, Ashland Blazer) |
| 3. Jackson Geilear (11, Woodford Co) | 15. Devon Rahrig (11, Spencer County) |
| 4. Ben Rush (12, Boyle Co) | 16. Kyle Rufra (11, Trinity (Louisville)) |
| 5. Chase Price (10, Johnson Central) | 17. Gabriel Ramirez (12, Central Hardin) |
| 6. Colin Walls (11, Caldwell Co) | 18. Stephen Whitehead (10, Madison Southern) |
| 7. Willie Rodriguez (9, Covington Catholic) | 19. Jack Hamburg (12, Conner) |
| 8. Hayden Hartlage (12, DeSales) | 20. Deandrell Mattison (10, Central) |
| 9. Thomas Haggan (12, Lafayette) | 21. John Bronson (11, Frederick Douglas) |
| 10. DJ Riggins (10, Taylor Co) | 22. Spencer Redwine (11, Paducah Tilghman) |
| 11. Trey Fleek (11, Ryle) | 23. Ryan Woosley (12, Simon Kenton) |
| 12. Jacob Mann (11, Dupont Manual) | 24. Elijah Robertson (10, Fern Creek) |
| 13. Conor Tolson (11, Daviess Co) | 25. Nick Watters (12, Calloway Co) |

Returning placers: Steven Little 1st @170, Everett Marret 6th @ 170, Ben Rush 6th @ 182

Surprise placers: Unranked Mann takes out Hartlage in the semis is the biggest surprise; Woosley got hot and beat both Rodriguez and Rahrig. Redwine over Walls was a slight upset.

Who didn't make it: This weight has been very inconsistent, so no real surprises here.

Team title race implications: That big 4/5 match mentioned below could set Price up for big team points. Little is one of the prohibitive favorites in the entire event, so expect him to score major bonus points for Union County.

Best first round match: #4 Rush v #5 Price and the winner is a big favorite to make the top 4

General notes: As mentioned above, this weight has been somewhat a mess all year, so not totally surprised to see #17, #20, and unranked in the field this weekend. And who knows how the final placements will fall. It could be chaos after the top couple guys.

195 lbs.

Favorite: Levid Rodriguez (11, Johnson Central)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 2. Jerry Simpson (12, Fairdale) | 14. Darryl Dowell (12, Valley) |
| 3. Kolby Coburn (12, Ashland Blazer) | 15. Jimmy Mooney (9, Paducah Tilghman) |
| 4. Oscar JT Adams (10, Christian Co) | 16. Colin Obrien (11, Western Hills) |
| 5. Paxton Ervin (11, Union Co) | 17. Caleb Duke (9, Ryle) |
| 6. Dyllan Davis (12, Anderson Co) | 18. Timarian Bledsoe (11, Calloway Co) |
| 7. Joel Hatchett (11, Fern Creek) | 19. Jack Feree (12, Trinity (Louisville)) |
| 8. Conner Jones (12, Simon Kenton) | 20. Kylon Williams (10, McCreary Central) |
| 9. Conner Lambert (10, Larue Co) | 21. Austin Ellis (10, Meade Co) |
| 10. Bryce Russell (12, St. Xavier) | 22. Brandon Richmond (12, Campbell Co) |
| 11. Rocky Whitehead (11, Madison Southern) | 23. Jahvon Frazier (9, Bryan Station) |
| 12. James Arnold (12, Scott Co) | 24. Neil Wright (7, Bullitt Central) |
| 13. Sam Rayburn (11, West Carter) | 25. Seth Serra (10, Central Hardin) |

Returning placers: Levid Rodriguez 3rd @ 195, Brandon Gibson 4th @ 182, Oscar JT Adams 7th @ 170, Rocky Whitehead 8th @ 195

Surprise placers: #11 Whitehead taking out Coburn 5-3 in the semis

Who didn't make it: Paxton Ervin kept the streak alive for Ervin qualifiers, but lost a tough battle in the semi to Lambert. Also of note is Brandon Gibson missing semi-state and not making the podium.

Team title race implications: Rodriguez is another massive favorite and should put up a lot of bonus points for Johnson Central.

Best first round match: #3 Simpson v #7 Lambert in the 4/5 match; while Lambert pulled an upset to get here, he is a placer level guy.

General notes: A couple surprises in this bracket; seems like a big drop off after Levid who will make his run without a Walton-Verona wrestler in his bracket

220 lbs.

Favorite: Darius Moore (12, Union Co)

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|---|--|
| 2. Uriah Virzi (9, Paducah Tilghman) | 14. AJ Harvey (11, Christian Co) |
| 3. Tony Ornelas (12, Woodford Co) | 15. Brad Lowe (12, Belfry) |
| 4. Cooper Elliston (11, Conner) | 16. LeTrell Karnickey (11, Iroquois) |
| 5. Zaine Christian (11, Ashland Blazer) | 17. Michael Leicht (12, Campbell Co) |
| 6. Ryan Martin (12, Trinity (Louisville)) | 18. Austin Silva (10, John Hardin) |
| 7. Jordan Diaz (12, Montgomery Co) | 19. Kodi Reeder (12, East Jessamine) |
| 8. Carter Guillaume (9, St. Xavier) | 20. Tyler Votaw (10, Fairdale) |
| 9. Dakota Brooksbank (12, Simon Kenton) | 21. Rance Hawkins (12, Henderson Co) |
| 10. Thomas Boone (12, Larue Co) | 22. Tanner Morris (12, Knox Central) |
| 11. Devin Sanders (12, Wayne Co) | 23. Joaquin Solis (9, Great Crossing) |
| 12. Nathan Millburn (11, Valley) | 24. Brett Sizemore (11, North Bullitt) |
| 13. Gabe Savage (11, Ryle) | 25. Christian Griffin (10, Letcher Co Central) |

Returning placers: Uriah Virzi 5th @ 195, Darius Moore 2nd @ 220, Gabe Savage 4th @ 220, Cooper Elliston 2nd @ 195, Zaine Christian 5th @ 220, Dakota Brooksbank 6th @ 220, AJ Harvey 6th @ 195

Surprise placers: #12 Sanders with the close win over Diaz in semis

Who didn't make it: Semi-state 3 at this weight was crazy good, so no real surprise that Ornelas and Elliston did not advance because Savage and Brooksbank are really stinking good.

Team title race implications: Savage got the super nice draw with #1, #2, #4 on the opposite side. Moore comes in as the 1 seed, but could face Virzi in the semis who has 2 wins over Moore.

Best first round match: #2 Virzi v #4 Brooksbank in the 4/5 match is huge for team impacts as well as how this bracket may play out

General notes: This may be one of the best 220 brackets I have ever seen. Not only is there some depth of talent that we don't usually see in the upper weights, but the competitiveness has been crazy good with so many guys having big wins over others. I could see just about anything happening in this bracket on Saturday.

285 lbs.

Favorite: TyDarius Kelly (12, Christian Co)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 2. Branson Smith (12, Martin County) | 14. Davis Pike (12, Union Co) |
| 3. Ian Hughes (12, Simon Kenton) | 15. Blake Fox (12, Oldham Co) |
| 4. Andrew Pottle (12, Ohio Co) | 16. Josh Slayton (12, North Bullitt) |
| 5. Hunter Arthur (12, Campbell Co) | 17. Che Smith (11, Meade Co) |
| 6. LaQuann Williams (12, Trinity (Louisville)) | 18. Luke Hill (11, Woodford Co) |
| 7. Brandon Key (12, Central) | 19. Zac Stray (12, Lafayette) |
| 8. Jesse McCoy (11, Johnson Central) | 20. Brandon Dobbs (11, Male) |
| 9. Bill Bradley (11, Sayre) | 21. Say Moe (12, Daviess Co) |
| 10. Matt Mooney (12, Paducah Tilghman) | 22. Colton Kessinger (12, Spencer County) |
| 11. Tayshaun Marshall (11, Ryle) | 23. Shawn May (11, Pike Co Central) |
| 12. Alex Martin (12, Fern Creek) | 24. Honor Honshell (11, Western) |
| 13. Israel Tshiunza (12, Frederick Douglas) | 25. Amarius Beaudoin (12, South Oldham) |

Returning placers: Ty Kelly 4th @ 285, Branson Smith 7th @ 220, Zac Stray 5th @ 285, Tyshaun Marshall 8th @ 285

Surprise placers: Probably the most surprise placers at this weight, which isn't completely unexpected as heavyweight had some strange chaos throughout the season. Two unranked guys got in here with Martin and May

Who didn't make it: #5 Arthur lost a tough semi in like 27 overtimes to Marshall

Team title race implications: Marshall got the big win at semi-state to get Ryle another placer and has some opportunity to wins some matches in this bracket

Best first round match: #3 Hughes v #6 Williams in the 3/6 match

General notes: Christian County has been really good in the upper weights over the last few seasons and has the favorite at heavy this week. While we have some tough guys at the top here, this weight is not nearly as competitive as 220.

Team Champions

Favorite: 1. Union Co (6 finalists, 2 champs, 9 total placers)

2. Johnson Central	(2 finalists, 1 champ, 10 placers)	14. Fairdale	(4 placers)
3. Ryle	(2 finalists, 2 champs, 6 placers)	15. North Hardin	(2 finalists, 1 champ, 2 placers)
4. Trinity (Louisville)	(1 finalist, 1 champ, 9 placers)	16. Simon Kenton	(2 placers)
5. Campbell Co	(1 finalist, 1 champ, 6 placers)	17. Lafayette	(2 placers)
6. Paducah Tilghman	(2 finalists, 0 champs, 5 placers)	18. Wayne Co	(1 finalist, 1 champ, 2 placers)
7. St. Xavier	(2 finalists, 1 champ, 5 placers)	19. Conner	(2 placers)
8. Christian Co	(2 finalists, 1 champ, 4 placers)	20. Martin County	(1 finalist, 0 champs, 2 placers)
9. Larue Co	(1 finalist, 1 champ, 3 placers)	21. Anderson Co	(1 finalist, 0 champs, 2 placers)
10. Madison Central	(1 finalist, 1 champ, 3 placers)	22. Ashland Blazer	(2 placers)
11. Woodford Co	(3 placers)	23. McCreary Central	(2 placers)
12. Walton Verona	(2 finalists, 1 champ, 3 placers)	24. Central	(2 placers)
13. Caldwell Co	(2 placers)	25. Bullitt East	(3 placers)

Trinity, who inarguably came through a soft semi-state, comes into the weekend with the lead and 8 placers. But Union County, Ryle, and Johnson Central are right on their tails (less than 10 points back) and bring in just as many placers. Ryle overperformed at home in their semi-state and brings the second-most placers with 9. Johnson Central got their 10 kids through (most for the weekend), but their seeds leave a lot of work