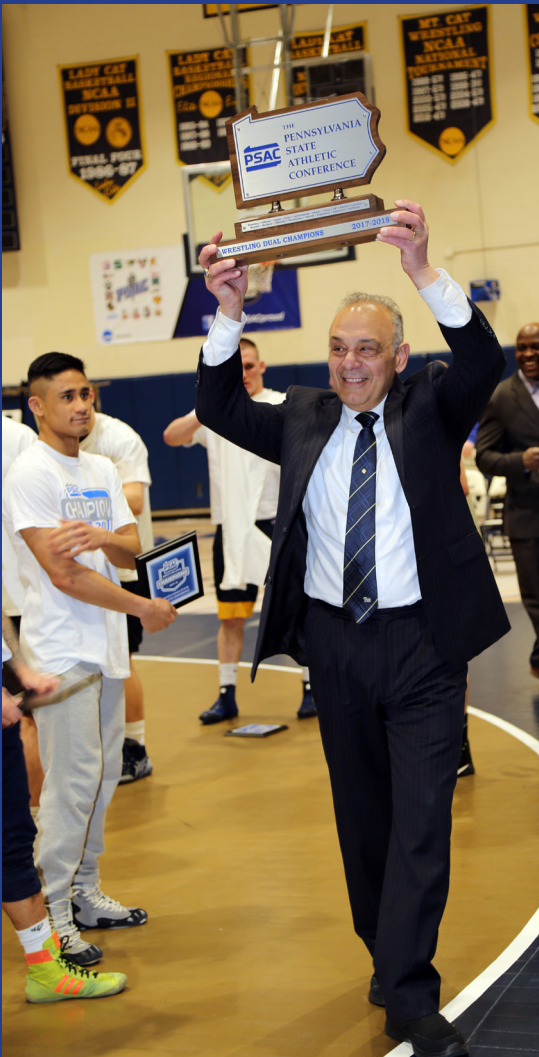


As we celebrate 30 years promoting the great sport of wrestling in Pennsylvania, we are dedicating our 30th anniversary issue to the late Pat Pecora, legendary UPJ Coach

PENNSYLVANIA WRESTLING NEWSMAGAZINE

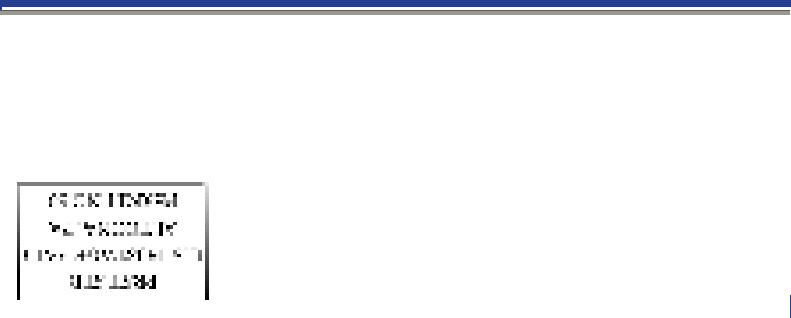
DECEMBER 2024 • Volume 30 • Issue 1

4X NCAA CHAMP "FIVE for FIGHTING" CARTER STAROCCI



**Pat
Pecora:
661 Wins**

**59-Match Win Streak
3X Defending Champion
#1 Penn State Nittany Lions
No. 1 Carter Starocci (184) (Erie Prep) of PSU
dominating Jack Wilt of Lehigh. Starocci won 15-1.**



Letter from the Founder

As we begin the 2024-25 wrestling season in the Keystone State, we at the Award-Winning Pennsylvania Wrestling Newsmagazine, are celebrating our 30th year in publication. We look forward to continuing to tell you the stories, give our ideas and opinions on how to make our sport better, and show you the pictures of many of the major events throughout PA in junior high, high school and on the collegiate level. We will continue our mission to Promote, Educate, Inform, and Entertain you about the elite athletes and teams in this purest/fairest form of human sport.

This year also marks the 94th Div. I NCAA Championships which will take place right here in the Keystone State in Philadelphia, PA (March 20-22). The 61st Div. II NCAA Championships will take place on March 14-15 in Indianapolis, and the 52nd Div. III NCAAs will occur on March 15-16 in Providence, R.I.

In all, there are 11 Pennsylvania D-I college programs, the most of any state. Penn State will try and win their 12th NCAA title in the last 14 championships as they celebrate their 117th season. Carter Starocci will try to become the first ever 5x NCAA Champion. Lehigh University has great tradition as well as they begin their 116th season of competition in the EIWA Conference, the oldest conference in the country. PA schools in the EIWA include; Bucknell, Drexel, F&M, Lehigh and Penn. The 121st edition of the EIWA Championships will take place on March 7-8 on the campus of Lehigh University. The Mid-American Conference which includes Bloomsburg, Clarion, Edinboro and Lock Haven begin their sixth year in the League. Their conference tournament will take place on March 7-8 in Trenton, NJ (Cure Insurance Arena). The University of Pittsburgh, which is another school with great tradition, wrestles in the ACC. Their Conference Tournament will take place on March 9 in Durham, NC.

The eight Div. II wrestling programs in the Keystone State will have plenty of PA natives fight to qualify for nationals. Look for Gannon # 8, Pitt-Johnstown #10 and Kutztown #11 to be in the title fight.

The Div. III PA College & Universities are led by Alvernia College in Reading, and Penn College and Lycoming College in Williamsport. Look for these schools to qualify numerous wrestlers for the NCAAs.

On the scholastic scene, we will keep you informed of the nearly 500 teams in PA and the wrestlers who will try to qualify for the Boys 88th PIAA Championships in Hershey, and the 2nd PIAA Girls Wrestling Championships. On the Junior High side, we have you covered like a "figure four."

All of us who work for PWN have a great passion for man's oldest sport and feel wrestling deserves much more recognition than it receives. Please keep us informed about the great stories, accomplishments, and achievements of our athletes, coaches, officials, fans, writers, administrators and parents. We hope you will spread the word about PWN which has subscribers in 24 states. We are committed to bringing you a first rate wrestling magazine. Thank you for all your support.

Yours in wrestling,
Joe Baranik, Founder/Owner
pwn.baranik@gmail.com
www.pawrestling.net

PWN CELEBRATES 30 YEARS!

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Half Nelson Report	15	January of 2025.	
Takedown Trivia	17	Happy Holidays!	
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Lehigh vs Penn State Dual



Top Pic: A sold out PPL Center (9,769-attendance) in Allentown prepare for the annual Penn State vs. Lehigh dual on Sunday, Dec. 8. The Nittany Lions won the dual 36-3 over #14 Lehigh. credit Lehigh Athletics

Above middle left: No. 1 ranked Ryan Crookham (133) (Saucon Valley) of Lehigh celebrates his 4-2 win over No. 10 Braeden Davis of Penn State.

Above middle: No. 23 Josh Barr (197) of Penn State takes down No. 6, Michael Beard (Malvern Prep) of Lehigh on his way to an 11-3 victory. Beard transferred from Penn State. Photo credit to: Tyler Mantz, PSU Athletics

Bottom left: Crookham and Davis go at it at 133 lbs.

bottom right: Lehigh's mascot, The Hawk, waves the Lehigh flag proudly before the start of the match.

WPIAL Class 3A Report

By **PAUL SCHOFIELD**

PIAA executive director Bob Lombardi met with the wrestling committee in Mid-December, and on Dec. 19, announced the site of the 2025 team championship.

The State Dual Team Championship will be held at Altoona Area HS, scheduled for Feb. 6-8.

Lombardi had a tough time finding a spot to host the three-day tournament, which was held at Hersheypark Arena or Giant Center in Hershey every year except 2021 since 1999.

The PIAA individual championships will be March 6-8 at Giant Center.

A look at the 2024-25 WPIAL Class 3A wrestling season:

The Favorite:

Reigning Class 3A champion Connellsville lost one starter, Nick Rohal at 172 pounds, to graduation.

The Falcons have a huge roster (40) that could field three teams.

Heading the returnees are four PIAA qualifiers: sophomore Nolan Rice (38-10) at 107, sophomore Kai Vielma (35-7) at 133, senior Evan Petrovich (41-7) at 145 and senior Lonzy Vielma (39-9) at 160.

Petrovich, a Pitt recruit, placed third in the state, and Lonzy Vielma, a West Virginia recruit, placed fifth.

Others back include sophomore Tommy Gretz (17-5) at 107, junior Zach Franks (25-17) at 114, junior Landon Lynn (19-14) at 121, sophomore Chase Sparks (13-20) at 127, senior Jullian Ruggieri (35-14) at 139, senior Chris Cook (27-19) at 215 and senior heavyweight Tyler Gallis (26-16).

“I don’t like being the favorite,” Connellsville coach Bill Swink said. “I’d rather be the hunter instead of being the hunted. We’re going to have some battles for starting jobs. We have good depth and have some good freshmen coming up.”

Swink has his team entered in numerous tournaments, including the Tom Best Memorial in Williamsport; the St. Edwards Quad, NursePro Plus tournament in Morgantown, WV; the

prestigious **Powerade** Tournament and the **Escape the Rock** at Council Rock South.

Preseason Top 10

Teams are listed with last year’s record and final ranking.

1. Connellsville (17-4) 1
2. Franklin Regional (22-3) 3
3. Bethel Park (19-3) 4
4. Norwin (12-7) 9
5. Trinity (13-3) 2
6. North Allegheny (17-4) 6
7. Fox Chapel (15-2) 7
8. Latrobe (13-5) 5
9. Kiski Area (12-12) NR
10. Canon-McMillan (6-5) NR

Teams to watch: Baldwin, Belle Vernon, Butler, Moon, North Hills, Penn-Trafford, Peters Township, Plum, Ringgold and West Allegheny.

Returning PIAA Champions:

- Landon Sidun, So., Norwin, 114
- Maddox Shaw, Sr., Thomas Jefferson, 136
- Vaughn Spencer, Sr., Pine-Richland, 172

Returning PIAA Placewinners:

- Evan Petrovich, Sr., Connellsville, 145, 3rd
- Bode Marlow, Sr., Thomas Jefferson, 160, 3rd
- Jake Conroy, Sr., Ringgold, 189, 4th
- Luke Willochell, Sr., Latrobe, 121, 5th
- Lonzy Vielma, Sr., Connellsville, 160, 5th
- Nicholas McGarrity, So., Peters Township, 107, 6th
- Santino Sloboda, Jr., Butler, 114, 6th
- Hunter Snyder, So., Latrobe, 172, 6th
- Cooper Roscosky, So., Kiski Area, 189, 6th
- Leo Joseph, Sr., Latrobe, 114, 8th
- Connor Smith, Sr., Seneca Valley, 121, 8th

- Ramil Islamov, Sr., Baldwin, 133, fourth

Returning WPIAL Champions:

- 107: McGarrity
- 114: Sloboda
- 121: Willochell; Shaw
- 139: Petrovich
- 145: Marlow
- 160: Spencer
- 172: Roscosky
- 189: Conroy
- 215: Shepherd Turk, Sr. Thomas Jefferson

Others to Watch

Seniors: Kase Chopp, Butler, 133; Dominic Ferraro, Pine-Richland, 139; Thomas Allison, Trinity, 145; Luke Dunlap, South Fayette, 152; Brock Evans, Waynesburg, 160; Ben Lloyd, 285

Juniors: Dylan Barrett, Penn-Trafford, 107; Nico Kapusta, Hempfield, 107; Collier Hartman, Canon-McMillan, 121; Cole Gibbons, Mt. Lebanon, 145; Roan Tustin, Waynesburg, 285; Brady McConneha, North Allegheny, 285

Sophomores: Nolan Rice, Connellsville, 107; Kai Velma, Connellsville, 133; Roman Thompson, Central Catholic, 189

Below: #12 Landon Sidun (114 lbs.), a sophomore from Norwin HS



© 23-24 Marc Billett Photos

WPIAL Class 2A REPORT

By **PAUL SCHOFIELD**

A look at the 2024-25 WPIAL Class 2A wrestling season:

The Favorite:

Burrell has a new head coach, Steve Ansani, but the goals haven't changed. The Bucs are out to win a section title and WPIAL Class 2A title and finish top four in the state.

Ansani was hired to replace Josh Shields, who resigned after the season to spend more time with his young family. Shields said he will remain close to the program as an assistant.

Ansani takes over a program that has dominated Class 2A in the WPIAL. The Bucs are the defending team champions and have won 18 WPIAL titles, including 15 in a row from 2007-21.

Prior to serving as an assistant at Burrell, Ansani was also the head coach at Valley HS. He has been coaching for 31 years.

Ansani inherits a team that returns 11 starters. His biggest losses were Cooper Hornack, who placed 6th in the state at 139 lbs, and Nico Zanella at 160.

The top returnees include:

junior Cam Baker (44-7), who placed 6th in the state at 107; junior Julian Bertucci (39-18) at 127; junior Jacob Stewart (24-19) at 133; senior Calio Zanella (24-19) at 145; Ben Catullo

(27-23) at 152; senior Isaac Lacin-ski (21-12) at 172; and senior Luke Boylan (34-17) at 215.

Ansani is also counting on freshman Logan Barrett at 107 and sophomore Vincent Guerrini at 113 to assume starting jobs.

"I recruited Vincent from the soccer team," Ansani said. "He's very athletic and is a quick learner. It's a matter of him gaining mat time.

"We're another year older, and I feel these guys are ready to face challenges from other teams in 2A."

Derry, which returns three PIAA qualifiers, is much improved and so are McGuffey, Quaker Valley, Highlands and Burgettstown.

Preseason Top 10

Teams are listed with last season's record and final ranking.

1. Burrell (15-4) 1
2. Derry (11-4) 7
3. Burgettstown (15-3) 2
4. Quaker Valley (13-3) 3
5. McGuffey (12-2) 5
6. Bentworth (6-3) NR
7. Frazier (9-7) 8
8. Avonworth (8-10) NR
9. Freedom (10-3) 6
10. Highlands (13-5) 10

Teams to watch:

Beth-Center, Greensburg Salem, Hopewell, Laurel, Ligonier Valley, Mount Pleasant, Southmoreland

Returning Placewinners:

Seniors: Nico Fanella, Indiana, 127, 3rd (now in Class 3A); Gaven Suica, Burgettstown, 139, 5th; Braedon Welsh, Fort Cherry, 172, 5th; Isaiah Pisano, Hopewell, 160, 6th; Vitali Daniels, Bentworth, 189, 7th

Juniors: Dylan Pitzer, Mt. Pleasant/Derry, 285, 4th; Jackson Angelo, Frazier, 189, 5th

Sophomores: Cam Baker, Burrell, 107, 6th; Mason Horwat, Derry, 145, 6th

Returning WPIAL Champions:

107: Baker; 114: Anthony Mucci, Sr., Derry; 121: Antonio Boni, Jr., Central Valley; 172: Elijah Brown, Jr., Belle Vernon (now in Class 3A); 145: Horwat; 189: Brady Brown, So., Derry.

Others to Watch:

Seniors: Ryan Celaschi of Frazier, 160

Juniors: Bruce Anderchak of Quaker Valley, 107; Emmett Wolfe, McGuffey, 121; Mason Wright, Beth-Center, 121; Lucas Barr, McGuffey, 127; Owen Ivcic, Bentworth, 145; Rook Smith, Montour, 145 and Colin Whyte of West Greene, 215.

Sophomores: Drake McClure of Bentworth, 114 lbs and Lucas Boyer of Elizabeth Forward at 139 lbs.

Tyler Reinhart becomes the interim Head Wrestling Coach at UPJ



It was announced in September that Tyler Reinhart will become the interim Head Wrestling Coach at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown. Reinhart is following his legendary college coach, Pat Pecora, at the helm, who led him to an NCAA title in 2016 at 165 lbs. Reinhart pinned his opponent in the NCAA finals in 2016. Tyler came to UPJ after placing 6th in the Pennsylvania State Tournament at (152 lbs) in 2013 out of Greensburg Salem High School. Reinhart mentored under Pecora for six seasons to gain valuable experience. Following an injury that ended his senior season, Reinhart earned his Bachelor of Science Degree in Marketing in 2018 and joined Coach Pecora's coaching staff.

Lehigh Valley / District 11 Report

By: Dave Crowell



Scholastic wrestling in Pennsylvania has officially opened its season. As is customary, its teams have once again begun competing with an interesting mix of dual meets and tournaments.

The Lehigh Valley should be a definite force in 2024-25. This should prove true as it pertains both to its teams AND its individual competitors. Quite possibly there is more overall balanced strength this year in the DXI AAA division than has been seen in a number of years. We could easily see five or more AAA schools fighting for those two state dual meet spots that qualify for the state team championships (at a location to be determined, of course). Bethlehem Catholic is once again favored to win it all in District XI if not the state. However, Easton, Nazareth, Northampton and Notre Dame Green Pond (first year in the AAA division) are all serious contenders for at least one of those two coveted slots. Other solid teams include Freedom, Emmaus, Parkland and Liberty among others. With the departure of Notre Dame GP, Saucon Valley appears to be the prohibitive favorite to “rule the roost” in AA.

That being said, here are a few results of interest thus far in the early weeks of the 2024-25 season:

The 30th annual Walsh Jesuit Ironman saw three Lehigh Valley teams compete. Bethlehem Catholic finished in 13th place. At 126 lbs., BC’s Keanu Dillard lost a 3-2 tie breaker in the finals to former teammate Nate Desmond (now at Wyoming Seminary) to take second. In addition, Shane McFillin (165 lbs.) was sixth for head coach Mike Cole who is in his second season as HC of the Hawks. Northampton was just a few places behind BC in 16th. Place winners for head coach Joe Provini were freshman Brayden Wenrich (4th @ 106 lbs.) and sophomore Gabe Ballard (6th @ 126 lbs.).

Keegan Ramsay of Notre Dame Green Pond was 7th @ 165lbs. and was the Crusaders’ (28th place) lone medalist for head coach Matt Veres.

The Tom Best Memorial Top Hat Tournament in Williamsport had three Lehigh Valley teams competing there. Easton (2nd) was the top local finisher. Three Red Rovers made the finals for coach Jody Karam who has hinted that this could be his final year as head coach. Easton runners up included Nick Salamone (121 lbs.), Justin Cosover (172 lbs.) and Shae Linegar (189 lbs.). Saucon Valley was only one place behind in third. The Panthers also had three runners up in Carter Chunko (114 lbs.), Aiden Grogg (139 lbs.) and Jackson Albert (152 lbs.). Emmaus came in sixth but had the LV’s only champion. The Hornets’ head coach Jim Best saw Emilio Albanese (114 lbs.) bring home gold. Jacson Max (107 lbs.) and Jesse Scott (160 lbs.) brought home silver. Of interest is that Tom Best began his coaching career at Parkland High School.

Freedom won the team title at the Battle on the Delaware at Delaware Valley High School. Winning titles for head coach Anthony Marino were Keenan Ray (152 lbs.), Noah McIlroy (189 lbs.) and Daniel Schiffert (285 lbs.). Bangor finished in third place. Bringing home gold medals for Slater head coach Richie Smith were Tyler Mintz (107 lbs.), Jace Labar (127 lbs.) and Carter Smith (139 lbs.).

Whitehall went 6-0 at the Case-Flynn Duals in Pottsville while Palmerton was 5-1 in the same competition. Freedom was a perfect 3-0 in its own Battle at Bethlehem Duals.

Even though it is early in the season, there have been a number of local dual meets that could eventually have an impact on final league finishes as well as district dual meet seeding later in the season. Bethlehem Catholic controlled Northampton 42-20. Northampton bested a feisty Parkland team 40-24. Quakertown (District 1) just squeaked past Saucon Valley 36-29 in a great potential inter-district rivalry (only about ten miles apart).

However, the dual meet that got the most people talking apparently was the Easton vs Nazareth match on December 11th. This has been a contentious rivalry going back to the late 1980’s when Nazareth started to become a serious threat to Easton’s and Northampton’s wrestling dominance in District XI. Going into the final bout at 215 lbs., Nazareth held a slim 27-23 lead. However, Easton was able to send returning state qualifier Kurtis Crossman to the mat. Crossman was able to secure a technical fall which provided the Red Rovers with the points it needed to win the dual 28-27. Unfortunately for the visiting team, Easton was penalized one team point for unsportsmanlike conduct after the conclusion of the 215 lb. bout. This made score 27-27 in favor of Nazareth with the criteria being the team with the fewest unsportsmanlike conduct penalties.

The Lehigh Valley now boasts 20 girls wrestling teams. Catasauqua is one of the latest DXI schools to officially sponsor the sport. Easton’s Aubre Krazer is a true phenom! She is ranked #1 in the country at 130 lbs. and was a U20 Pan American gold medalist last summer. Aubre has never lost an in-season bout and is set on repeating as PIAA state champion in 2025. The Lehigh University commit’s brother Ethan is also a starter on the boys team and was a 20+ match winner last season.

(The Lehigh Valley Report was presented by Dave Crowell, head wrestling coach at Nazareth Area H.S. In addition to his coaching duties, Dave serves as a coaching consultant conducting seminars, clinics, consultations, and leadership training for all athletic coaching staffs as well as wrestling coaches specifically. He also serves as the National Wrestling Coaches Association resident coaching consultant and is busy facilitating the NWCA Scholastic Coaches Academy – one of the NWCA’s latest coaching development projects. You can contact Dave Crowell directly via email at dcrowell@rcn.com or visit him on the web at www.coachingbeyondthevictory.com.)



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District 3 H.S. Report

By Bill Creps



The Central Dauphin Boys wrestling teams enjoyed big tournament success over the opening weekend of the season. The Rams placed sec-

ond overall at the Solanco Mule Classic at Solanco High School. Central Dauphin finished second to Salesianum School of Delaware by just 11 points in the team standings.

Three Rams won gold, including Thunder Beard at 121 pounds who took a forfeit victory over Jordan Manyette of Trinity. Luke Hitchcock won the 133 pounds title by tech fall over Aaron Menickella of St. Mark's (Del.) and C.J. Ferree was victorious at 145 with a decision over Barrett Keiffer.

The Rams saw Anthony Neuhard (215) take a fourth-place medal. Franics Perri (114) placed fifth at 114 pounds and Brayden Powell placed sixth at 107. Cole Ramberger (189) and Pierce Lemmons (127) were seventh-place finishers.

HERSHEY'S BURD, MECHANICSBURG PAIR TAKE GOLD AT SAM LOVELLO --

Hershey placed fourth of 17 teams at the Sam Lovello Classic at Brandywine Heights with Christian Burd (172) garnering gold and Tyler Laughman (152) taking silver.

Xander Korn (160) and Aiden Bickley (189) were third-place finishers.

Mechanicsburg's Willie Marshall-Travis (215) and Collin Stare (285) also stuck gold at the Lovello – both beating wrestlers from Harry S. Truman JJ Gould (133) was a third-place winner.

Shippensburg's Ayden Estep was a runner-up at 145 pounds. Mechanicsburg finished fifth and Shippensburg was 11th.

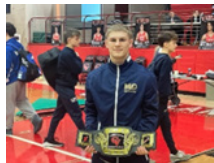
MECHANICSBURG –

Bishop McDevitt put their fingerprints all over the trophies and medals on display at the PennStro Leasing Kick-Off Classic at Cumberland Valley High School. McDevitt wrestlers claimed

four individual titles, two runner-up medals and two third place finishes on the way to blowing away a talented field by scoring 234 points.

Two of the featured bouts of the championship round saw two returning McDevitt state runners-up take on two highly ranked wrestlers in exciting and entertaining bouts. McDevitt's Greyson Music outlasted returning state place-winner Jackson Rush of West Perry in a tiebreaker by gaining a reversal to post a 7-5 win at 133 pounds.

McDevitt's Camden Baum



Camden Baum, wrestling at 139 pounds, battled Anthony Mutarelli of Council Rock South, who is the

top-ranked wrestler at the weight class by PA Power Wrestling. Baum, trailing 1-0 in the second period, took down Mutarelli and made it stand up for a 3-1 decision.

State place-winner Lucas Lawler, wrestling at 215 pounds, fashioned a 12-6 decision over Walker Murray of Pennsbury for the gold medal spot on the podium. Lawler returned to the mats days after celebrating a McDevitt state football championship one week ago at Chapman Field, just steps from CV's Dome Gym.

Braiden Loiter started off for McDevitt by getting a 7-point takedown and near fall sequence in the first period enroute to a 16-5 major decision over Downingtown West's Shafer Hoffman at 107 pounds.

West Perry's Tyler Morrison, the top-ranked wrestler at 172 pounds by PA Power Wrestling, won the 189-pound belt with an 8-2 decision over Brandon Carr of Sun Valley. Fellow team mate Quade Boden earned a silver medal at 285 pounds after dropping an 8-1 decision to Christopher DellaBella of Delaware Valley.

Cumberland Valley's Phil Montes earned the 114-pound title with a tie-breaking takedown in the third period to hold off Wilson's Abram Schaffer by an 8-6 count. The Eagles also earned a crown at 127 pounds as Connor Killion decided Cameron Baker

of Burrell by a 12-5 count.

McDevitt's Ryan Lawler lost a heart-breaker at 152 pounds, dropping a 2-1 decision Michael Turi of West Scranton in overtime. Lawler appeared to have scored a bout-winning takedown prior to the overtime period's buzzer, but the officials ruled otherwise. Turi of West Scranton in overtime.

The Crusaders' Nicky Negron was a runner-up at 160 pounds. Negron was pinned by Cade Campbell of Nazareth in the second period.

Nazareth's Tahir Perkins, a top-ranked wrestler at 145 pounds, won a major decision over McKaden Speece of Wilson gold at that weight class.

Nazareth placed second in the team standings with 190.5 points and Burrell was third with 140 points. Council Rock South (135 points) and Sun Valley (133) rounded out the top five. Camden Baum of Bishop McDevitt was named the Most Outstanding Wrestler.

Carlisle Wrestling Classic --

Carlisle's Brayden Jumper and Big Spring's Blake Gutshall were the two Mid-Penn Conference wrestlers to win individual titles Saturday night at the Carlisle Wrestling Classic at Carlisle High School.

Jumper, wrestling at 215, pinned Ian Wysocki of Southwestern in the second period to take top honors.

Gutshall, wrestling at 285, defeated Ezra Doyle of Millbrook, 2-1, in the first tiebreaker to win the gold. Big Spring's Keegan Barrick (121) and Nicholas Souders (160) were runners-up as was Carlisle's Steffon Urban (172).

Central Bucks West crowned three champions -- Daniel Dennis at 139, Kevin Mallon at 152 and Chris Dennia at 160 – on the way to 162.5 points and the team title.

Garnet Valley finished second in the team race with 158 points and Carlisle was third with 153. Palmerton was fourth with 147.5 and Big Spring fifth with 145.

Hope to see you on the Road to Hershey...

District 6 Report

By John Hartsock

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com*



The month of December is chock full of exciting and competitive tournament action for

District 6 wrestlers, who are competing in high-profile events all this month.

The month kicked off with the prestigious Bishop Walsh Ironman Tournament in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, and will wrap up with another nationally-acclaimed event, the Powerade Tournament, at Canon-McMillan High School in Canonsburg.

Many District 6 wrestling schools and their competitors are preparing themselves for the demanding postseason tournaments in late February and early March – culminating with the state tournament at Hershey’s Giant Center – by taking the mat against some of the best competition that the state, and in some cases, the nation, has to offer in the first month of the season.

Bishop Walsh Ironman Tournament

A total of 128 schools from all over the United States, including Bishop McCort and State College of District 6, competed in the season-opening Bishop Walsh Ironman Tournament at Bishop Walsh Jesuit High School in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio Dec. 6-7.

Led by championship performances from Jax Forrest (132 pounds), and Bo Bassett (144), along with a second-place effort from Melvin Miller (165), Bishop McCort, with 177.5 team points, finished second in the team standings in the blockbuster event -- behind only team champion Faith Christian Academy of Pennsylvania (213). Lake Highland Prep (Fla.) was third with 157 points, followed by Pennsylvania’s Wyoming Seminary (153) and Malvern Prep (132).

Forrest outlasted Jayden Raney of Union County, Ky., 10-7 in overtime in the championship match, while Bassett breezed to a 22-4 technical

fall in 2:23 of Carlos Stanton of Sunnyside, Ariz. in the title bout.

Miller reached the championship round before dropping a 10-1 major decision to Ladarian Lockett of Stillwater, Okla.

State College’s Asher Cunningham, a Penn State commit, reached the 175-pound championship match before losing a 15-12 overtime decision to William Henckel of Blair Academy, N.J.

Another Penn State commit, Bishop McCort’s Sam Herring, placed third at 138.

Panther Holiday Classic

One of the largest in-season tournaments involving District 6 teams was held Dec. 13-14, when the Panther Holiday Classic, with Penn Cambria of District 6 serving as the host school, was held at the Mount Aloysius College Athletic and Convocation Center in Cresson.

53 schools comprised the tournament field, including 19 from District 6. Hills School, a Pottstown, Pa. school based in Pottstown, Pa. that competes as a member of the Pennsylvania Independent Schools Athletic Association, won the team championship with 160 points in what was a very hotly-contested team race.

Hickory of District 10 was second with 155 points, followed by third-place McGuffey of District 7 (149.5 points).

Fourth-place Penns Valley of District 6, which racked up 145.5 team points, boasted a pair of individual champions in Max Dinges (114 pounds) and Erik Carlile (127). Dinges won his title match, 4-1 over Dakota Santamaria of Tussey Mountain, while Carlile scored an 11-8 overtime win over Brady Slicker of Hickory.

Tyrone’s Kyle Scott won the 189-pound title with a 17-2 technical fall in 4:13 over Ethan Miller of Selinsgrove in the championship round.

Two District 6 wrestlers, Gaige Sholly (107 pounds) of Huntingdon and Josh Ryan (215) of Mount Union, both finished second. Sholly lost his championship match, 5-4 to Carter Christ of Conemaugh Township, while

Ryan dropped an 11-6 decision in his title match to Zak Zindle of Hills School.

Tom Best Memorial Tournament

Penn State commit Luke Perry won the 145-pound championship in the Tom Best Memorial Top Hat Tournament that was held Dec. 6-7 at Williamsport High School. Perry won the title match by technical fall, 15-0 in four minutes over Jake Mitchell of Cumberland Valley.

Central Mountain, with 169 points, finished fourth in the 24-team standings, while Connellsville of District 7 won the team title with 220.5 points.

Hickory Tournament

Hollidaysburg and Penn Cambria were the District 6 entries in the 22-team Hickory Invitational held Dec. 7 at Hickory High School in Hermitage.

Neither Hollidaysburg or Penn Cambria crowned an individual champion, but Brayden Sidney finished second at 114 pounds for Hollidaysburg, which finished fifth in the team standings with 175 points. Host Hickory of District 10 won the team championship with 263.5 points.

Inter-County Conference Tournament

The 14-team Inter-County Conference Tournament featured teams from Blair, Bedford, Huntingdon, Clearfield and Somerset counties, and was held Dec. 7 at Claysburg-Kimmel High School.

Individual champions from District 6 included Mount Union’s Rowan McClain-Hartman (152 pounds) and Josh Ryan (215 pounds), along with Glendale’s Zach Vereshack (160).

Second-place finishers from District 6 included Moshannon Valley’s Aaron Cook (114 pounds), Rocco Reifer (189) and Tyler Lobb (285), West Branch’s Drake Taylor (127), Claysburg-Kimmel’s Ayden Soler (133) and Parker Knisley (139), and Juniata Valley’s Zach Dick (172).

Curwensville of District 9 won the team title with 145 points, while Moshannon Valley’s fourth-place finish with 125 points led the District 6 team entries.

**continued on page 13*

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Junior High Report

1st Junior High Boys State Team Rankings of 2024-2025 and Super 32 PA Results

Written by Junior High Editor, Grant Lowther

Top 10 JH Teams State Wide

- 1 Norwin
- 2 Parkland
- 3 Connellsville
- 4 Canon Macmillan
- 5 Trinity
- 6 Altoona
- 7 Kiski
- 8 Nazareth
- 9 Easton
- 10 Central Dauphin/Chestnut Ridge

Top Team in each District

- District 1- Downingtown
- District 2- Wilkes-Barre
- District 3- Central Dauphin
- District 4- Warrior Run
- District 5- Chestnut Ridge
- District 6- Altoona
- District 7- Norwin
- District 9- Dubois
- District 10- Reynolds
- District 11- Parkland



Previous #1 Ranked Junior High Team in State

- 2024- Trinity
- 2023- Bishop McCort
- 2022- Connellsville
- 2021- Northampton

Pennsylvania Middle Schoolers Dominate at Super 32

Pennsylvania Middle School wrestlers won the team race at The Super 32 for the 7th year in a row. PA had 24 Medalists including five Champions. Pennsylvanians Asher Bacon, Bradley Dimiglio, Kooper Deputy, Nelson Villafane, and Rocco Lombardo all won Super 32 Titles. Finishing runner up were Caleb Kosko, Dakota Sandy, and Grayden Paris. Taking 3rd place were Alex Marchetti, Arav Pandey, Dane Malone, Jax Fuhrman, Logan Reed, and Will McNeal. Other Middle School division Medalists from PA were Cole Schwartz (4th), Michael Nicosia (4th), Evan Restivo (5th), Noah Curren (5th), Stevy Mytych (5th), Jamison Forrest (6th), Bradley Bleich (7th), Jacob Kramer (7th), Brady Full (8th), and Riley Crandall (8th)

Early December Results Help Shape the Season's 1st Team Rankings

PA's junior high wrestling season is underway and already there have been some key results in early December. Last years #1 ranked Junior High team in the state, Trinity, started their season off 6-0 winning the Shaler Duals. Kiski Area went 5-0 winning the Seneca Valley Duals, including a victory over host Seneca Valley 51-33. At the same duals, Seneca Valley defeated last year's #3 ranked team in PA, Bishop McCort, 47-27. Three important head-to-head duals across the state also took place. Altoona defeated Chestnut Ridge 45-34, Norwin defeated Canon McMillan 48-33, and probably the most impressive of the early December results, Parkland defeated last year's District 11 Champion, Northampton, 75-12.

At the Joe Iagnemma JH Tournament, Connellsville finished 1st, Canon Mcmillan 2nd and Trinity 3rd. The Powerade, Baguba Brawl, Trojan Wars, and the Connellsville Duals are some key upcoming tournaments before the Bellefonte Invitational in January.

pictured below is the 1st Annual "Hiller Holidays Duals" At Trinity High School December 14th (Girls Varsity and Junior High)

pictured above are the Middle School Team Champions -Pine Richland



NCAA Div. II Report

By: Zack Schafer

2024-2025 Men's Wrestling Preview

Seven Division II wrestling programs across Pennsylvania have started their quests for team and individual championships in 2025.

- East Stroudsburg enters the season led by heavyweight Layton Schmick (Carlisle), who is ranked 12th in the initial NCAA D-II Coaches Association Rankings. True freshman Parrish McFarland (Pottsville) has been an immediate-impact newcomer for the Warriors at 157 lbs.

- Gannon boasts two returning All-Americans – 133 Jerry Echevarria and 165 Nick Coreno – fourth-ranked 157 Ethan Richner (Bellefonte), and high impact transfers 285 Dorian Crosby (Erie Cathedral Prep) and 125 Logan Sallot (Erie McDowell). The Golden Knights are currently seventh in the initial team rankings.

- Kutztown also returns two All-Americans in 165 Bailey Gimbor (Hamburg) and national finalist 184 Matt Weinberg (Archbishop Ryan). The Golden Bears are ranked 13th as a team with ninth-ranked 149 Jimmy Ryan, seventh-ranked 174 Dalton Gimbor (Hamburg), and 11th-ranked 197 Wayne McIntyre (East Stroudsburg North) giving them five nationally ranked wrestlers.

- Millersville is off to a strong start with three wrestlers currently featured in the national rankings: 125 Bryce Beatty (Mount Union), 133 Taylor Robinson, and 149 Richie DeFulvio. The Marauders lineup is anchored by 285 Bishop McCoy (South Side Beaver).

- Pitt-Johnstown features three returning All-Americans – 125 Trevon Gray, 197 Dakoda Rodgers (Connellsville), and 285 Isaiah Vance (Hempfield) – plus ninth-ranked 141 Mason Myers (Central York), and returning national qualifier Cooper Warshel (Richland). The Mountain Cats are currently ranked 20th as a team.

- Seton Hill is led by returning national qualifier Kane Kettering (Reynolds) and high impact transfer Ty Linsenbigler (Hempfield Area). True freshman Don Lindsey (Central Valley) is off to a strong start for the Griffins.

- Shippensburg is led by returners 149 Mike Trainor (Octorara), 157 Kyler Everly (Mifflin County), 174 Trey Shoemaker (Mifflin County), 184 Owen Koch (Phoenixville), and 197 Diesel Koser (Shippensburg), along with true freshman 165

Anthony DeAngelo (Trinity).

Super Region I

Pennsylvania's seven Division II wrestling programs, along with American International (MA), Fairmont State (WV), Felician (NJ), Frostburg State (WV) and Wheeling (WV), comprise Super Region 1. There are six Super Regions across NCAA Division II wrestling, and the top three wrestlers in each weight class of each super region will qualify for the 2025 NCAA Division II Championships in Terre Haute, Indiana.

Transfers

The transfer portal continues to play an important role in the roster management of Division II wrestling programs across the country, with wrestlers changing schools to obtain both undergraduate and graduate degrees. Below is an overview of transfer student-athletes from D-I and D-II institutions on the rosters for PSAC programs in 2024-2025:

Gannon: Dorian Crosby (Bucknell), Jerry Echevarria (American International), Cole Hivnor (Pittsburgh), Patrick Jackson (Lock Haven), Kenny Kiser (Army), Ethan Richner (South Dakota State), Logan Sallot (Lock Haven)

Kutztown: Bailey Gimbor (Franklin & Marshall), Dalton Gimbor (Franklin & Marshall), Jimmy Ryan (Gannon)

Millersville: Nick Cottone (Davis & Elkins), Taylor Robinson (Mount Olive)

Pitt-Johnstown: Brock McMillen (Pittsburgh), Brad Morrison (Lock Haven), Macon Myers (Bloomsburg)

Seton Hill: Landon Christie (Mercyhurst), Jacob Gardner (Gannon), Jacob Houpt (Kent State), Ty Linsenbigler (Lock Haven)

Shippensburg: Demetrius Daniels (Alderson Broaddus) and Nick Delp (Bucknell)

Other PA Natives in Division II

In addition to the nationally ranked wrestlers at PSAC institutions, there are a number of Pennsylvania natives ranked for out-of-state programs, including returning national champion and top-ranked 184 Ty McGeary (West Allegheny) wrestling for West Liberty. Other ranked individuals include 11th-ranked 141 Colton Stoneking (Waynesburg Central) wrestling for Fairmont State, 12th-ranked 157 Jordan Watters (West Allegheny) wrestling for West Liberty, sixth-ranked 165 Guy DeLeonardis (Knoch) wrestling for Glenville

State, and 11th-ranked 184 Kyle Homet (Waynesburg Central) wrestling for Glenville State.

St. Cloud State opens 2024-2025 as the top-ranked team in Division II, followed closely by returning national champion Central Oklahoma. Wisconsin-Parkside, McKendree, and Nebraska-Kearney round out the top five.

285 Dorian Crosby (Gannon), pictured left



197 Dakoda Rodgers (Pitt-Johnstown)



184 Matt Weinberg (Kutztown)



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District 6 Report Continued

continued from page 9

3 win Super 32 Challenge titles

District 6 wrestlers acquitted themselves very well in the prestigious Defense Soap Super 32 Challenge held this past Oct. 12-13 in Greensboro, N.C.

Bishop McCort's Forrest (132 pounds) and Bassett (144), along with State College's Cunningham (165) each won individual championships, while Central Mountain's Perry placed second at 138.

Forrest logged a 9-3 decision over Seth Mendoza of Mokena, Ill. In the title match, while Bassett earned his championship victory by topping Daniel Zepeda of Gilroy, Cal., 10-7 in overtime.

Cunningham outlasted Dominic Babinelli of Hoscton, Ga., 12-11, in the championship round.

Perry lost by 18-5 major decision in the championship round to Sergio Vega of Tuscon, Ariz.

Upcoming Events

The 33-team King of the Mountain Tournament and the Powerade Tournament highlight the late December blockbuster events involving District 6 teams.

The King of the Mountain Tournament features 33 teams, including six from District 6, and was held Dec. 20-21 at Central Mountain High School in Mill Hall. District 6 entries included Altoona, Bald Eagle Area, Bellefonte, Central Mountain, Mifflin County and

State College.

The Powerade is annually one of the entire nation's most prestigious scholastic wrestling tournaments, and will be held December 27-28 at Canon-McMillan High School in Canonsburg, Pa. There are 67 high school teams from various states around the country involved in this year's event, with Altoona, Bishop McCort and State College comprising the District 6 entries.

Sipes Signs with UNC

Altoona Area High School standout Luke Sipes, who is a three-time District 6 Class 3A and Northwest Regional Tournament champion, and three-time PIAA Class 3A state medalist, signed a letter of intent in November to continue his wrestling career on the NCAA Division I level at the University of North Carolina.

"I'm very grateful and I'm really excited for the opportunity to get to compete at a high level and get a great education at the University of North Carolina," Sipes said of the Tar Heels, whose head coach, Rob Koll, was a PIAA Class 3A state champion at State College back in 1984 and has enjoyed a long and distinguished collegiate coaching career.

"I really believe in the North Carolina coaching staff, and I can't wait to see how I get developed in the next four to five years," Sipes said.

Sipes entered the 2024-25 high school wrestling season with 113 career victories.

Northwest Regional is history

There will no longer be a Northwest Class 3A Regional Wrestling Tournament. That tournament, which was held for over the past three decades at Altoona Area High School, and which involved wrestlers from Districts 4, 6, 8 and 9 in recent years, will merge with the former Southwest Class 3A (WPIAL) Regional Tournament and its District 7 schools to become the new Western Regional Tournament.

This past fall, the PIAA Board of Control approved the wrestling steering committee's proposal to make a change and eliminate the Northwest Regional, moving the schools from Districts 6, 8 and 9 which had previously competed in that regional to the expanded Western Regional Tournament that will be held Feb. 28-March 1, 2025 at Canon-McMillan High School.

The District 4 wrestlers who had competed in the Northwest Regional will now compete in the Northeast Class 3A Regional.

This move leaves the PIAA with four regional wrestling tournaments at both the Class 3A and 2A levels.

All four Class 3A regionals throughout the state will qualify the top five finishers at each weight class for the boys state tournament in Hershey.

(John Hartsock has covered high school wrestling and other sports for the Altoona Mirror for over 40 years)

THE BEST FROM PENNSYLVANIA IN NCAA DIV. I

125

1. Sheldon Seymour-Sr. Troy HS (Lehigh) #15
2. Chris Vargo-Fr. Bentworth (Edinboro) NR
3. James Garcia-Fr. Wilson (Franklin & Marshall) NR

133

1. Ryan Crookham-So. Saucon Valley (Lehigh) #1
2. Jacob Van Dee-So. Erie Prep (Nebraska) #20
3. Ethan Berginc-Jr. Jeannette (Army West Point) #23

141

1. Dylan Chappell-Sr. Seneca Valley (Bucknell) #20
2. Wyatt Henson-Jr. Waynesburg (Lock Haven) #23
3. Anthony Ferraro-So. Pine-Richland (Edinboro) NR

149

1. Ty Watters-So. West Allegheny (WVU) #3
2. Gabe Willochell-Jr. Greater Latrobe (Wyoming) #22
3. Kaden Cassidy-Jr. Bedford (George Mason) #26

157

1. Tyler Kasak-So. Bethlehem Catholic (Penn State) #4
2. Ed Scott-Sr. DuBois (NC State) #10
3. Paniro Johnson So. Erie Cathedral Prep (Iowa State) #13

165

1. Sammy Sasso Sr. Nazareth (Ohio State) #8
2. Evan Maag So. Notre Dame (George Mason) #24
3. Mac Church Fr. Waynesburg (Virginia Tech) #29

174

1. Levi Haines-Jr. Biglerville (Penn State) #2
2. Lenny Pinto-Jr. Stroudsburg (Nebraska) #14
3. Luca Agustine-Jr. Waynesburg (Pittsburgh) #17

184

1. Carter Starocci-Grad Student, Erie Prep (Penn State) #1
2. Edmond Ruth-Sr. Susquehanna Twp. (Illinois) #12
3. Max Hale-Sr. Downingtown West (Penn) #22

197

1. Michael Beard-Sr. Reading, PA Malvern Prep (Lehigh) #8
2. Mac Stout-So. Mt. Lebanon (Pittsburgh) #16
3. Luke Stout-Sr. Mt. Lebanon (Princeton) #20

285

1. Nick Feldman-So. Malvern Prep (Ohio State) #9
2. Dayton Pitzer-So. Mt. Pleasant (Pittsburgh) #14
3. Michael Wolfram-Sr. Central York (West Virginia) #29



Half Nelson Report

By Coach Joe Baranik, Owner/
Founder



All Things Pennsylvania Wrestling:

Wow, what a wrestling flurry since our last issue in May! Unfortunately, we lost a true coaching legend and a good friend of

mine in **Pat Pecora on Sept. 8**. Pat lost his 11-year battle with cancer way too young at 70 years old. I used to work his summer wrestling camps for eight straight summers along with my son, Troy; our team at St. Andrews University competed against his teams. We shared some great times at the annual National Wrestling Coaches Association convention with our families.

Legendary football coach Don Shula, who was the last NFL coach to go unbeaten and win a Super Bowl with the Miami Dolphins, has a chain of restaurants called “Shula 347” to signify the most wins in NFL history. Well, Pat’s would be called “Pecora 661” for his number of wins. Pecora leads all NCAA divisions for the most career wins at 661-154-5! One of the many fine attributes of Pat was his loyalty. He was loyal to his wrestlers and he expected the same from them. Maybe this is why he spent 48 years at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown (UPJ) when he had other offers to coach at D-I schools. Since 2008, Pecora had been both the athletic director and head wrestling coach at UPJ, which demonstrates his great leadership abilities.

Pecora won the only two NCAA team titles at UPJ in 1996 and 1999. His teams won 25 NCAA regional titles and have won the last eight PSAC championships. Pat has been named NCAA Regional Coach of the Year a remarkable 22 times! He was named National Coach of the Year in 1995, 1999, 2019 and 2022. His teams have produced 24 top 10 finishes and 11 top five finishes at the NCAA Championships. Finally, Pecora has mentored 170 All-Americans and 15 NCAA champions who have combined for 23 NCAA titles.

The President of the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, Jem Spectar, had this to say about Coach Pecora: “The UPJ family mourns the loss of Pat Pecora, a great coach, teacher, colleague — a titan of a man and a champion of Olympic proportions. We extend our deepest condolences to his family, friends, and loved ones. For over four decades,

Coach P built a monumental legacy of athletics excellence, transforming Pitt Johnstown into an unparalleled wrestling powerhouse that propelled legions of UPJ athletes to state, regional, and national championships while also elevating and burnishing UPJ’s reputation. During a storied career, his many accomplishments became the stuff of legend, especially when, in 2020, he became the All-Time Winningest College Wrestling Coach (aka the Greatest of All Time or the GOAT) - across all divisions, breaking a 46-year-old record.”

Tyler Reinhart, who has stepped in as interim head coach at UPJ, won an NCAA title for Pecora in 2016. Reinhart had this to say about Coach Pecora: “Coach Pecora was one of the best leaders to walk the earth. He was a leader on and off the mat and practiced what he preached day in and day out. He just had a special way of connecting with people, not only his wrestlers, and he was able to bring the best out of everyone. He was able to get anyone to believe in him and get anyone to believe in themselves. He was special.”

Ryan Buterbaugh, who was a regional champ for me at Hollidaysburg High School and an All-American for Coach Pat, had this to say about his coach: “Coach Pecora affectionately called some of us ‘ever readies,’ which was part of his mantra of readiness in life, practice and competition. When the critical moment would arrive, whether stepping in for an injured starter, breaking your opponent in the final minute of a tight match, or at nationals, you’re ‘ever ready.’ Victory is yours, a testament to Pecora’s time-tested roadmap to success.”

Coach Pecora is also the only coach in college wrestling history to coach a **six-time NCAA champion in Carlton Haselrig (285)**. Up until the late ‘80s, if you won the D-II or III Nationals, you got to wrestle in the Division I NCAA Championships. Haselrig won three in both the D-II and D-I NCAA tournaments. The “Rig” is the only wrestler to accomplish this feat. Pecora then helped Haselrig get drafted by the Pittsburgh Steelers, where he went on to become a starting offensive lineman and an eventual Pro Bowl in 1993.

In tribute to Coach Pat Pecora, we at PWN are dedicating our 30th year in publication to this brave man who had a vision and a true passion for our sport, his athletes and those of us lucky enough to call him a friend.

“STAR-occi” 5 for Fighting:

Former Cathedral Prep state champion Carter Starocci could be the only college wrestler to win five individual Division I national titles because of the extra COVID-19 year of eligibility. He joins his coach and former teammate Aaron Brooks as only one of seven Div. I wrestlers to win four NCAA titles! Starocci was coached in high school by PWN writer Mike Haheesy. I asked Haheesy what Carter’s five essential characteristic traits were coming out of high school and here they are:

1. Work ethic was off the charts.
2. Confidence was unreal; he wasn’t scared of anyone!
3. Extra work — he worked hard before, during and after the season.
4. He had a thirst for getting better. Watching videos, wrestling other kids, and going to tournaments.
5. Ability to win close bouts — able to do the right thing at the right time; never put himself in a position to lose.

Violet Lasure: “This Girl is on Fire” Like the girl who sings this song, Alicia Keys, sophomore Violet Lasure of Chestnut Ridge is definitely on fire in the wrestling world! As a freshman, she won the PWN PA Pinner Award (the first one for girls) with 31 pins out of 32 bouts and became the Lions’ first ever Girls State Champion. Over the summer, she won the U16 girls title in Fargo, ND. Next, she won the Journeyman Classic and, in October, she won her second Super 32 Belt at 148 lbs. Finally, she was a preseason national champion at 145 lbs. The sky’s the limit for this girl and she has a great workout partner in her sister, Juliet, who is a freshman this season for the Lions of Chestnut Ridge. Juliet was 155-pound runner-up at preseason nationals and she won the Ironwoman tournament.

Bo Bassett: Some call him the next Cary Kolat or the next Dave Schultz. By anyone’s standards, Bo Bassett is certainly one of the best high school wrestlers in the last 50 years, and he is only a junior! He wrestles for the Bishop McCort Crushers — what an appropriate nickname for a wrestler. He possesses all the positive characteristics such as great work ethic, a superb attitude and academics to match. He is the whole package and will do great things. Currently, he is 9-0 on the season with eight tech falls and a forfeit win. His high school career record is 83-0 with 55 tech falls and 18 pins! Recently, Bassett won the Super 32 and his third Ironman tournament.

**continued on page 24*



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FALL TAKEDOWN TRIVIA

compiled by Joe Baranik

The University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown will be the host institution for the 2028 NCAA Div. II Wrestling Championships to be held at the University of Pittsburgh's Petersen Events Center in Pittsburgh on March 10-11, 2028.

Lehigh and Penn State met for the 112th time on Dec. 8. The dual had been sold out for weeks at the 10,000 seat PPL Center in Allentown. The Mountain Hawks are 1-2 with a 21-12 loss to Pitt on Nov. 24.

The Nittany Lions hold the longest winning streak in the country with 59 straight wins, and an amazing 7 of their 10 starters are ranked in the top 4!

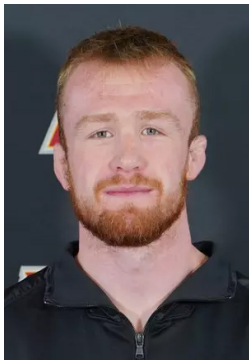
PSU shut out Wyoming 54-0 on December 15 at the Bryce Jordan Center in front of 7,300 fans, and all 10 starters won by bonus points! It was the first time these two teams ever wrestled. The Lions earned 5 pins, four tech falls and one major decision. The Cowboys were able to earn one takedown in the bout by former Greater Latrobe wrestler Gabe Willochell (149). Penn State won the takedown battle 29-1.

The 54- point margin is the second longest in PSU history. The largest was against Buffalo (55-0) in February of 2018.

#1 PSU 54, WYOMING 0

- 125: #12 Luke Lilledahl PSU tech fall Jack Braman WYO, 20-5 (TF; 4:25)
- 133: #11 Braeden Davis PSU tech fall Stockton O'Brien WYO, 18-4 (TF; 5:27)
- 141: #3 Beau Bartlett PSU pinned No. 28 Cole Brooks WYO, WBF (0:47)
- 149: #2 Shayne Van Ness PSU pinned No. 22 Gabe Willochell WYO, WBF (4:27)
- 157: #4 Tyler Kasak PSU maj. dec. No. 19 Jared Hill WYO, 16-3
- 165: #1 Mitchell Mesenbrink PSU tech fall Cooper Voorhees WYO, 15-0 (TF; 3:17)
- 174: #2 Levi Haines PSU pinned Riley Davis WYO, WBF (2:25)
- 184: #1 Carter Starocci PSU pinned Ethan Ducca WYO, WBF (1:37)
- 197: #7 Josh Barr PSU pinned Brant Whitaker WYO, WBF (1:48)
- 285: #2 Greg Kerkvliet PSU tech fall Kevin Zimmer WYO, 20-8 (TF; 3:28)

*Lock Haven University defeated Wisconsin 26-17 at home on Dec. 8 for their first win over a Big Ten opponent since 2017. LHU's Lucas Kapusta (149) (Jeanette, PA-Hempfield) a redshirt freshman, is off to a 10-3 start of the season, including 3-0 in dual meets. He is ranked #32 nationally and has a victory over #33 Andrew Clark of Rutgers, plus a win over Aiden Medora of Wisconsin. Kapusta was named MAC East Wrestler of the week for his victories.



* The Bethel Park Black Hawks had a great day on December 14 at the Hampton Dawg Duals by going 5-0 against some tough competition. BP beat Altoona 38-27, Plum 52-9, Canon-McMillan 45-18, Greater Latrobe 32-29 and a hard fought battle with Fox Chapel, 28-27.

***Matthew Lackman (165) (Bethlehem Catholic) pictured, of Alvernia University, became the school's first wrestler to ever reach 150 career wins. The graduate student placed 3rd in last year's NCAA D-3 Championships.**

*The #19 Pitt Panthers defeated Lehigh on Nov. 24 (21-12) for the 3rd straight year, and have won 5 of the last six vs the Mt. Hawks. Pitt also nearly upset #5 Ohio State after winning five of the 10 bouts...box score below

#5 Ohio State 20, #19 Pitt 17

- 174: No. 17 Luca Augustine (Pitt) dec. Ethan Birden (Ohio State), 2-1, TB (Pitt leads 3-0)
- 184: No. 11 Reece Heller (Pitt) dec. Seth Shumate (Ohio State), 6-5 (Pitt leads 6-0)
- 197: No. 16 Mac Stout (Pitt) dec. No. 15 Ryder Rogotzke (Ohio State), 8-2 (Pitt leads 9-0)
- 285: No. 14 Dayton Pitzer (Pitt) tech. fall Hogan Swenski (Ohio State), 16-1 (7:00) (Pitt leads 14-0)
- 125: No. 6 Brendan McCrone (Ohio State) major dec. Matt Marlow (Pitt), 8-0 (Pitt leads 14-4)
- 133: No. 7 Nic Bouzakis (Ohio State) major dec. No. 31 Vinnie Santaniello (Pitt), 14-4 (Pitt leads 14-8)
- 141: No. 2 Jesse Mendez (Ohio State) tech. fall No. 21 Anthony Santaniello (Pitt), 16-1 (5:00) (Pitt leads 14-13)
- 149: No. 12 Dylan D'Emilio (Ohio State) dec. No. 28 Finn Solomon (Pitt), 7-4 (Ohio State leads 16-14)
- 157: No. 7 Paddy Gallagher (Ohio State) major dec. No. 31 Dylan Evans (Pitt), 13-4 (Ohio State leads 20-14)
- 165: Jared Keslar (Pitt) dec. No. 8 Sammy Sasso (Ohio State), 13-11 (Ohio State wins 20-17)

**Redshirt freshman Dylan Evans (157) (Chartiers Valley) is 5-1 on the season for Pitt.*

A school from the Big Ten (B1G) conference has won the last 17 NCAA Wrestling Championships. Penn State has won 11, Iowa has achieved four, Ohio State got one, and Minnesota tallied one. The last school from a different conference was the Big 12's Oklahoma State back in 2006, when they won their 4th in row.

DISTRICT 10 HS REPORT

By **JEFF UVEINO**

Erie Times-News

District 10 has trended toward Class 2A for years. But this season may present its strongest small-school field in some time.

Cathedral Prep dropped from Class 3A to 2A for this PIAA cycle. The Ramblers return all 13 starters from last year's D-10 championship team, plus three accomplished freshmen who have seen immediate mat time.

Hickory also returned to Class 2A after a two-year stint in 3A. After winning their home invitational, the Hornets upset Reynolds, 35-33, in a Dec. 11 dual meet, then placed second at Mount Aloysius' Panther Holiday Classic.

Corry returns 12 starters. Grove City and North East feature improved lineups. Fort LeBoeuf and General McLane remain contenders.

D-10's two Class 2A berths at the PIAA team championships will not be easily won.

Snow delays start for some

Hickory's 263.5 points topped runner-up Greater Latrobe (242.5) and third-place St. Marys (202.5) at the annual Hickory Invitational Tournament on Dec. 6-7.

Six teams from Erie County, however, did not attend, including Fort LeBoeuf and Corry, the defending team champion and runner-up. Some programs were kept from practice – and school – for a week after a lengthy snowstorm engulfed the region.

Mercer County schools had no such issues. Reynolds avenged its loss to Hickory by beating rival Greenville, 39-20, a day later.

Hickory, meanwhile, stayed hot with a second-place finish at Mount Aloysius. Elijah Scriven (121 pounds) and Brady Slicker (127) each placed second at the Panther classic after Slicker won his home invitational and Scriven was runner-up at the same weight. Tyler Boyle (114) also won at Hickory.

Other early notable dual results include Cathedral Prep's 52-15 triumph over General McLane on Dec. 4 and Corry's 54-11 triumph over Union City before a daytime gymnasium packed with students. Prep finished 6-0 at its annual Rambler Duals tournament Dec. 14, posting victories over Bradford, McDowell, St. Joseph's (N.Y.), Perry (Ohio), Madison (Ohio) and St. Edward (Ohio).

Top Returners

No D-10 wrestler has won the PIAA tournament since 2021. Seven state medalists return for this season, including Slicker, who placed eighth at 127 pounds in Class 3A last year – D-10's lone 3A medalist.

Logan Stewart returns for Reynolds after placing fourth at 127 pounds as a freshman and Cyrus Hurd returns for North East after a fifth-place finish at 133 his junior year. Grove City returns two medalists in junior Hudson Hohman, who finished eighth at 133 last season, and senior Cody Hamilton, who was fifth at 152.

Saegertown senior Carter Beck placed eighth at 114 pounds last year and Greenville senior Teage Calvin was 8th at 215.

New Head Coaches

D-10 features 11 new head coaches this season, including a change at traditional power Fort LeBoeuf. Nick Milano, a PIAA medalist at Cathedral Prep and Clarion wrestling alumnus, relieved Shane McChesney as Bison leader after three seasons.

Other new head coaches include Jason Vardell (Cambridge Springs), Scott Shipton (Conneaut), Jeremy Little (Erie High), Tye Vardell (Franklin) Curt Cardman (Girard), Travis Bell (Mercer), Matt Cherry (Northwestern), Nate Smith (Seneca), Mo Burns (Titusville) and Tim Mitcham (Union City).

D-10's large schools impacted by realignment

Numbers don't lie. The PIAA's Class 3A realignment makes sense.

Eliminating the Northwest regional, however, will make individual PIAA berths much more difficult for D-10 wrestlers.

With just four Class 3A teams (Erie High, McDowell, Harbor Creek, Meadville), D-10 will join three teams from District 9 for a combined sub-regional tournament Feb. 15 in place of districts. Then, instead of traveling to Altoona for regionals, D-10 qualifiers must place top four in a West regional which features most of its former foes plus the 44 WPIAL teams – not an inviting path to Hershey.

Upcoming tournaments

Meadville's annual Tool City tournament is scheduled for Jan. 3-4. Several D-10 teams will travel to Indiana's Mid-Winter Mayhem the following weekend while others visit the Burgettstown Invitational or Falconer, New York's Patrick J. Morales Memorial Tournament.

Jan. 18 will welcome PIAA Class 2A run-

ner-up Bishop McCort and 11 other teams to the Corry Beaver Brawl Duals. Grove City's Fred Bell Tournament is Jan. 24-25.

Starocci strives for No. 5

Cathedral Prep alumnus Carter Starocci will strive for his fifth NCAA championship this season with the Penn State Nittany Lions. Starocci weathered a late-season knee injury to win his fourth title in March.

Come 2025, Starocci – a two-time PIAA champion with the Ramblers – could become the first collegiate wrestler to ever win five NCAA Division I championships. Starocci is one of seven men with four NCAA D-I titles, including former Penn State teammate Aaron Brooks, who also accomplished the feat last season.



Other notable D-10 alumni now wrestling collegiately include Cathedral Prep alumni Jake Van Dee (Nebraska) and Paniro Johnson (Iowa State), both former NCAA qualifiers.

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District 9 HS Report

By: Kenn Staub



It's that time – the time of year when schools across District 9 cover their gyms' hardwood floors with wrestling mats

There's a lot to look forward to in 2024-2025 – new rules consistent with those at the college-level, a cadre of veterans looking to cement their legacies, and an incoming freshman class ready to make their marks.

Two wrestlers will be gunning for their fourth District 9 individual titles – Brookville's Cole Householder and Clearfield's Brady Collins.

Twelve returning District 9 grapplers have qualified for states at some point in their careers, accounting for 26 trips to Hershey. Householder, Collins, Cranberry's Elijah Brosius and Dalton Wenner, and Port Allegany's Carson Neely have all earned two medals apiece.

Householder, a Naval Academy commit, is looking to add another NW Regional title to his resume, repeating what he accomplished as a junior and freshman. A three-time state qualifier, he placed seventh in Hershey as a freshman and fifth as a junior. Last season Householder went 46-5 at 145 pounds, driving his career mark to 119-23.

Among Householder's Brookville teammates are returning state placer Gavin Hannah and two-time state qualifier Easton Belfiore.

Hannah, a senior, had his best varsity season in 2023-2024, going 39-11 at 215 pounds, winning districts and regionals, and ultimately taking sixth at states.

Belfiore, also a senior, was 36-8 last year at 189 pounds, winning districts and placing second at regionals enroute to the state tournament. He was also a state qualifier as a freshman.

Hannah is a Bloomsburg commit, while Belfiore will wrestle collegiately at Mercyhurst.

Collins, a Brown commit, was third in Hershey at 152 pounds last season, a one-podium step improvement from his sophomore placement. Collins has never won fewer than 35 matches in a season, going 46-4 a year ago as he descended from 160 pounds to his postseason weight. He has a career record of 119-15.

Joining Collins in the Clearfield line-up are a pair of returning state qualifiers, Ty Aveni, a senior, and junior Cash Diehl. Both Aveni and Diehl made their first trips to Hershey a year ago, the former at 145

pounds and the latter at 121 pounds.

A three-time regional qualifier, Aveni went 37-21 during his descent from 152 pounds.

Diehl won a district title a year ago at 121 pounds. The two-time regional qualifier was 31-12 each of the past two campaigns.

Brosius, a senior, has qualified for states three times. He did not place last year competing at 127 pounds, but was eighth his freshman and sophomore seasons. Brosius won districts as a freshman and was runner-up his past two outings. His three trips to regionals have all ended with third-place finishes.

Dalton Wenner, a junior, is a two-time district and regional champion, placing seventh in Hershey as a freshman and sixth his sophomore season. Last year, wrestling at 114 pounds, he went 39-7.

The Cranberry line-up boasts two other state qualifiers – senior Dane Wenner and Aiden Thompson, a sophomore.

Dane Wenner, a two-timer at states, won regionals as a junior after placing third the year prior. One of his goals this year has to be winning districts, having had to settle for third the past three seasons.

Both Brosius and Dane Wenner have never won less than 30 matches in a season and already eclipsed the 100-win milestone, the former 102-33 and the latter 104-12. The pair each went 36-12 last year.

Aiden Thompson is coming off a stellar freshman effort, going 30-11 at 107 pounds. His accolades included a District 9 title and third at regionals.

This year Cranberry's grapplers will have to take a different path to the state tournament than in previous seasons, the PIAA having reclassified the Berries from 2A to 3A.

Neely, a senior, qualified for states as a sophomore and junior, placing both times, fourth his first try and fifth his second. He's won district and regional titles the past two seasons competing as a 285-pounder. Neely, who plans to wrestle collegiately at Clarion, was only 4-9 as a freshman, but went 36-2 as a sophomore and then 44-2 as a junior.

In addition to Neely, Port Allegany will also have returning state qualifier Aiden Bliss in the line-up. A senior, Bliss went 29-11 a year ago at 172 pounds. A two-time district runner-up, he will be looking for that elusive first D9 championship.

Neely and Bliss should just be rounding into wrestling form when this magazine goes to press, both getting a later start to the season as they were key contributors the Gators football team that advanced to the state championship game.

Punxsutawney junior Jordan Rutan won districts and placed second at regionals a year ago. The returning state qualifier posted a 30-7 mark as a 133-pounder. Rutan was a regional qualifier his freshman season.

St. Marys has two previous state qualifiers on its roster – seniors Aiden Beimel, who made the trip to Hershey as a freshman, and Jaden Wehler, who advanced to the PIAA tournament his sophomore season.

Beimel, a three-time regional qualifier, was a district champion his freshman year, second as a sophomore, and third as a junior. He has never had fewer than 20 wins in a season, going 43-9 at 127 pounds a year ago.

Wehler, a regional qualifier the past two years, was district champion as a sophomore and runner-up in 2024. After going 7-9 his freshman year, he improved to 27-13 as a sophomore and then 38-8 last season when he went from 152 pounds to his postseason weight of 145.

Among the freshman, DuBois's Mateo Gallegos and Kendahl Hoare, Johnsonburg's Mario Casilio, and Clearfield's Matthew Rowles all have proven track records at the state and/or national levels.

There's also no shortage of talent among the District 9 girls.

Punxsutawney senior Jael Miller is the defending 170-pound state champion. She also won a state championship in 2022, predating the PIAA's sanctioning of the sport. A season ago Miller was 28-0.

Keyauna Schimp of Redbank, a senior, qualified for the state tournament as a sophomore, prior to the PIAA's recognition of the event. She was 10-9 last year at 190 pounds.

Freshman Iris Reitz, a former PJW state champion, joins Schimp in Redbank Valley's line-up.



District 5 H.S. Report

By **TODD IRWIN**



Somerset senior Rowan Holmes is wrestling this season at 285 for the first time in his career after placing third at 215 at the PIAA Class 2A Championships as a junior and fourth at 189 as

a sophomore.

While he's adjusting to the weight class, the top-seeded Holmes was still able to easily win his second title at the 52-team Panther Holiday Classic on Dec. 14 at Mount Aloysius College.

Holmes capped a 6-0 mark at two-day event with a 7-0 win over Selinsgrove's second-seeded Jack Peters in the championship finals.

Holmes, who weighs 235 pounds, notched three first-period falls, a 13-0 major decisions and back-to-back 7-0 wins in the semifinals and finals, respectively.

"I think I wrestled pretty well," Holmes said. "Being up at heavyweight this year is a lot different. I had to put some weight on to wrestle some bigger guys and get used to the weight. It's just a different type of wrestling."

The only other champion from District 5 was Conemaugh Township sophomore Carter Christ at 107 pounds. The third seed pulled off a stunning takedown as time expired to beat Huntingdon's top-seeded Gaige Sholly, 5-4, in the finals.

"Carter wrestled great all weekend, real smart," Conemaugh Township coach Brian Heinrich said. "He was very into his attacks the entire time, handfighting well, moving well, wrestling his match in his style. He was looking to make an

impact, and that's what he did."

Tussey Mountain's second-seeded Dakota Santamaria fell in the 114-pound finals to Penns Valley's fourth-seeded Max Dinges, 4-1.

Berlin Brothersvalley's seventh-seeded Dawson Shaffer dropped an 11-4 decision to McGuffey's top-seeded Lucas Barr in the finals at 139.

Former Bedford wrestler, returning Virginia state champion and three-time Panther Holiday Classic finalist Kaden Cassidy lost, 11-0, to the tournament's Outstanding Wrestler Arment Waltenbaugh of The Hill School.

Holmes scored a takedown in the first period, rode Peters the entire second period, escaped 51 seconds into the third and got another takedown when Peters attempted to throw him.

"I the third period, I was pretty confident," Holmes said. "I'm good on my feet, so I got a takedown at the end. I'm pretty happy with how I wrestled in this tournament overall."

Holmes hiked his record to 6-1 this season, with his loss coming via fall in the season opener to Bishop McCort's Caleb Rodriguez.

"I think it's a pretty good starting point for the year," he said of the tournament. "I went to keep it going."

Sholly led Christ for most of the bout after scoring a first-period takedown. Sholly held a 3-2 lead in the waning seconds of the bout when Christ decided to go for a throw.

"I was on my attack the entire time," Christ said. "I knew if I didn't stop it would come out to victory in the end."

Christ threw Sholly to his back just before time expired or after time expired. That was the question as the head referee and the mat judge conferred about the call. They ruled that Christ had gotten

the takedown before time expired, thrilling Christ and Coach Brian Heinrich.

"I wasn't sure," Christ said about what he thought the officials would rule. "I was close. (The throw) was kind of out habit. I worked on it a little bit throughout the summer. I pushed the pace and got to it. I was very excited, a lot of adrenalin was pumping and it felt really, really good."

"I thought it was good," Heinrich said. "I'm biased, but it was clean on time. I'm just super excited and happy for him."

Shaffer, who went 5-1 in the tournament, took Barr down in the first period with a single-leg shot and lift to take a 4-3 lead into the second period.

Shaffer couldn't convert on another shot in the second, but Barr did, taking him down to his back for a seven-point move in the period. Shaffer avoided the fall, but he couldn't muster enough offense the rest of the way.

Somerset had two other placewinners in sixth-placers Drew Miller (152) and Zane Hagans (215). Tussey Mountain's Ezra Masood (172) placed third, while Everett's Howard Brambley (285) was sixth.

Meyersdale's Aurora Comfort captured the 118-pound title in the girls Panther Holiday Classic with a 5-0 win over Shippensburg's Kara Fogelsanger. Comfort pinned her first two opponents.

McCort's Myah Miller finished second at 148 after getting pinned by Philipsburg-Osceola's Bella Hunt in 48 seconds in the finals.

North Star's Laikynn Paxton finished second at 170 after getting pinned by The Hill School's Lexi Lubczenko in 3:36.

Central Cambria's Emily Shetler (124) placed third, while Somerset's Addy Boburchock (130) was fourth.

Conemaugh Township's Carter Christ throwing Huntingdon's Gaige Sholly to his back at the buzzer.

photo credit to Conemaugh Township Booster Club



District 5 Report contonued

Chestnut Ridge rallies by Altoona

**continued from page 20*

It was a heck of a season opener on Friday, Dec. 6 with a large crowd watching at the Altoona Fieldhouse – traditional Class 2A state power Chestnut Ridge tangling with Class 3A rising power Altoona.

In the end, Chestnut Ridge rallied to win, 39-24, with five straight victories to close the dual meet, including the last two bouts involving state-ranked wrestlers.

Ridge's Easton Mull, ranked fifth in Class 2A by PA Power Wrestling, pulled off a sudden second-period pin of freshman star Deklan Barr, ranked ninth in Class 3A, in a scoreless bout at 121 lbs.

Then, second-ranked and two-time state runner-up Dominic Deputy beat second-ranked Braiden Weaver, 7-0, at 127 lbs to close the meet.

"Altoona is a great team," Ridge coach Josh Deputy said. "On paper, I honestly couldn't figure out how we were winning. We're very young and inexperienced, but we're finding a way. They found a way to win. Our heart showed. We have a little bit of a team atmosphere, and our kids thrive on that. I'm super proud of them."

After Jeffrey Ickes' technical fall at 114 lbs., Mull and Barr were locked in a scoreless second period when Mull reversed Barr to his back and pinned him in 3:16. It was the Clarion University commit's 73rd career pin.

"He's a pinner," Deputy said. "That's who he is. If he gets you on your back, you're in trouble. That was a very good win. Deklan is a very good wrestler."

Dominic Deputy scored a takedown of his training partner Weaver in the first period and added an escape and takedown in the second. Neither wrestler could score in the third.

"They're practice partners," said Josh Deputy, who coaches both of them at Orchard Wrestling Club."That's tough, but Braiden is a great kid. I love Braiden to death. Hopefully they don't wrestle anymore this year."

Dom Deputy, who has verbally committed to North Carolina State, wrestled his first two postseasons at 107 lbs., so he's made a big jump to 127 lbs.

"He's big. He's grown a lot," Coach Deputy said. "He's feeling good. He likes that weight, and he's only going to get better now. It took a little bit to get to 127. I'm proud of him because he puts the work in."

Todd Irwin can be followed on X/Twitter: @ToddIrwin1

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Violette Lasure of Chestnut Ridge becomes the first girl to win the Schalles PA Pinner-Award. Lasure (33-0), a freshman, pinned 31 foes out of 32 bouts for a 97% pin percentage!

She becomes Ridge's first ever Girls State Champion, and she did it without a loss. "It feels great accomplishing my goal of becoming the first-ever girls 142 lb. PA State champion," She told PWN women's columnist Deborah Lynch. "I'm hoping my win inspires young girls to come out for the sport to continue the growth."

Mike Haheisy Coaching Tips



by Mike Haheisy,
Head Coach,
Erie Prep

I have been a wrestling coach for 35-plus years. Over that time, my beliefs and philosophies have changed drastically.

Starting off as young coach at a struggling program was hard, but it was also very rewarding. I focused most of my time on winning wrestling. What could I do to make these young men WIN! We won quite a bit, too, after taking over a program that had won three matches in the previous two years. A few years later, I put my attention on myself. How could I improve as a coach? What could I do differently, what areas could I improve on, how could I be more knowledgeable, and how could I work smarter not harder? All of these traits/skills would help these young men to become more successful. At that point, the winning increased quite a bit!

I took two years off to be a principal and father. I realized that being a dad was more important than anything else, but I always realized that I really missed coaching and, in order to get back into it, I would have to make some changes in my approach. I was an assistant coach at Gannon University for four years, which was a great experience for me. I learned many valuable things. I then became an assistant at Edinboro University for nine years. I learned a great deal here working for Tim Flynn, Lou Rosselli, and Cliff Moore; these guys taught me a lot of things about wrestling and working with athletes.

However, in my opinion, we learn mainly from our mistakes and failures to become better people. We are who we are because of the events leading up to this moment. For good or for bad, life is one of most successful teachers. I have listed 12 areas or skills that can have a great influence on your life and coaching:

1. Relax.

This is a new one for me admittedly. We do our best work when we are relaxed. Think about times you've wrestled your best. I would bet you were relaxed. When you are relaxed, you are more confident and think

with clarity. Develop a practice of relaxing. Multiple times a day, do an internal check of your current level of tension. Then, relax. Do a body scan, breath, sit in the sun, take a slow walk in nature and relax.

2. Simplify.

Minimize the things in your life down to a small few. Clear out the clutter that is distracting you from doing your best work. Maybe it is dropping friends who historically bring you down. Or write your daily plan instead of wandering aimlessly from one thing to the next. It could be cutting out the activities that bring you little benefit.

3. Journey.

Wrestling is a journey. Life is a journey. Stop focusing only on the results. Start spending time seeing the joy in what is happening right in front of you. We rush to the end only to find that we missed a lot of great stuff along the way.

4. Commit.

Commit to being your best self. It's simply a personal decision you make day after day, month after month. You will have easy days, hard days, fun days, boring days, so-so days, and entirely unexpected days. Through it all, stay on the path. You will never regret giving your best effort — win or lose.

5. Self-care.

Take care of yourself first. Do not be selfish but make it a priority in your life to take time for yourself, your hobbies, and your mental well-being. Self-care is a buzzword these days. Some have used it as an excuse to be lazy or give less effort. Not you! It is taking care of you so you can be your best when you need it most.

6. Tough.

Get tough. Do hard things. Stop playing it safe. Refuse to not take the easy route. If I gave people a choice between a challenging workout, an easy workout, and a medium workout, almost 90% of the time, the average person would pick the medium one. Why? Because it is safe. It's less of a risk. Go big. If you aim for a 100 and get 93, you are better off than aiming for an 80 and getting a 75.

7. Fight.

This is a contradiction or a paradox. The more you fight, the more challenging things become. Go back to No. 1. What you resist, persists. Stop fighting each day. I don't mean quit or give less of an effort. I mean, we hold onto things with a

tight grip, creating unnecessary stress and tension. Start seeing that resistance keeps you stuck. "Go with the flow." Accept the tough times and know nothing is permanent. Forgive yourself for poor performances. Nothing good comes from beating yourself up. It creates hesitation and fear.

8. Love.

Love wrestling. Be grateful for it. When you see what you do each day as an opportunity instead of a requirement, you see it differently. Train your mind to look at all challenging things as an opportunity.

9. Help.

Help others. Be kind. It is written in many places that the more you help others, the more it comes back to you. Help your teammates get better. Help your parents. Life has a strange way of bringing back what you give to others. Also, celebrate others' successes. Resentment and jealousy add negative energy to you.

10. Intention.

Each morning, decide how you want your day to be. For example, you may want to work hard, be kind, have a positive attitude, or whatever. Often, your days will match your intentions.

11. Excuses.

Don't make them. Excuses are the mind's way of letting you off the hook for mistakes and failure. Admit fault. Forgive yourself. Another contradiction in some ways. The result is when you refuse to find fault, blame or complain, things have a way of turning out better for you.

12. Human.

You are a human being with faults and imperfections. You will not win every match. You will not always make the right decisions. Give your best effort. That should be a given. As it has been referenced a few times, you will not wrestle better if you are hard on yourself for every mistake. Have an attitude of positive expectations, and if things don't go well, be OK with it, learn from it, put in the work to improve, and move forward. It is called being constructive compared to destructive.

These 12 characteristics should be a part of your coaching lifestyle. By using and incorporating these traits, it can make your coaching a little less hectic and more relaxed, and I really feel that by improving myself it has a direct effect on the wrestlers on my team. Good luck this season!

Ironhead Lines: PSU Wrestling

by: Jeff Byers



The expectations are sky high for the 2024-25 Penn State wrestling team. Coming off a record-setting NCAA tournament performance last season, this year's team may be capable of matching or surpassing that

standard and is loaded with talent. With so many expectations and so many wrestlers chasing high hopes, I thought we'd take a look at what I consider to be the top ten storylines for Penn State this season. As always, I'll point out this is simply one person's opinion and certainly there are plenty of other stories to follow as the Nittany Lions work their way through the season.

10. Is Shayne Van Ness picking up where he left off?

Van Ness was off to a dominating start last season before injury ended his campaign. He is off to a fast start again this season and if he in fact emerges as a title contender and I as expect, it will further solidify the Nittany Lions' favorite status and give them greater margin for error. Van Ness is not only one of the best wrestlers in the lineup, he is one of the most entertaining. He has a non-stop motor and has an amazing array of moves that make him virtually impossible to slow down. I think he will quickly remind college wrestling fans why he was so much fun to watch en route to a third place finish in the 2023 NCAA Championships. His impact will be noticed even in a lineup filled with superstars.

9. How will the weight changes work out for Penn State?

For a program with so much stability, Penn State has a lot of changes in this year's lineup, mostly in the form of new weight classes for familiar names. Half of the starting lineup is in a weight class they have not competed in collegiately before this season.

Braeden Davis is up a weight to 133 pounds after winning a Big Ten title at 125 pounds last year. Davis is a long wrestler and I think the new weight will benefit him, especially at tournament time. But 133 is one of the deeper weight classes in college wrestling this season. Tyler Kasak is up a weight class to 157 and Alex Facundo joins him at this weight, moving down a weight class from where he competed two seasons ago and down two weight classes from where many were projecting him. Levi Haines is

making the jump up two weight classes after winning the title at 157 last season. Early indications are he is making that adjustment rather easily. Carter Starocci is up a weight class from where he won his first four NCAA titles. And Josh Barr is up a weight class from where he competed last season. All of these wrestlers appear to have made the adjustments well and have high expectations. But it will be worth watching how things play out.

8. Can Beau Bartlett emerge from an elite trio to claim the title at 141 pounds?

I think there are three elite wrestlers contending for the title at 141 this year. 2023 national champion Andrew Alirez of Northern Colorado and last year's national champion, Jesse Mendez of Ohio State are the favorites but Bartlett is right there. Can he get on top of the podium in his final season? It will be fun to see how it turns out. All three of these guys bring elite skills, a terrific mindset and a healthy respect for one and other and the sport. The competition here should be entertaining for fans and however the results turn out, I think the opportunity to see these guys compete should be appreciated by all. Bartlett has a wonderful perspective and his leadership is a key component to what makes this year's squad so special.

7. Will the 2025 Hodge Trophy winner come from this Penn State lineup and if so, who will it be?

Since Cael Sanderson took over the Penn State program in the 2009-2010 season, Penn State wrestlers have brought home Hodge Trophies in six of the 15 seasons. I think there are at least four, and maybe more, Hodge contenders this year from the Nittany Lions. We'll see how the season plays out but certainly Minnesota's Gable Steveson, already a two-time winner, would be a strong contender with his return this season. Keegan O'Toole of Missouri, Andrew Alirez of Northern Colorado, Jesse Mendez of Ohio State and AJ Ferrari of CSU Bakersfield are among the national contenders to keep an eye on. But Penn State has a formidable group. The offensive-oriented Mitchell Mesenbrink, high-scoring Levi Haines and history-making Carter Starocci are clearly among the contenders. Certainly if Greg Kerkvliet upends Gable Steveson, he'll garner strong consideration. But a dark horse for the honor may be Shayne Van Ness. Keep an eye on his progress and statistics as the season plays out. Van Ness is another high-octane wrestler who doesn't just look to win but to dominate.

6. Who will Penn State's postseason starters be at 157 and 197?

Tyler Kasak and Josh Barr seemed to gain the inside track with their performances at the Black Knight Invitational. And while Kasak beat Alex Facundo and Barr beat Lucas Cochran in the finals of that event, it would be premature to write off the elite Facundo and rising star Cochran at their respective weights. Penn State has built depth in its room that rarely, if ever, has been seen in our sport. I'm not sure exactly where a team of non-starters for Penn State would be able to finish if given the chance at the NCAA tournament but I don't think there are a lot of teams that would score higher. Facundo and Cochran are special wrestlers and leaders and certainly there are others like Aaron Nagao, that when healthy could make a real push to be in the starting lineup. The push from the non-starters in the room is a big reason why the sky is the limit for this year's team and the program in general. These battles will be hotly contested until the lineups are set for the Big Ten tournament. It is a problem that is the envy of most programs but it is nonetheless a problem when you have just ten starting positions and probably at least 16 to 18 wrestlers worthy of being a starter even on a team as strong as Penn State's is.

5. Will this team team post its 9th undefeated season in the last decade and in the process extend its winning streak to 71 consecutive dual meets?

While some are chalking this up as a given, I think there are a few potentially dangerous duals. The dual at Nebraska on January 17th, the Jordan Center dual with Iowa on January 31st at the Bryce Jordan Center and the Valentine's Day matchup at Ohio State all could pose challenges for the Nittany Lions. Iowa certainly seems like the biggest threat and the Hawkeyes seem poised to make some strides from a year ago with some significant transfers. Penn State went 12-2 in 2019-2020. That is a very good dual season but it is by far the low water mark for the Nittany Lions over the last decade. In each of the eight other seasons prior to this one, the program did not lose a single dual. If this team does go unblemished in dual meets, it will set the program record for consecutive undefeated seasons at five and will extend its winning streak to 71 which would be just five shy of Oklahoma State's NCAA record of 76. While not a given, this is certainly an accomplishment this team has a chance to achieve and it would put this era in even higher regard.

**continued on page 29*

Half-Nelson Report Continued

continued from page 15

Next year, Bassett, pictured, will have a chance to join only David Taylor and Zahid Valencia to have ever won four Ironmans. It runs in the family. Bo and his two brothers, Keegan Bassett and Melvin Miller, became the first trio from one family to earn spots on Team USA after they all won titles in the U.S. Open in May.



President Donald J. Trump:

President Trump is a friend to our sport. He is the 14th president to have a wrestling background. He is the only U.S. President to have attended the NCAA championship finals. While former President Trump was campaigning to become the 47th President of the United States, he spoke at one of his rallies at the Bryce Jordan Center on the campus of Penn State. He invited the PSU wrestling team on stage and bragged about how good the Nittany Lion team was and still is today.

Zain “The Freight Train” Retherford spoke and encouraged everyone in PA to get out and vote. President Trump wrestled at the NY Military Academy



in high school. Trump enjoys watching UFC fights and is a friend of Bo Nickal.



The Wrestling Steelers:

Starting center Zach Frazier, linebacker Payton Wilson, and defensive lineman Keanu Benton were all state champions in high school. In fact, Frazier was a four-time state champion from West Virginia. In recent games, Wilson, a rookie, recovered a fumble and ran for a touchdown. Benton, in his second year, intercepted a pass.

In other NFL wrestling news, the Buffalo Bills, who are 10-3, are coached by Sean McDermott, a two-time national prep champ from La Salle College High School in Pennsylvania. He invited PSU coach Cael Sanderson to speak to his team during summer training camp. It must have been a good speech the way the Bills are playing! Buffalo, led by MVP candidate Josh Allen, gave the Kansas City Chiefs their only loss so far this season.

Senator Dave McCormick:

McCormick, who wrestled at Bloomsburg High School and started for the United States Military Academy at West Point, is one of our new United States Senators from Pennsylvania. Dave placed fourth at the PIAA championships his senior year in 1983 and was a two-time runner-up in the EIWAs in 1986 and ‘87. His brother, Doug, was also a starter for the West Point wrestling team and was the highest ranked cadet in 1992 and No. 1 in his class. Dave attended the Olympic Trials in April, which were held on the campus of Penn State. *He is pictured left*

Anthony Robles and the new wrestling movie “Unstoppable” starring Jharrel Jerome and Jennifer Lopez:

I had the opportunity to see the premier of Unstoppable when it came out Oct. 31 at the Paramount Theatre in Charlottesville as part of the Virginia Film Festival. Director William Goldberg was there to introduce the film and it was very well received by a non-wrestling audience. I thought going in that they may show a few wrestling scenes. I was pleasantly surprised to see that about 50% of the movie was wrestling. Jerome did a good job of playing Robles, as the movie was based on a true story. Anthony Robles, who won an NCAA title in 2011 for Arizona State, was born with one leg. It demonstrates that you can overcome any obstacle and still reach your goals. Ironically, the NCAAs were held in Philadelphia the year Anthony won it, and this year they will also be held at the same location. Robles helped produce the movie along with Ben Affleck, Matt Damon and a few others. Robles is currently the wrestling coach at his alma mater — Mesa High School in Arizona — and he does motivational speaking.



Violette & Juliet Lasure Sisters



Above middle: Middle School Outstanding Wrestler, Emily Kurtley



"We are family, I got all my sisters and me!"

Top Left: Violette winning the Belt at the Journeymen Classic and the second one is her winning the Belt at the Super 32.

top right: Juliet on the left and Violette on the right. Juliet won the Silver at the Preseason Nationals, and Violette won the Gold

Bottom Left: Juliet wrestling at the IronWomen Tournament where she won the gold medal

Middle Left: High School Team Champions - Connellsville



Official Pennsylvania State Chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame

2025 PA Chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame Honorees Banquet

INDUCTION DETAILS:

The PA Chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame will be hosting its 31th Annual induction ceremony on Sunday, April 27, 2025. This year's class includes the following new honorees: Joe Baranik, Ralph Cindrich, Jeff Cook, Curtis Herneisen, Rick Mahonski, C. D. Mock, Ken Shirik, Pete Smith and Ron Spinner

LOCATION: Hershey Lodge, 325 University Drive
 Hershey, PA 17033

***Hall of Fame Poster on page 30**

District 1 Report

by Glenn Kaiser



The 2024-25 PIAA Wrestling Season is underway, and there is excitement here in District One with some of the best teams & grapplers in the state

hailing from the Southeast Region in both AA & AAA. Faith Christian Academy (AA) is absolutely on fire here at the start garnering the Ironman team championship at Walsh Jesuit HS (OH) with three champs in Freddy & Joey Bachman at 113 & 120 respectively. Adam Waters



picked up where he left off last year's state title with a pin in the 190-pound finals in Ohio. Big Mark Effendian won the silver at 285. Their three champs here will be top-contenders to win gold in Hershey come March, along with former state champ Gauge Botero. FCA is loaded up and down their line-up with no holes, and they demonstrated their power in a nationally relevant dual meet downing Wyoming Seminary 32-24. They will showcase their individual talent again here in December at the Beast of the East (University of Delaware) with their crazy schedule, that is clearly the best around.

In AAA, Boyertown, from the Pioneer Athletic Conference has made an early statement as well in their own Brian Bealer Bear Duals to open the season. They too are a powerful dual squad that is no easy out for anyone. The Bears were a perfect 5-0 winning the championship in their home gym. They defeated Council Rock North 48-23 in the finals and dismantled everyone on their way for the most part. Their biggest challenge based on scoring, was a 37-25 win over Pennridge. Boyertown knocked off some of the Suburban One Leagues' best in CR North, Pennridge, Hatboro-Horsham 54-
PWN 2024-25

11, Neshaminy 55-15 & Souderton 46-13. Although Boyertown does not have the star power like CR North & South, they will be in the mix for a D1 Team Championship in February. CR North has a super-frosh in A.J. Kane at 107-pounds, brother Pierce, Marco Loss, & stand-out Eren Sement solidifying their star-studded line-up, which is strong from top to bottom as well. Mack Marcy has not yet stepped on the mat, but he will only make the Indians better when he does.

Speaking of Council Rock South, they too will be in a small group of teams to reign supreme in D1 this season. This is the most wide-open its' been in a long while here in D1 with parity at the top. The Golden Hawks have had an interesting start to their season with a 4th place showing at the PennStro Leasing Kick-Off Classic at Cumberland Valley. Anthony Mutarelli returned to the mats after sitting out the post-season due to PIAA transfer rules, but he was beaten in the 139-pound final by Bishop McDevitt's Camden Baum 3-1. Gavin Cole got back on track at 172 winning the title over Shik's Connor Wetzel 4-1, Cole dropped a dual decision to Oxford's Blake Hostetter 5-4 at the S.S. Gold Duals hosted by the Hornets. Both Mutarelli & Cole are top-ranked individuals whom will look to climb atop the podium in Chocolate Town, USA down the road to Hershey in March.

Other challengers for D1 supremacy include Sun Valley which has plenty of individual talent throughout their lineup with another super-frosh Jacob Carr along with his brother, senior Brandon Carr, Hunter Delaney, John Deorio and his little bro Josh who will be a lightweight wonder too. Brecken Strickland and Darren Miniconzi make up a strong core for the Vanguarders who will be wrestling for their former head coach Tommy Ellis, who passed away suddenly over the summer. They will be a dangerous dual team and right there with the big boys in individual tourneys as well. However, they have failed to advance to the PIAA Team Championships in recent years and will have to rise up to the challenge in the D1 Team Championships to legitimize this team, which some say is its best ever. Quakertown, as always starts their season slow, and builds, just like CR South does for the post-season push. They have two really good ones in former state champion

Colin Gaj & Gavin Carroll. The Panthers will be competitive at a high level and will be right there along with their neighboring rival Pennridge. The 'Ridge features Kevin McFadden, Colby Martinelli & Quinn McBride, but they will miss Talan Hogan, who is out for the season with a football injury.

Keep an eye out on Oxford and Kennett as well with their extremely talented squads. Oxford has already threatened CR South losing to the Golden Hawks 35-29 in an early season battle. The Hornets feature Hostetter, Sam Howell, Jared & Jordan Schiable, Jon Smith & Jace McKinney. Kennett still has some individual talent with the Boyer brothers Blake & Bryce, along with Zack Jaffe and Kane Lengel.

Other contenders include Hatboro-Horsham with returning state champ Dom Morrison, hot off a Panther Classic title knocking off some big names at 121 lbs.



Teammate Ryan Allegier, a senior who was 5th at the Panther Classic at 139 lbs. He has some big wins early this season, including one over Boyertown's Beck Babb 13-8. H-H has a new lead man in Jason Gribshaw, who took over as the head coach for the Wrestling Warriors prior to the start of the season. Downingtown West will also be in the discussion out of the Ches-Mont League with the Brayden & Chase Sigle, Levi Richmond and newcomer Shafer Hoffman down at 107-pounds. Central Bucks West has two returning place-winners in Chris Dennis & Patrick Kelly. They will be joined by Dennis' lil bro Daniel who is ranked as the #24 in-coming freshmen class by PA Power to give the Bucks some nice firepower.

Elling's Opinions



By: *Tom Elling*

As I see it...

Tom Elling PA
Wrestling News-
magazine

Questions I've
Been Asked...

Throwing these out to start some discussion among our wrestling leaders:

Once again the topic arises about redesigning the mat divisions as to initiate a separate division for the non-public schools. First of all, that is not up to the PIAA as so often is proclaimed. The State Legislature years ago passed an edict that parochial schools must be included in the PIAA championships- and it started with basketball. So that body would have to amend that proclamation to allow any such developments.

That stated, how about developing 3-4 Classifications for the **Team State Championships**. As it stands now, most public schools (especially in AA) have no chance to win (or even get to the finals) with the current setup. One

proposal never solves all the problems or compliants, but it would be worthwhile to study that sort of thing (again with the Legislators modifying their current law.)

Further, reduce the number of teams at the Finals' site. Make it similar to the pigtail round wherein Team A travels to Team B's school if a higher seed. Yes, SEED the teams. They are seeded at the start of District team qualifiers. A reduced field at the finals would take just one or two days and might be held at a high school or small college that could handle the event. Maybe Bloomsburg? Lock Haven? Lower cost for the venues and a facility that wouldn't look empty with 2,000 fans.

Wrestling losing popularity.. why?

No one definitive answer. Sure the advent of the internet immediacy makes it a lot cheaper and convenient for the average fan to stay home. The electronic ticketing is not a user-friendly option for older fans. The higher costs for travel (gas, hotel, food) are negatives. Abandoning the dual meet as a big event (our town vs your town) in favor of multi-dual and huge multi-

state tournaments deter the casual or new fan. How many fans travel on a Saturday to watch 5-6 dual meets their teams wrestles? Certainly, we garner no 'new' fans with such. In fact, most fans I know (with the exception of parents or grandparents) will not go to a marathon wrestling foray. And the wrestlers of today.. those who want to dedicate the major part of their young lives to the sport, attending camps, enrolling in developmental clinics or clubs and participating year round.. great for them. Their choice. BUT while these elite grapplers rise to the top.. the athlete who participates in other sports or just wants a summer off can no longer compete at that higher level. Dwindling rosters and rising forfeits.. and we wonder why.

Calling such observations as listed above 'old-fashioned' thinking is counterproductive. Yes, times have changed. There is more to do for the youth of today. But if we want them to choose wrestling as one of their interests and we want to attract new followers, we must be pensive and creative. Realizing that insanity is just doing what we're doing and expecting more

participation, more interest, bigger rosters, sold-out gyms and fewer forfeits. Don't just read this and dismiss it. Start really constructing some solutions- even if they seem radical. Dare to think outside the current mat.

**PSU photo at left of Carter Starocci vs. Wyoming, courtesy of Mark Selders, PSU athletics*



District 1 Report Continued

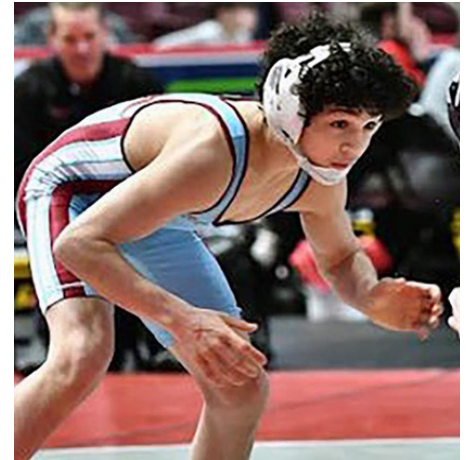
by Glenn Kaiser

*continued from page 26

Expectations are high again here in Dist. 1, especially with top-ranked wrestlers spread out through the region. **Owen J Roberts HS' Dean Bechtold** is on a mission to win a state title and join his brother Dillon who snatched gold last year in Hershey as a Senior. Colin Gaj (Q-town) & Dom Morrison (H-H) are both former state champs on the AAA side, Gaj in 2023 & Morrison won his title last year as a freshman at 107. Meanwhile, FCA bolsters D1's chances for gold big time on the AA side with the Bachman brothers Joey (2024 champ) & Freddy (#1 incoming frosh according to PA Power & a #1 ranked wrestler nationally), Gauge Botero (2023 champ), Max Stein (2024 runner-up), Adam Waters (2x state champ), Cael

Weidemoyer (2024 runner-up), Luke Sugalski (3rd in 2024), Jason Singer, & Mark Effendian (3rd in 2024). Don't forget Chase Hontz as well with two state medals to his name with a 3rd & 4th place finish over the past two years. FCA will once again shatter all Pennsylvania team & individual records in the post-season.

There are plenty of newcomers as well, as everyone wants to see what CR South's Anthony Mutarelli can do in Hershey along with CR North neighbor Eren Sement, who owns three bronzes heading into his senior season. The freshmen class is stellar with Freddy Bachman (FCA), A.J. Kane (CRN), Decker Bechtold (OJR), Chase Williams (CB East), Shafer Hoffman (Downingtown West), Jacob Carr (Sun Valley), Beau Kosmalski (Great Valley), Brayden Laird (Ridley), Scott Lamplugh, Jr. (Garnet Valley), Mason Sigle (DTW) & Carter Soto (OJR). Soto has already downed



Pennridge's Quinn McBride 8-6 in an epic battle. This exciting freshmen class and veteran talent coming out of D1 this season should be a blast for fans, not only here in the Southeast Region but throughout the state as we continue to improve on the West, especially with D11 back in historic form...the EAST is back!



Dillon Bechtold, Owen Roberts HS, was named the 2023-24 Schalles PA Pinner Award Winner--90% - 36 pins out of 40 bouts wrestled

(Left: Head Coach Stephen DeRafelo, Dillon Bechtold, Asst. Coach Mike Brilla)

pictured above: Joey Bachman (FCA) Returning AA State Champ, pictured above middle

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Ironhead Lines: PSU Wrestling

*continued from page 23

4. Will Luke Lilledahl, pictured below middle, give Penn State its breakthrough All-American at 125 pounds?

Penn State fans are well aware that the Nittany Lions haven't had an All-American at this weight since Nico Megaludis won the national title at the weight in 2016. It is not that the program hasn't had talented wrestlers or significant wins at the weight but the void at the NCAA tournament has been the one thorn in the side of a program that has otherwise had wild success on college wrestling's biggest stage. Lilledahl brings an impressive list of credentials and a high-level wrestling energy to the spot and certainly has designs on ending the All-American drought at this weight and possibly even the national title drought. His development and impact on the national scene at this weight is definitely something Penn State fans and college wrestling fans in general will be following closely.

3. Can Greg Kerkvliet, pictured below right, win a second NCAA title to finish his collegiate career?

Many were presuming this would be the case since Kerkvliet announced his plans to return for his final season of eligibility. But then Gabe Steveson sent shockwaves through the sport when he announced he was returning to college wrestling at Minnesota after a two-year absence and a largely assumed decision to move on from the sport. Steveson's return means Kerkvliet is now in the underdog role even as the returning champion. Adding to the plot here is the long history the two have going back to their Minnesota schoolboy days and the

fact that Steveson's only two collegiate losses came to a Nittany Lion (Anthony Caesar). While Steveson is not the only threat to Kerkvliet's pursuit of a second title, he is certainly the most formidable. If this finals matchup occurs and it will be expected at both Big Ten's and NCAA's, I think it will provide plenty of excitement and possibility.

2. Will Carter Starocci win an unprecedented 5th national title as he moves up a weight class?

Until the pandemic hit, it was hard to imagine someone doing something unprecedented in our sport. After Cael Sanderson completed a 159-0 college career with four national titles at Iowa State, it seemed like the best anyone could do would be to match the undefeated record and four titles. Sure, someone could get more individual victories but the unprecedented components were undefeated and four titles. But with extra year of competition allowed by the NCAA, Starocci could achieve an unmatched, and likely unattainable by any future wrestler, fifth national title. While he won't be undefeated during his career, the unique opportunity to stand alone in the history of the sport is certainly worth watching. Adding to the intrigue here is that Starocci is moving up a weight and will likely have to face the reigning champion, Parker Keckeisen of Northern Iowa, again to complete the historic feat. The two met in the NWCA All-

Star Classic and Starocci got the take-down in overtime to win the exhibition bout. If they meet again, the stakes will be much higher and the drama about as

good as it gets in sport.

1. What kind of history can or will this team make at the NCAA Championships in Philadelphia?

While Penn I think this team has a chance to join the 2001 Minnesota team as the only teams to produce 10 All-Americans in a season. I thought last year's team had a chance and while it did have an opportunity, it fell just short. While it will certainly take a great effort by all of the starters in the postseason, I think this team has wrestlers at each weight that are capable of getting on the podium. I also think this team has a chance to surpass the NCAA tournament record of 172.5 points set by last year's squad. Some other standards that I think this team has a chance to match or surpass is the record of 6 wrestlers from one team in the NCAA finals and the record of 5 individual NCAA champions from one team. These are all remarkable standards that this team will have a chance to match or even surpass. Whether or not it does, it will be fun to see this team give chase to these and other historic accomplishments where this run began for the Nittany Lions under Cael Sanderson. Penn State, of course, captured its second national title overall and its first under Sanderson in Philadelphia in 2011. The fans in the Keystone State figure to be rooting loudly for an epic finish to what is expected to be a memorable season.



The National Wrestling Hall of Fame and Museum

proudly acknowledges its
**31st Annual Celebration in the 33-year history
of the Pennsylvania State Chapter**

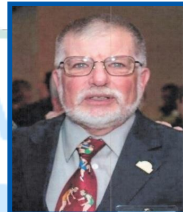
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Wrestling Coach 21 Years



JEFF COOK
Referee
PIAA Official 29 Years
NCAA Official 34 Years
Worked 7 PIAA, 15 EIWA,
5 Big10, 5 PAC12, 9 NCAA
Championships



CURTIS HERNEISEN
Referee
PIAA Official 50 Years
15 Years Tournament
Scoring Worker
10 Years Youth Wrestling
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RICK MAHONSKI
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C. D. MOCK
Coach
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University of North Carolina
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ACC Champs in 2005, 2006
Head Coach Council Rock
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KEN SHIRK
Coach
Volunteer Assistant at All Levels
Bald Eagle Area 28 Years.
Head or Assistant Coach of
Private Wrestling Clubs for 10
Years. Coached 20 Wrestlers
with over 90 Career Wins



PETE SMITH
Referee
PIAA Official 43 Years
NCAA Official 28 Years
9 Years Head Coach
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Worked 22 Regional &
12 PIAA Championships



RON SPINNER
Coach
33 Years Head Coach
11 Years Assistant Coach
Overall Record 357-191-6
All at Stroudsburg High School
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University of Pittsburgh Wrestling MVP 1969
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Univ. of Pittsburgh Distinguished Alumni 1997
5-Year NFL Career, Patriots, Broncos, Oilers
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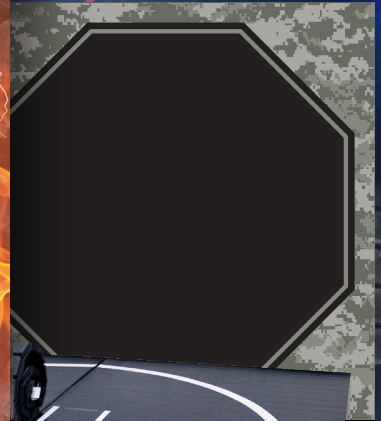
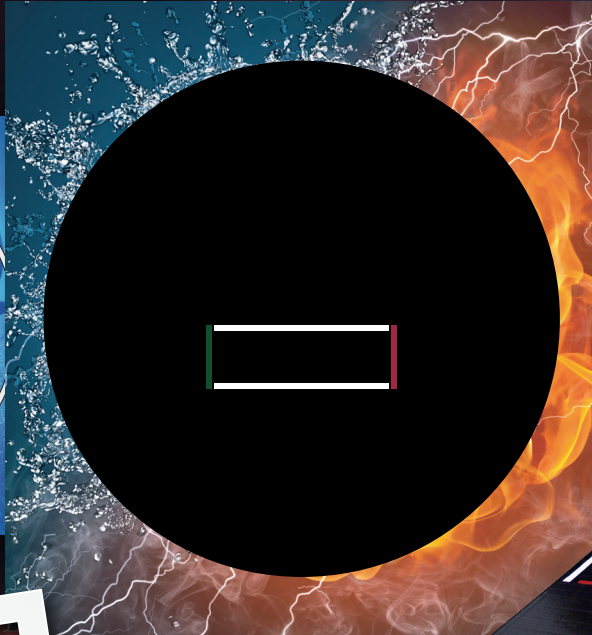
**The Pennsylvania Chapter celebrates its 31st Honors
Banquet on April 27, 2025 at the Hershey Lodge**

For additional information contact:

Lloyd Rhoades, 814-355-1776 or lar2psu@gmail.com or Joe Stabilito, 215-317-3079 or joe.stab@gmail.com

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