

2012 Kentucky High School Wrestling State Tournament Report

Similar to first edition I have patterned the design and much of the content of this report based on the work of Brian Brakeman who annually creates the Brakeman Report prior to the Ohio high school wrestling post season. His work is admired by many throughout the state of Ohio (and us KY folks who compete across the river quite a bit) so I decided why re-create the wheel. I also want to acknowledge the valuable input from many parents, coaches, wrestlers, and fans across the state throughout the course of the season. A few do a particularly great job of keeping me up to date on not only their team, but also opposing competitors that deserve to be recognized.

I have not gone to the effort of explaining the process of ranking individual wrestlers and the issues that arise when attempting to do so, from receiving little to no information on some individuals and teams to receiving limited or incorrect information. Instead I will direct anyone interested to at least read the introduction published by Brakeman at:

<http://www.baumspage.com/brakeman/2010%20Brakeman%20Report.pdf>

For those of you who have followed me over these last 5 or so years, you know I willingly admit I am far from perfect. Add to that the fact that I have far from perfect data from which to base this report, so I am bound to make some mistakes. But hey, this is high school wrestling, it ain't the end of the world. Hopefully we can have a good chuckle, learn from those mistakes, and get even better at this in the future. Besides, in the end, the winners are decided on the mats around the state and eventually in Lexington; not from these pages. So take this for what it is, one man's humble opinion (although influenced by the input of many others), a decent reference guide for understanding the level of competition, and a decent tool to spark some conversation.

So without further adieu, LET'S GET IT ON!

Because I am a numbers fanatic with a degree in statistics I think it makes sense to publish some data on the accuracy of this report. I have gone back a couple years to the data that I have easily accessible.

Report Audit

How the predicted individual champions fared?

	2009		2010		2011		3 Year Average	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Won title	11	79%	6	43%	10	71%	9.0	64%
Finished 2 nd	0	0%	2	14%	3	21%	1.7	12%
Finished 3 rd	3	21%	4	29%	1	7%	2.7	19%
Finished 4 th	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0.0	0%
Lower than 4 th	0	0%	2*	14%	0	0%	0.7	5%
TOTAL	14	100%	14	100%	14	100%	14	100%

*Jake Lee (Campbell Co., 160, 7th), Tyler Crow (Meade Co., 215, DNP)

Who won the individual state title?

	2009		2010		2011		3 Year Average	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Ranked 1 st	11	79%	6	43%	10	71%	9.0	64%
Ranked 2 nd	1	7%	6	43%	3	21%	3.3	24%
Ranked 3 rd	2	14%	1	7%	0	7%	1.0	7%
Ranked 4 th	0	0%	1	7%	0	0%	0.3	2%
Lower than 4 th	0	0%	0	0%	1**	7%	0.3	2%
TOTAL	14	100%	14	100%	14	100%	14	100%

** Thomas Buckman (Union Co., 189, 6th)

Who placed?

	2009		2010		2011		3 Year Average	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Ranked Top 8	88	78%	78	70%	81	72%	82.3	74%
Ranked 9 th - 12 th	12	11%	18	16%	13	12%	14.3	13%
Ranked 13 th -16 th	5	5%	9	8%	7	6%	7.0	6%
Ranked below 16 th	7	6%	7	6%	11	10%	8.3	7%
TOTAL	112	100%	112	100%	112	100%	112	100%

How the predicted team champions fared and who placed high?

2008

	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th
Predicted	Union Co.	Campbell Co.(6 th)	Ryle	Trinity	Wayne Co.
Actual	Union Co.	Ryle	Woodford Co.	Trinity	Wayne Co.

2009

	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th
Predicted	Trinity	Ryle	Campbell Co.	Union Co.	Larue Co. (finished 7 th)
Actual	Trinity	Union Co.	Ryle	Campbell Co.	Johnson Central

2010

	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th
Predicted	Ryle	Trinity	Campbell Co.(6 th)	Johnson Central	Larue Co.
Actual	Trinity	Ryle	Union Co.	Johnson Central	Larue Co.

2011

	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th
Predicted	Trinity	Union Co.	Ryle	Larue Co.	Johnson Central
Actual	Union Co.	Trinity	Ryle	Larue Co.	St. Xavier

106 lbs.

Favorite: Mike Whalen (10, Henry Clay)

2. Nathan Thompson (9, DeSales)
3. Luke Rearic (11, Lafayette)
4. Nick Douglas (12, Southern)
5. Logan Erdman (8, Ryle)
6. Brady Emerson (8, Oldham County)
7. Kyle Edlin (10, Larue County)
8. Elijah Owens (9, Simon Kenton)
9. Robert Dezember (10, Union County)
10. Geordan Blanton (7, Johnson Central)
11. Tyler Ward (Apollo)
12. Colin Roth (10, Walton Verona)
13. Caleb Austin (9, Christian County)
14. Cecil Nevels (9, Wayne County)
15. Cody Stephens (10, McCreary Central)
16. Davon Adams (9, Central)

With the NFHS weight class changes, and one less light weight class, this season many coaches and fans (myself included) expected the lighter weights to be much more competitive. But with only 2 returning state placers, 106 is a weight that could be wide open. Mike Whalen has been the class of this young field, with Thompson, Rearic, and Douglas all nipping at his heels. With Douglas being the only senior here, don't be surprised if his maturity and experience propel him into the finals. Last year the middle school crowd did not have a huge impact on this bracket. But 105 was one of the toughest weight classes in the state for middle school this season and I expect the middle school state finalists (Erdman and Emerson) to definitely make the podium. Edlin making the podium will be critical to Larue's team title chances.

113 lbs.

Favorite: Trae Blackwell (10, Union County)

2. JJ Killebrew (12, Christian County)
3. Chase Boone (12, Ohio County)
4. Gus Adams (11, Ryle)
5. John Shirkey (9, Oldham County)
6. Bryan Spahr (8, Campbell County)
7. Hudson Heidorf (8, North Oldham)
8. John Hernandez (10, Henry Clay)
9. Jason Hall (10, Moore)
10. Kyle Schults (10, North Hardin)
11. JD Criswell (7, Wayne County)
12. Coty Hunt (11, Franklin County)
13. Chris Abernathy (9, Meade County)
14. Juan Ramirez (10, Western)
15. Andrew Ackley (8, Nelson County)
16. Justin Torgensen (Lafayette)

Region 1 was a primary battle ground in setting the landscape for this bracket, with the top 3 ranked kids all emerging from that same region. Blackwell has been at the top of the rankings all season and walked out with a region title and favorite status this weekend. 113 will be another weight class with a couple of tough middle schoolers (Spahr and Heidorf) challenging for a medal and Spahr playing a key role in the team race.

Wrestler to watch: Chris Abernathy, Meade County – after placing 6th at 103 last season Abernathy has a tough draw this time around, but watch out for him when it comes time for earning a medal.

120 lbs.

Favorite: Garth Yenter (12, Campbell County)

2. Jeffrey Wurth (11, Union County)
3. Nick Paden (12, Larue County)
4. Joey Parrot (11, Simon Kenton)
5. Keegan North (11, Ryle)
6. JT Siler (11, Whitley County)
7. Clay Brown (10, Walton Verona)
8. Brian Crawley (11, Southern)
9. Jared Lynum (12, Central)
10. Anthony Shirley (12, Harrison County)
11. Brad Milford (12, Paul Dunbar)
12. Cameron Nevels (8, Wayne County)
13. Connor Wilkerson (10, Oldham County)
14. Bobby Poynter (9, Moore)
15. Max Korfhage (10, St Xavier)
16. Asa Odoms (Christian County)

Looking at the top 3 finishers here it is obvious this weight could be pivotal in the team race. If all three come through, the impact may be minimal. But if one comes up short, his teammates will need to pick him up. Yenter comes in undefeated and looks to defend his title and go out a 2-timer. Coming out of Region 6 with 4 of the top guys in the weight class, he showed that he is without a doubt the favorite here.

Wrestler to watch: Connor Wilkerson, Oldham County – similar to 113, after placing 5th at 103 last season, Wilkerson has a tough draw this time around, but could spoil another top wrestler's weekend.

126 lbs.

Favorite: Brock Ervin (10, Union County)

2. TJ Ruschell (12, Ryle)
3. Sean Fausz (10, Campbell County)
4. Jesus Rosado (11, Moore)
5. Wade Willen (11, University Heights)
6. Ian Kahl (10, Trinity)
7. Anthony Castellano (12, Dixie Heights)
8. Karlan Groves (12, Central)
9. Roy Bisenius (12, South Oldham)
10. Dylan Vish (12, St Xavier)
11. Clyde Newcomer (11, Montgomery County)
12. Trevor Smith (11, Southern)
13. Daniel Lannum (10, Danville)
14. Daniel Ingram (Trigg County)
15. Alex Wright (Bourbon County)
16. Francisco Rodriguez (11, Western)

Ervin continues his “Drive for Five” as the favorite in a very exciting weight class. As the only bracket matching defending state champions, there are many fans looking forward to an Ervin-Ruschell final. But Ervin will likely face a challenge from Fausz in the semis that will have teams watching the leader board.

Wrestler to watch: Daniel Lannum, Danville – for the third weight class in a row, a returning state placer will have a tough road to get back to the podium, but you can’t count him out.

132 lbs.

Favorite: Jayce Carr (11, Union County)

2. Justin Lampe (10, St Xavier)
3. Tyler Kaelin (12, Oldham County)
4. Corey Ahern (11, Ryle)
5. Raymundo Perez (10, Larue County)
6. Roderick Agyeman (11, Franklin County)
7. Corbin Woods (11, Campbell County)
8. Lazaro Bereguer (12, Southern)
9. Austin Dillow (12, Anderson County)
10. Garrett Kenealy (12, Meade County)
11. Josh Jude (10, Johnson Central)
12. Brad Williams (12, Perry County Central)
13. David Sahms (11, Ft Campbell)
14. Brock Moore (12, Manual)
15. Drew Harris (11, Simon Kenton)
16. Kenneth Sells (Christian County)

While defending state champion Carr is the class of the field here, if we wrestled this bracket 100 times we would likely get a different result every time for second through eighth. This wide open weight class, with 8 returning state placers, could play havoc with the team scores as Perez and Woods could finish high on the podium or go 2-2.

138 lbs.

Favorite: John Fahy (12, Trinity)

2. Paul Hamilton (11, Campbell County)
3. Tevon Clay (11, Franklin County)
4. Reece Molette-Nowland (12, Fairdale)
5. Justin Wynne (12, Paducah Tilghman)
6. Chad Gahafer (10, Union County)
7. Shane White (12, Woodford County)
8. Pedro Ruiz (11, Wayne County)
9. Kevi Matlock (Christian County)
10. Dominic Lampe (9, St Xavier)
11. Loren Avera (12, North Oldham)
12. Marquis Fleet (11, John Hardin)
13. Josh Caudill (12, Johnson Central)
14. Collin Taylor (11, Doss)
15. Chad Edwards (11, Pleasure Ridge Park)
16. Brandon Cleveland (12, Fern Creek)

One of the big stories of this tournament has to be the close of the career of John Fahy. As the greatest middle school wrestler in Kentucky history (the only person with more than 3 titles; he won it FIVE TIMES!!!), he is set to become a 4-time high school state champion. Yes, that is 9 in a row. I took my oldest son down to the floor to shake hands with Harrison Courtney after he won his final title. Let's all show this all-time great some respect and appreciation. Now to the rest of the field. Last year Gahafer had a key run that helped lead his team to a title. This year he is expected to make the podium and more if Union wants to repeat.

145 lbs.

Favorite: Kevin Cooper (11, Simon Kenton)

2. Cory McCall (12, Woodford County)
3. Kory Polley (11, Christian County)
4. Jordan Young (10, Johnson Central)
5. Joe Rupp (11, Eastern)
6. Johnny Meiman (8, Ryle)
7. Logan Jones (10, Walton Verona)
8. Kegan Agnew (10, Caldwell County)
9. Clayton Smith (11, Trinity)
10. Colton Hall (11, University Heights)
11. Jon Green (9, Lafayette)
12. Marshall Aiken (11, Tates Creek)
13. Quincy Jacobs (12, Southern)
14. Mitch Rusch (10, North Oldham)
15. Kortland Maguire (12, Meade County)
16. Trent Presnell (11, Cooper)

145 is an amazingly young weight class with only 3 seniors listed in the top 16 (McCall the only placer). What will that mean for this bracket? Likely a number of surprises and letdowns, especially considering that only 3 of these kids have won a high school state medal before. None of the top 3 teams has a major player in this weight, so little to no impact from this weight on the team race. Returning state champion Cooper looks to continue the family tradition of earning state gold medals.

Wrestler to watch: Johnny Meiman, Ryle – you don't see too many middle schoolers battle for a medal at this high of a weight, but the two-time middle school champ has the opportunity to make the podium this year.

152 lbs.

Favorite: Stephen Myers (11, Campbell County)

2. Jimmy Preston (12, Johnson Central)
3. Cameron Montgomery (11, University Heights)
4. Lane Jones (11, Walton Verona)
5. Luke Troxell (12, Wayne County)
6. Max Haddad (12, St Xavier)
7. Jake Risinger (12, Union County)
8. Kody Wade (12, Boyle County)
9. Erik Pina (11, Franklin County)
10. Taylor Eschan (12, Cooper)
11. Nick Waits (12, Central Hardin)
12. Gabe McIlrath (11, Montgomery County)
13. Jordan Doyle (11, Woodford County)
14. Tyler Goldman (12, Fairdale)
15. Ricky Calcedo (12, Trinity)
16. Shawn Tobin (12, Harrison County)

152 is set to be an interesting weight to watch and will likely get some attention from many fans with the all of the talk online and in gyms around the state about the Myers transfer(s). Myers is a returning state champion from Ohio and comes in as the favorite. This is another weight class without a lot of proven talent (only 3 returning medalists, including Myers), so expect some surprises. Two of the top contenders took losses at region (Jones and Troxell), so this could be a wild bracket.

Wrestlers to watch: Luke Troxell, Wayne County – after being projected #1 the last two seasons, Troxell lost in the regional finals and comes in with much lower expectations this year. Taylor Eschan, Cooper – pulled out a couple of impressive wins in region 6, including a solid win over Jones, after being off the mat for some time. Keep your eye on him; he looked tough last weekend.

160 lbs.

Favorite: Shawn Hull (12, Larue County)

2. Brent Hitchings (12, Trinity)
3. Omar Jarvis (12, Central)
4. Brandon Pledger (11, St Xavier)
5. Ryan Sowder (12, Scott)
6. Wyatt Courtney (10, Woodford County)
7. Beau Sheffer (12, Union County)
8. Tyler Simpson (12, Wayne County)
9. Chase Rusch (12, North Oldham)
10. Wade Holtsclaw (11, John Hardin)
11. Blake O'Neil (12, Southern)
12. Scotty Partin (12, Whitley County)
13. Jacob Clark (12, Simon Kenton)
14. Jonah Shacklet (10, Meade County)
15. Ki Ryder (Ft Campbell)
16. Dustin Turner (10, Campbell County)

160 begins the run for Larue County. With potential finalists from here through 220, they need their top guns to come through and score as many bonus points as possible. Hull comes in as the #1, but the Region 4 wrestlers can all push him and the seniors (Jarvis and Hitchings) no doubt expect to leave Lexington with a state title.

Wrestler to watch: Beau Sheffer, Union County – this will be a key weight in Union's quest for the title. Sheffer needs to hold his ranking to keep pace with Larue in the upper weights.

170 lbs.

Favorite: JJ Jude (12, Johnson Central)

2. Sam Willibanks (11, Moore)
3. Jake Maupin (12, Fairdale)
4. Caleb Canter (11, Larue County)
5. Noah Bauer (11, St Xavier)
6. Cody Floyd (11, Central Hardin)
7. Chad Goodrich (12, Woodford County)
8. Ryan Mosher (12, Madison Central)
9. Rhodes Bell (12, Danville)
10. Jake Fooks (10, Bourbon County)
11. Hiero Chamblee (11, Simon Kenton)
12. David Jean (12, Western)
13. Richard Parriman (12, McCreary Central)
14. Dylan Marksbury (12, North Oldham)
15. Seron Martin (12, Jeffersontown)
16. Charlie Courtney (12, Calloway County)

170 is a fairly deep weight with 4 returning placers following returning state champion Jude. Jude could see his 2011 state finals foe in the semis this year. Canter needs to keep pace with his teammates and rack up some points at a weight where Larue has an advantage on paper.

182 lbs.

Favorite: Bernard Ray (12, Larue County)

2. John Conley (12, Johnson Central)
3. Zach Gnadinger (12, Oldham County)
4. William Thompkins (12, St Xavier)
5. Matt Lefler (12, Fairdale)
6. Zach Fisher (12, Conner)
7. Sean Barrett (11, Southern)
8. Justin McDaniel (11, Moore)
9. Evan Kenealy (11, Meade County)
10. Drayton Simmosn (Ft Campbell)
11. Derek Hicks (10, Simon Kenton)
12. Sam Steele (11, Boone County)
13. John Garrett (12, Henry Clay)
14. Bryan Carter (Union County)
15. Blake Schaeffer (12, Lawrence County)
16. Austin Derden (Christian County)

This is probably the bracket with the least proven talent, but plenty of seniors looking to finish their high school wrestling careers on a high note. Ray, a multiple time state placer, comes in as the favorite and another part of the upper weight foundation for Larue.

195 lbs.

Favorite: Bobby Bryant (11, Trinity)

2. BJ Carmen (11, Larue County)
3. Darrius Parrott (10, North Hardin)
4. Tucker Fair (Madison Central)
5. Travis Kaelin (12, Anderson County)
6. Sam Preston (11, Johnson Central)
7. Quincy Page (12, Walton Verona)
8. Thomas Noe (11, Southern)
9. Michael Kollar (10, Fern Creek)
10. Will Conrad (11, North Oldham)
11. Rodney Rednour (9, Wayne County)
12. Derik Overstreet (Paducah Tilghman)
13. Matt May (12, St Xavier)
14. Jake Williamson (12, Ryle)
15. Jake Harris (9, Manual)
16. Alex Hogan (11, Meade County)

Another weight with limited returning proven wrestlers, 195 features another Larue big guy. Carmen was a state placer at heavyweight last year and returns to compete at closer to his actual weight this year. Bryant, part of that amazing Trinity football tradition, will try to show that the Shamrocks have some upper weights of their own.

220 lbs.

Favorite: Drew Newberry (12, Larue County)

2. Austin Myers (9, Campbell County)
3. Brendan Darrow (12, Trinity)
4. Cody Hollin (12, Perry County Central)
5. Wesley Morris (12, Woodford County)
6. Chris Fitzpatrick (12, Anderson County)
7. Charlie Cornett (12, Dixie Heights)
8. Nick Wafzig (11, St Xavier)
9. Trevor Thompson (10, Conner)
10. Brandon Roeder (11, Western)
11. Tanner Adams (11, Ashland Paul Blazer)
12. Rashaud Wilkins (12, Union County)
13. Chris Niece (10, Johnson Central)
14. Zach Farris (Ohio County)
15. CJ Weires (12, Oldham County)
16. Anthony Jennings (11, Fairdale)

This could be the match of the night. 2010 state champion Newberry returns from his football injury that cost him his junior season. He returns as a solid favorite to win another championship. But then enters the second “transfer”. The freshman Myers was a stud in Ohio; a two-time state JH champ and three-time finalist. Alltech Arena could explode if the team race is on the line and these two meet in the finals. This is another weight where Union could steal some points and keep pace with Larue’s big guys.

285 lbs.

Favorite: Trevor Ford (12, DeSales)

2. Mike Caudill (11, Oldham County)
3. Mason Franck (12, Campbell County)
4. Terrell Moore (12, Tates Creek)
5. Colin Patrick (12, Simon Kenton)
6. Matt Daugherty (10, Central Hardin)
7. Zack Lawson (10, Nelson County)
8. Shane Speed (Graves County)
9. Zach Troxell (11, Wayne County)
10. Elliott Porter (11, Danville)
11. David Dawson (12, Christian County)
12. Cody Miskell (Grant County)
13. Eli Meredith (12, Larue County)
14. Christian Wilkins (12, Western Hills)
15. Johnathan Begley (12, Perry County Central)
16. Robert Green (11, Doss)

There are only 2 returning heavyweight placers from last year (Franck and Ford). Franck was a finalist last year, but injuries have limited his season and Ford comes in as the favorite. Larue and Union have guys here right on the fringe who could score valuable points. Plus, it is heavyweight, so anything can (and probably will) happen.

Team Champions

Favorite: Campbell County

2. Larue County	14. Moore
3. Union County	15. Fairdale
4. Johnson Central	16. DeSales
5. Trinity	17. Walton Verona
6. St. Xavier	18. Franklin County
7. Ryle	19. Henry Clay
8. Oldham County	20. Central
9. Simon Kenton	21. North Oldham
10. Woodford County	22. Anderson County
11. Southern	23. University Heights
12. Christian County	24. Central Hardin
13. Wayne County	25. Meade County

This could be one of the tightest team races in recent history. Larue has been my favorite most of the season, but Union showed they have a strong squad taking home the state dual championship a few weeks ago. And now Campbell County has emerged as a serious contender for the title. I see a pretty good drop down to Johnson Central, Trinity, and St Xavier after the top 3. Given the brackets as originally drawn, I have Campbell winning a wild and crazy team race that could come down to an exciting finals matchup at 220 between Newberry and Myers. Union is bringing their usual contingent of studs, including a much better group of big guys than historically. With a three horse race, many of the individuals for these teams will compete head to head, possibly even in the championship finals. I don't see any team winning the title based solely on their studs. I see Campbell County with 2 champs and 2 runner-ups and 4 other placers, Larue with 3 champs and 1 runner-up and 4 other placers, and Union with 3 champs and 1 runner-up and 3 other placers. The edge comes in the wrestlebacks with the role player kids who pull out the small victories. Obviously bonus points could change things up a bit with a tight race like this, but matchups will dictate much of that so I won't venture a guess as to who has the advantage there. Either way, it looks to be an exciting event with lots of interesting individual matchups and the potential for a team race that comes down to the wire.