

2021-2022



**NIAGARA FALLS
WRESTLING**

**NIAGARA CUP CHAMPIONS
NIAGARA FRONTIER LEAGUE CHAMPIONS
SECTION 6 CLASS AA CHAMPIONS
9TH PLACE IN NEW YORK STATE**

**COACHES: Joshua Eagan, Don McCoy,
Jon Eagan, Palmer Archie & Ken White**

2021-2022 Niagara Falls High School Wrestling



Niagara Falls High School opened during the 2000-2001 season, combining two competitive wrestling programs in LaSalle Senior High School and the former Niagara Falls High School. Since then, the team has gone on to win several league and sectional championships and produce some of the top wrestlers in the State.

Many wrestlers have claimed individual titles including 39 Class AA titles, 21 Sectional titles, and our schools first State Champion Willie McDougald (2018 & 2020). We currently have seven alumni competing at the collegiate level. Wolverine wrestlers have continued their post high school careers all over the country. Wrestling at places such as Niagara County Community College, The University at Buffalo, Brockport University, Ithaca College, Cortland State, Oklahoma University, Oklahoma State, The US Marine Corps, and Harvard.



← Visit our alumni website:
NFWrestling.net
View our facility tour, 2021 yearbook, sponsors and register for our alumni catalog.

Wrestling Scoring Explained

Match Scoring	
Takedown	2pts
Escape	1pt
Reversal	2pts
Nearfall 2 seconds	2pts
Nearfall 5 seconds	3pts
Penalty	1pt

Team Scoring	
Decision	3pts
Major Decision (8-14 points)	4pts
Tech Fall (15pts)	5pts
Pin/Fall	6pts
Forfeit	6pts

Roster

Name	Weight	Grade
Eian Peterson	102	Fr.
Thomas Crumpler	102	Fr.
Jaidyn Moore	118	Fr.
Vincent Lucchetti	118	Fr.
Ja`shad Bumpers	118	Sr.
Jaden Crumpler	118	Jr.
Rory Miller	126	Fr.
Amarfio Reynolds	126	Jr.
Kayden Feagin	126	8th
Matthew Syposs	126	Fr.
London Palmer	126	8th
Grady Peterson	126	Jr.
Vinny Falsetti	132	So.
Roman Sanders	138	Sr.
Lewis Miller	132	So.
Bishop Palmer	138	8th
Darren Christian	138	Sr.
Michael Syposs	145	Jr.
Paul Robertson	145	8th
Jayden Hilson	152	Jr.
Wendel Rivers	145	8th
Qya`mir Burch	152	Jr.
Max Hill	172	Sr.
Jesiere Carter	160	Sr.
Armani Morris	145	8th
Cameron Hall	172	Jr.
Mikkel Howard	152	Fr.
Anthony Navaroli	189	Sr.
Dominic Contento	189	Sr.
Timothy Warren	172	So.
Demarius Gregory	215	Fr.
Javez Caldwell	285	8th
Atreal Mayfield	285	Jr.

[2021-2022 Sponsors](#)
[Thank you for your support!](#)

DAVID W. KINNEY MEMORIAL FUND

Thank you to the David W. Kinney Memorial Fund for sponsoring this year's team with your VERY generous donation. Thank you to the entire Kinney family and everyone involved in this great Memorial Fund. David Kinney touched the lives of many people in the WNY area including the wrestling community in Niagara Falls.



Our Alumni Association would like to thank the following sponsors for supporting us by purchasing season long Buffalo Bills squares:

Aaron Roszel	Joe Sarkees
Adam Kinney	Jon Eagan
Albert Buck	Josh McCoy
Amarfio Reynolds	Josh Miller
Amy Feidt	Josh Moccio
Andrew Dane	Judy Prum
Anthony Boland	Larry Aceti
Anthony Zielinski	Laurrie Hill-Gregorski
Carmine Bianco	Linus McDonough
Carrie Eagan	Lisa McDonough
Chris Robins	Mark McDonough
Chris Smith	Mark Thomas
Crystal Strange	Mark Zito
Darlene Eagan	Mark-Angelo Johnson
David St. Onge	Martha Amoretti
Don McCoy	Matt Leo
Erin Eagan	Melyssa Peterson
Frank Gregorski	Mike Esposito
Frank Zielinski	Mike Spence
Gary Riggi	Nick Loncto
Irvin Buck	Rachel Jeckovich
James Strassburg	Sammy-Jo McCoy
Jeremy Eagan	Victor Favero



*A BIG Thanks
to our Sponsors!*

Sponsor Website:



Team Dual Record

1. Niagara Falls 48 – Iroquois 18
2. Niagara Falls 69 – West Seneca West 6
3. Niagara Falls 57 – Will-North 7
4. Niagara Falls 32 – Starpoint 27
5. Niagara Falls 42 – Newfane 24
6. Niagara Falls 46 – Ken-Ton 22
7. Niagara Falls 51 – Lockport 15
8. Niagara Falls 78 – CSAT 0
9. Niagara Falls 58 – Grand Island 18
10. Niagara Falls 25 – Lancaster 30
11. Niagara Falls 35 – Wheatfield 24
12. Niagara Falls 69 – Lew-Port 3
13. Niagara Falls 60 – North Tonawanda 9
14. Niagara Falls 38 – Wheatfield 12





NIAGARA FRONTIER LEAGUE

1 ST TEAM:	2 ND TEAM	3 RD TEAM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amarfio Reynolds Mike Syposs Jaden Crumpler Jesiere Carter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Darren Christian Max Hill Eian Peterson Grady Peterson Ja'shad Bumpers Tommy Crumpler 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demarius Gregory A'treal Mayfield Vinny Falsetti

SECTION 6 AA CHAMPIONS

**2021-2022 Section Six
Class AA Champions:
Niagara Falls High School**

- Niagara Falls - 256.0
- Lancaster - 171.5
- Frontier - 166.0
- Clarence - 121.0
- Lockport - 107.0
- Will. North/East - 93.0
- Orchard Park - 92.0
- Jamestown - 90.0
- Ken-Ton - 76.0
- West Seneca West - 51.5

****Tournament MVP: Mike Syposs (Niagara Falls)**
First Place: Eian Peterson, Jaden Crumpler, Amarfio Reynolds, Mike Syposs
Second Place: Grady Peterson, Darren Christian, Jesiere Carter, Max Hill
Third Place: Tommy Crumpler
Fourth Place: Ja'shad Bumpers, Vinny Falsetti, Dom Contento

Section 6 Champions

- Eian Peterson – 102
- Jaden Crumpler – 118
- Amarfio Reynolds – 126
- Mike Syposs – 160
- Jesiere Carter – 160

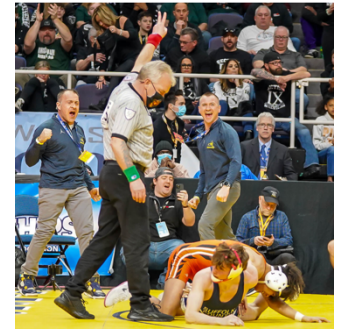


Section 6 Place Finishers

- Darren Christian – 138, 3rd
- Grady Peterson – 132, 4th
- Max Hill – 172, 4th
- Tommy Crumpler – 102, 6th
- Ja'shad Bumpers – 118, 6th

NYSPHSAA 2022 WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

MVP ARENA



- Jaden Crumpler (3-1) 2nd place
- Amarfio Reynolds (3-2) 7th place
- Jesiere Carter (3-2)
- Eian Peterson – (1-2)
- Mike Syposs – (1-2)

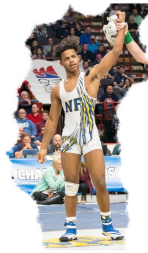


NYS Division 1 Team Scores

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Minisink Valley 155.5 | 11. Hauppauge 37.0 |
| 2. Wantagh 65.5 | 12. Brentwood 36.0 |
| 3. Pittsford 57.5 | 13. Spencerport 35.0 |
| 4. Chenango Forks 57.0 | 14. Frontier 33.0 |
| 5. Hilton 47.0 | 14. Shaker 33.0 |
| 6. Burnt Hills 42.0 | 16. Ballston Spa 31.0 |
| 7. MacArthur 41.0 | 16. Central Square 31.0 |
| 8. Arlington 40.0 | 16. Massapequa 31.0 |
| 9. <u>Niagara Falls 39.0</u> | 19. Sayville 30.0 |
| 10. Herricks 38.5 | 20. Eastport-S Manor 29.0 |

INDIVIDUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

STATE CHAMPIONS



2018	Willie McDougald	132
2020	Willie McDougald	145



ALL-STATE WRESTLERS



2001	Angelo Ashker	6th	152
2004	Joshua Eagan	3rd	145
2004	Nick Strange	5th	215
2009	Matt Johnson	6th	215
2011	Irvin Buck	2nd	152
2014	Jemone Carter	6th	106
2017	Willie McDougald	6th	126
2019	Willie McDougald	2nd	138
2022	Jaden Crumpler	2nd	118
2022	Amarfio Reynolds Jr.	7th	126

SECTION 6 CHAMPIONS



2001	Angelo Ashker	152
2004	Nick Strange	215
2004	Joshua Eagan	145
2009	Matt Johnson	215
2009	Kenny Hamilton	189
2011	Irvin Buck	152
2013	Donny McCoy	99
2014	Jemone Carter	106
2015	Donny McCoy	120
2015	Ryan Gradner	220
2016	Willie McDougald	113
2017	Willie McDougald	126

2017	Willie McDougald	126
2018	Willie McDougald	132
2019	Willie McDougald	138
2020	Willie McDougald	145
2021	Jaden Crumpler	110
2021	Amarfio Reynolds Jr.	118
2021	Jesiere Carter	152
2022	Eian Peterson	102
2022	Jaden Crumpler	118
2022	Amarfio Reynolds Jr.	126
2022	Mike Syposs	160
2022	Jesiere Carter	160

CLASS AA CHAMPIONS



2001	Angelo Ashker	152
2002	Mark Thomas	119
2002	Rob Klinger	125
2003	Joshua Eagan	135
2003	Charlie Ashker	140
2003	Richard Posey	215
2004	Anthony Grant	103
2004	Angelo Cusatis	130
2004	*Mark Thomas	140
2004	Joshua Eagan	145
2004	Nick Strange	215
2005	Angelo Cusatis	145
2005	Dale DeBacco	152
2006	William Turk	275

2007	Irvin Buck	119
2009	Irvin Buck	140
2009	Kenny Hamilton	189
2009	Matt Johnson	215
2010	Irvin Buck	145
2011	Joe DiFrancesco	145
2011	Irvin Buck	152
2012	Joe DiFrancesco	170
2012	Dequan Ralands	182
2013	Donny McCoy	99
2014	Jemone Carter	106
2014	Donny McCoy	120
2015	Willie McDougald	106
2015	*Jemone Carter	113
2015	Deion Harris	138

2015	Ryan Gardner	220
2015	Timere Ralands	285
2016	Willie McDougald	113
2017	Willie McDougald	126
2018	Josh McCoy	132
2019	Deandre Prum	132
2019	Willie McDougald	138
2019	Joseph Dixon	160
2020	Amarfio Reynolds	106
2020	*Willie McDougald	145
2022	Eian Peterson	102
2022	Jaden Crumpler	118
2022	Amarfio Reynolds Jr.	126
2022	*Mike Syposs	160

* Indicates MOW

100 WINS CLUB

2020	Willie McDougald	233
2011	Irvin Buck	209
2015	Donny McCoy	188
2003	Larry Aceti	181
2001	Angelo Ashker	166
2012	Joe DiFrancesco	165
2015	Jemone Carter	161
2004	Joshua Eagan	158
2002	Rob Klinger	154
2019	Michael Snowden	131
2005	Angelo Cusatis	128
2004	Mark Thomas	121
2005	Charlie Ashker	117
2019	Josh McCoy	105
2001	Pat Williams	100



40 WINS IN A SEASON

2004	Joshua Eagan	48	145
2013	Donny McCoy	48	99
2013	Dequan Ralands	48	182
2014	Jemone Carter	48	106
2015	Jemone Carter	47	113
2020	Willie McDougald	45	145
2015	Donny McCoy	44	120
2017	Willie McDougald	44	126
2019	Willie McDougald	44	138
2004	Nick Strange	43	215
2015	Deion Harris	42	138
2013	Desha Duckworth	41	160
2009	Matt Johnson	41	215
2001	Angelo Ashker	41	152
2016	Willie McDougald	40	113
2003	Larry Aceti	40	160
2001	Irvin Buck	40	152

TEAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

SECTION 6 CLASS CHAMPIONS



2004
2011
2015
2020
2022

NIAGARA FRONTIER LEAGUE CHAMPIONS



CHAMPIONS

2002
2003
2004
2011
2020
2022



SUPER LEAGUE



**CHAMPIONS
2021**

TOURNAMENT CHAMPIONSHIPS

2001	Lockport Tournament
2002	Maryvale Tournament
2002	Lewport Tournament
2003	Maryvale
2003	NFWOA (NCCC)
2004	Maryvale
2004	NFWOA (NCCC)
2004	Section 6 Dual Meet Championships
2009	Maryvale Tournament
2009	Lewport Tournament
2011	Sweet Home Invitational
2011	Williamsville North Invitational
2012	Sweet Home Invitational
2013	Barker Round Robin
2014	Pine Valley Invitational
2014	Alden State Bank Duals
2015	St. Francis Duals
2015	Alden State Bank Duals
2019	Tonawanda Duals
2019	Starpoint Duals
2019	Akron Tournament
2020	Ken-Ton Tournament
2022	Starpoint Duals
2022	Akron Tournament

Statistics

2021-2022 Varsity Statistics

Wrestler	Wins	Losses	Fall	T2	TF	MD	Match Points	Team Points	E1	R2	N2	N3
Bumpers, Ja'shad	22	11	7	39	3	1	182	101	16	5	6	12
Carter, Jesiere	33	8	15	51	1	3	193	177	14	2	3	11
Christian, Darren	24	10	13	35	2	1	176	132	9	5	7	9
Contento, Dominic	10	10	0	14	0	0	46	40	6	1	0	0
Crumpler, Jaden	32	3	19	52	0	2	201	196	10	8	7	15
Crumpler, Thomas	13	11	5	13	0	2	66	84	5	5	2	2
Falsetti, Vincenzo	10	8	7	10	0	1	55	65	6	1	0	2
Gregory, Demarius	6	4	4	3	0	0	9	29	3	0	0	0
Hall, Cameron	5	7	4	3	0	0	52	44	9	7	3	3
Hill, Max	27	7	15	57	2	3	205	162.5	7	7	11	10
Hilson, Jayden	5	6	2	8	0	1	50	19	12	1	4	0
Mayfield, Atreal	12	11	8	12	0	0	59	62	12	1	1	3
Miller, Lewis	1	0	0	2	0	0	6	3	0	1	0	0
Moore, Jaidyn	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0
Peterson, Eian	26	10	11	27	0	3	119	142	14	7	4	7
Peterson, Grady	22	10	6	30	1	2	135	105.5	12	6	6	3
Reynolds, Amarfio	33	3	17	51	2	3	237	198	13	9	12	19
Sanders, Roman	0	2	0	2	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0
Syoss, Michael	31	8	15	29	3	1	230	173	11	8	27	20
Warren, Timothy	0	2	0	1	0	0	5	0	1	0	0	0
Totals	314	136	149	441	14	23	2043	1745	160	74	95	117

STATS

2021-2022 JV Statistics

Wrestler	Wins	Losses	Fall	T2	TF	MD	Match Points	Team Points	E1	R2	N2	N3	N4
Burch, Qya'mir	3	0	2	10	0	0	28	24	0	1	2	1	0
Caldwell, Javez	9	5	5	13	0	1	56	38	10	0	1	2	0
Crumpler, Thomas	4	1	3	10	0	0	45	17	1	4	1	5	0
Falsetti, Vincenzo	2	0	2	5	0	0	16	26	1	0	1	1	0
Feagin, Kayden	9	1	9	5	0	0	22	66	1	2	2	0	0
Gregory, Demarius	8	0	8	8	0	0	30	37	0	2	2	0	0
Hall, Cameron	7	1	6	5	0	0	46	50	1	7	1	3	0
Howard, Mikkell	0	6	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lucchetti, Vincent	3	4	2	0	0	0	24	8	0	1	0	0	0
Mayfield, Atreal	4	1	3	3	0	0	17	18	5	0	0	2	0
Miller, Lewis	11	3	8	7	1	0	60	58.5	0	8	3	4	0
Miller, Rory	12	1	6	13	0	3	86	61	3	5	5	3	0
Moore, Jaidyn	1	2	0	1	0	0	17	1	0	3	1	2	0
Morris, Armani	5	3	5	4	0	0	29	31	1	2	0	3	0
Navaroli, Anthony	7	4	6	7	0	0	58	34	2	5	2	3	1
Palmer, Bishop	11	3	8	12	0	0	53	44	2	3	3	2	0
Palmer, London	8	4	8	13	0	0	52	47	1	3	3	3	0
Rivers, Wendle	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Robertson, Paul	2	6	1	6	1	0	41	5.5	6	4	2	2	0
Sanders, Roman	10	3	7	15	0	0	66	72	8	2	1	4	0
Syoss, Matthew	8	3	8	7	0	0	38	64	2	9	1	1	0
Warren, Timothy	6	4	2	12	0	1	48	28	3	2	0	1	0
Totals	138	61	105	167	3	6	905	777.5	50	66	36	49	1

Powerful local wrestling squads have league, Section VI aspirations

By Matt O'Rourke Dec 9, 2021



Members of the Niagara Falls wrestling team pose after winning the Spartan Duals on Saturday at Starpoint High School.

The spring 2021 wrestling season was unlike any before. Because of COVID-19, teams from Niagara and Orleans counties formed a one-time 'super league,' those in Chautauqua and Cattaraugus counties wrestled a fairly standard season, and Erie County programs were left behind for a month before being allowed to return to action.

Things are back to relative normal after that one-year blip, and the 2021-22 regular season officially kicked off Nov. 29 in Western New York.

Just over a week in, things appear to be on schedule. Just as in previous years, the slate will be highlighted by critical qualifier and championship event dates in the calendar set forth by individual leagues, Section VI and NYSPHSAA.

The 2021 spring 'super league' proved to be a smashing success by all accounts, given the circumstances. The Niagara Falls Wolverines under new head coach Josh Eagan ran away with the league championship with a perfect 10-0 dual meet record while topping the WNY Athletics large school dual meet power rankings for all of WNY by the end of the season. Starpoint, Newfane and

Niagara Wheatfield all tied with 8-2 records within the league, wrestling very competitive duals against one another.

All four teams are back to their regularly-scheduled competition this winter in their respective leagues and all four carry high expectations for league, class, sectional and possibly state honors by the end of the season.

The WNY Athletics dual meet power ranking released Tuesday had Niagara Falls as the top-ranked large school in all of WNY, followed by Starpoint at No. 3 and Wheatfield fourth. In the small school ranking, Newfane is up to No. 2, moving up one spot after the opening week.

With big expectations for the traditional powerhouses, regime changes at Kenmore and Lewiston-Porter, strong participation at the likes Wilson, Albion, Barker/Royalton-Hartland, Lockport and North Tonawanda, the return to action this season will be critical for the future of both the NFL and Niagara-Orleans leagues.

Wrestling fans were treated to some All-Niagara County heavyweight showdowns this past weekend at the Starpoint Duals, where Niagara Falls finished a perfect 5-0 with wins over Starpoint (32-27) and Newfane (42-24). Newfane also earned a quality win over the Spartans, 38-27. Newfane finished 4-1 while the Spartans landed at 3-2 on the day.

Niagara Falls

Under first-year head coach Josh Eagan, the Wolverines carried over their 2019-20 success into the odd spring 2021 season, wrapping up their second straight 'league' title and ascending to the top of the sectional tournament standings and final team power rankings by the end of the season.

The Wolverines captured their first NFL title in a decade in 2019-20 and finished a perfect 10-0 in the spring 'super league.' Seven place finishers guided the Wolverines to the Section VI Division I tournament team title, led by three returning sectional champions in Jaden Crumpler, Amarfio Reynolds Jr. and Jesiere Carter. Also returning with top-four finishes are Grady Peterson and Ja'Shad Bumpers, followed by a host of returning starters and contributors like Eian Peterson, Mike Syposs, Darren Christian and Max Hill.

"We have three returning sectional champions which is nice, but they won it last year and you cannot just expect that to happen again," Eagan said. "This is a new season and a lot can change. You can't get overconfident or expect anyone to just lay down. If anything, when you return from a successful

season like we had last year, you have a target on your back. ... People want to knock you off. We have to bring our A-game every competition.”

The Falls should be the early favorite to repeat as champions in the NFL and Class AA tournament with real Section VI Dual Meet Championship aspirations. However, strong Lancaster and Starpoint teams, a Wheatfield team that could play spoiler and a host of hungry Erie County Interscholastic Conference large school teams will be eager to compete for a sectional team title.

“Our numbers are great this year and our practices have been very productive,” said Eagan. “We have a lot of leaders on our team that have really stepped up. Our goals are to win the league again, the Section VI Duals, the class tournament, and to send at least four kids to states and have a few all-state wrestlers. Our staff will not set the bar low but we need to push ourselves every day.”

The Wolverines were tested but showed their strength in defeating strong small school powers Iroquois and Newfane and edging out the Spartans at the Starpoint Duals last Saturday. The head-to-head win over Starpoint could prove to be especially critical for Section VI Dual Meet Championships seeding considerations next month.

NF will be tested again this month at the Linda Knuutila Memorial Tournament in December, the first half of its NFL slate and the Akron Holiday Tournament. Circle Jan. 19 on the calendar for the annual showdown with Niagara Wheatfield at NFHS, a match for the Niagara Cup that usually decides the NFL champion.

WNY Athletics Wrestler of the Week: Max Hill

By Matt O'Rourke January 3, 2022

WNY Athletics

WRESTLER OF THE WEEK

This certificate is presented to

Max Hill

to recognize him for outstanding achievement and character
displayed during the 2021-2022 wrestling season.



Matt O'Rourke
Wrestling Coordinator

Niagara Falls senior Max Hill has been selected as the WNY Athletics Wrestler of the Week for the fifth week of the 2021-2022 regular season (Monday, December 27th – Friday, December 31st).

Max captured the 172-pound individual title at the 53rd Annual Akron Holiday Wrestling Tournament on December 29th, going a perfect 4-0 on the day while helping lead the Wolverines to the team title in convincing fashion. Hill earned a first round decision followed by a tech fall and pins in both the semi and final to gain 25.5 of Falls' 170.5 team points.

So far this season, Max is 15-1 overall and a huge part of the lineup for the #1 Wolverines, who are also the top seed in Division I going into this weekend's Section VI Dual Meet Wrestling Championships.

In addition to having an outstanding season, Hill is known as a leader for the Wolverines both in the classroom and practice room, carries good grades, and is known to be a polite individual.

It's All Love: The Recipe for Continued Success of Wolverines Wrestling

By Matt O'Rourke February 2, 2022



The Niagara Falls Wolverines wrestling team locked up its third consecutive 'league' title last Friday, January 28th with a 38-12 victory at home over Niagara Frontier League archrival Niagara Wheatfield to finish unbeaten in NFL action for the second time in the last three years. The Wolverines also boasted a 10-0 record in the spring 2021 'super league' which included wins over Wheatfield and non-NFL powerhouses Starpoint and Newfane and concluded the season with the team title at the Section VI Division I championships.

The Wolverines' latest victory over the Falcons was the fourth in a row in the series going back to the 2019-2020 season. The streak includes three consecutive wins over Wheatfield in NFL action and a 35-24 win on January 8th at the Section VI Division I Duals. Also, the Wolverines retained possession of the Niagara Cup, first introduced in 2013, for the third straight year. Wheatfield won five of the first six Niagara Cups to hold what is now a narrow five to four lead in the 'Cup series.

Champion: Bielec

With a roster loaded with individual talent, three returning sectional champions, and with few losses to graduation in 2021, the Wolverines started the 2021-2022 season as the top ranked large school squad in WNY. 'Falls dominated the NFL schedule this season and the team's 3rd place finish at the sectional duals was the first placement at the tournament in program history.

However, before the string of recent successes, 'Falls went without an NFL title for nine years, having last won the conference championship in the 2010-2011 season. For the eight full seasons in between league titles, the Wolverines usually finished somewhere in the top three or four spots in the final standings with the exception of a 2nd place finish in 2014-2015.

While 'Falls battled through the deep NFL schedule from 2011-2019, the Wolverines weren't without individual success led especially by 2014 NYS place winner Jerome Carter and 2020 graduate, four-time state placer, and two-time NYS champion Willie McDougald, who is currently one of the hottest rising stars in NCAA Division I for the University of Oklahoma Sooners.

Parallel to the meteoric rise of McDougald in the landscape of NYS wrestling came a local balance of power starting to tip in favor of the Wolverines, a full-fledged wrestling revival, and a new wave of young wrestlers whose wrestling training and upbringings can be traced to the legendary Niagara Falls Wrestling Club and Niagara Wheatfield Amateur Athletics clubs.

While it is no secret that Niagara Falls is a powder keg of athletes, second year head coach Josh Eagan says there is one characteristic that defines the program: love.

"Niagara Falls Wrestling is a family thing," said Eagan. "It's all love."

Eagan, a 2004 NFHS graduate and state tournament place winner, knows better than anyone both the advantages and challenges within the community at large, and with it, the best formula for managing those advantages and challenges.

"Why am I coaching high school wrestling right now? Because I love it," Eagan reflected. "It's all about the kids...you love it, you can't get away from it. If you don't feel like you are achieving anything...like in terms of influencing kids, man, that's what it's all about...that's Niagara Falls Wrestling. The influence you can have here is huge. It's ALL about the kids."

Within the team itself, Eagan preaches a 'leadership by example' philosophy that the older members of the team, especially, have adopted.

“Leadership by example is something you can’t teach, can’t force,” said Eagan. “My seniors are the leaders on the team...Ja’shad Bumpers, Darren Christian, Jesiere Carter, Max Hill, Dom Contento. The only way you can lead by example is by being the hardest worker in the room.”

Eagan believes that a big part of the recipe for the Wolverines’ success goes beyond the wrestling itself.

“We built a philosophy where it’s not all about wrestling and being an athlete,” said Eagan. “It’s more about the kids and building relationships with them which leads to building camaraderie within the team. It’s become fun and the kids take pride in the program.”

Eagan also pointed out the excellent facilities unlike any other in WNY that the district has invested in that directly benefit the wrestling program. The field house adjacent to the high school is home to Wolverines Wrestling history, awards, and memorabilia that showcases the long tradition of the program.

“The fact that we have our own facility, our own space, is big for our program too. We are very fortunate with our facilities and the access to things we have. The mats are down all the time, we have our own locker room. We can watch film, drill, hit the weight room, and stay after practice and get some more work in. It’s exclusive, in a way, and kids here want to be a part of it.”

Niagara Falls finishes the 2021-2022 campaign a perfect 7-0 in the NFL and 13-1 overall. The Wolverines start their journey through the post season on Saturday at the Class AA championships at Williamsville North. Returning sectional champions Jaden Crumpler (junior, 23-2), Amarfio Reynolds, Jr. (junior, 24-1) and Jesiere Carter (senior, 24-4) will lead an explosive roster of talented wrestlers while looking to repeat as sectional champions and advance to the state individual championships in Albany.

Niagara Falls, Starpoint roll to sectional wrestling championships

By Nick Sabato February 5, 2022

WILLIAMSVILLE — After coming up short in a few key tournaments this year, Niagara Falls left no doubt who the best team in Class AA was on Saturday.

The Wolverines earned four champions, eight finalists and pushed 12 into the Section VI Division I state qualifier, recording 256 points — 84.5 better than runner-up Lancaster — to win the Section VI Class AA championship at Williamsville North High School. It is the third consecutive sectional title for Niagara Falls, including an overall championship last season.



Runner-up performances in the team standings at the Linda C. Knuutila Memorial Tournament and the Ken-Ton invitational were disappointments, as was finishing third in the sectional dual championships. But the Wolverines would rather be wrestling their best in the postseason.

“If that means we send more guys to states, personally that’s my favorite time of year,” Niagara Falls head coach Josh Eagan said. “I know it’s a team sport and an individual sport, but if we can have a van full of kids heading to Albany, that’s where I love to coach. That’s a good stage out there.”

Eian Peterson (102 pounds), Jaden Crumpler (118), Amarfio Reynolds (126), Grady Peterson (132), Darren Christian (138), Mike Syposs (160), Jesiere Carter (160) and Max Hill (172) all advanced to the finals. Crumpler won his second consecutive AA sectional title with a first-round fall, while Reynolds won his third in a row, avenging a 2019 finals loss to Lancaster’s Myles Gronowski.

Peterson, a freshman, scored an escape in the final 10 seconds to earn a 5-4 decision over Frontier’s Cullen Edwards in the 102 finals, while Syposs got the better of teammate and defending sectional champion Carter in an 8-7 decision.

“Eight finalists is impressive, let alone the class tournament,” Eagan said. “That was exciting and there were a couple close matches in the semis that we pulled through. We looked at the team score and said, ‘Man, we are taking off right now.’”

Lockport is sending four to the state qualifier, winning a pair of championships. Kevin Daskavitz pinned Frontier’s Nick Baco in 4 minutes, 47 seconds in the 215 finals, while Stefaan Fearon handed Frontier’s Konrad Krzyszton his first loss of the season in a 7-3 decision at 285.

Maleah McKinney finished third after scoring a late takedown to beat Jamestown’s Connor Bush 9-7 at 110. McKinney is the first female to place at the Class AA meet Lockport program history.

Starpoint romps in Class A

GRAND ISLAND — Starpoint continued its bookmark season by running away with the Class A sectional championship for the first time since 2006, besting Niagara Wheatfield by 61.5 points.

All 13 Spartans who competed advanced to the state qualifier, while 10 reached the finals and five earned championships.

Christopher Uptegrove (126), Griffin LaPlante (132), Gage LaPlante (145), Keith Coleman (152) and Matt Caldwell (215) all won their weight classes, as Uptegrove and Gage LaPlante both won their second career Class A titles.

Niagara Wheatfield sent 11 to the state qualifier and eight to the finals, with Collin Coughenour (138) and Andre Clause (285) both won championships. Coughenour won his fourth sectional title with a 2-1 decision over teammate Te’Shaun Mathews, while Clause beat teammate Trevon Mathews in a 1-0 decision.

Five Grand Island wrestlers advanced, with a pair of champions. Nik Massaro won the 118-pound championship, while Brian Bielec remained unbeaten to win at 172, his fifth consecutive sectional title. Bielec, now 40-0 on the season, broke the Grand Island school record with 190 career wins.

Starpoint hosts the Section VI Division 1 state qualifier on Feb. 12.

Newfane sends eight to state qualifier

EDEN — Newfane finished third in the team standings behind Class C-D champion Chautauqua Lake and runner-up Falconer, but eight Panthers are moving on to the state qualifier.

Newfane's Aidan Gillings recorded pins in all three of his matches to cruise to the 132-pound championship, while Simon Lingle defeated Maple Grove's Matthew Trim to win a 9-2 decision in the 189 finals and Charles Larose scored a 3-0 decision over Falconer's David Stein to win the 285 title.

Medina pushed three into the state qualifier, including Medina's Gavin Ciarfella, who beat Eden's Johnny Vicario in a 3-1 decision in the 126 finals. Four Wilson wrestlers also advanced to the state qualifier.

The Division 2 state qualifier will be held at Jamestown Community College on Feb. 12.

Jaden Crumpler, Amarfio Reynolds cooking at the right time for Niagara Falls

By Nick Sabato February 7, 2022



Sometimes losing is beneficial. It allows a wrestler to reset and reevaluate, especially if it doesn't happen frequently.

When Niagara Falls High School juniors Amarfio Reynolds and Jaden Crumpler start a match, it usually ends with their hands raised. The two have combined for 149 career wins, but suffered what they believe were good losses to tough opponents early in the season. Now they are rolling.

Since dropping his only match of the season to Pioneer's Daniel Kirsch, Reynolds has won 16 in a row, capped by a 6-3 win over Lancaster's Myles Gronowski to win the 126-pound title Saturday at the Section VI Class AA meet. Since losing to Gronowski in the Division I sectional dual semifinals, Crumpler has rattled off 12 straight and won the 118-pound AA championship.

Weathered by experience and plenty of success, Reynolds and Crumpler not only appear poised to finish atop the podium at the Section VI Division I championships for the second consecutive season this coming Saturday at Starpoint High School, but Niagara Falls head coach Josh Eagan believes they should have an even grander podium in mind.

“I’m always pushing for a state title, so unless you show me a true stud in that bracket — which we’ve seen before — that’s going to be the goal,” Eagan said. “I don’t want to say they have a ceiling, because I don’t ever want to think my kid’s going to lose. You have to be realistic and I think their goal should be to win states.”

Of course Reynolds wanted to win, but when he finished second at the Linda C. Knuutila Memorial Tournament, he wasn’t disappointed. He left the match feeling more confident than he entered. Reynolds felt he wrestled a good tournament and ran into a wrestler who was better that day.

Kirsch is a two-time Division II sectional champion and a state placewinner and Reynolds lost a 3-0 decision. The two met seven months earlier and Kirsch won an 11-2 major decision that wasn’t that close. But after going toe-to-toe with Kirsch, Reynolds knows it’s going to take someone with a whole lot of talent to knock him off.

Reynolds also knows what it’s like to go to the state tournament, having gone as a wild-card as a freshman in 2020 — states were canceled last season. But he’s a different wrestler now. He has lost four matches in the last two seasons. Two of those losses came to Kirsch and a sudden-victory loss to Newfane’s Adam Huntington last season is the only other blemish in his last 35 matches.

“That match (with Kirsch) really boosted my confidence,” Reynolds said. “I used to get nervous going into matches. Now it’s just wrestling. That’s all you have to do is wrestle. Just focus on wrestling. Don’t focus on winning or losing — just wrestle.”

Crumpler felt invincible coming into this season. After losing his first match of last year to Lewiston-Porter’s Caden Barrientos, he never lost again. But an overtime loss to Chautauqua Lake’s Jordan Joslyn in the semifinals of the Knuutila tournament changed that thinking and a 4-0 loss to Gronowski a month ago changed him as a wrestler.

Wrestling a heavier weight in the dual against Gronowski, Crumpler felt gassed late in the match. He needed to increase his cardio. Seven of his first 17 matches this season went the full six minutes and he lost two of them.

Since the loss to Gronowski, Crumpler has shown improved endurance by winning five of his last 12 matches by decision, but he has also been dominant. Six of his last seven matches — including all three at the Class AA tournament — have ended via fall, with the outlier being a 5-1 decision over Barrientos, who he has beaten all three times this season after losing their first two high school meetings.

Another sectional championship is within reach and it would deliver his first trip to states. Generally states is the reward for winning a sectional title, but Crumpler wasn't able to feel the experience last season and has been waiting ever since.

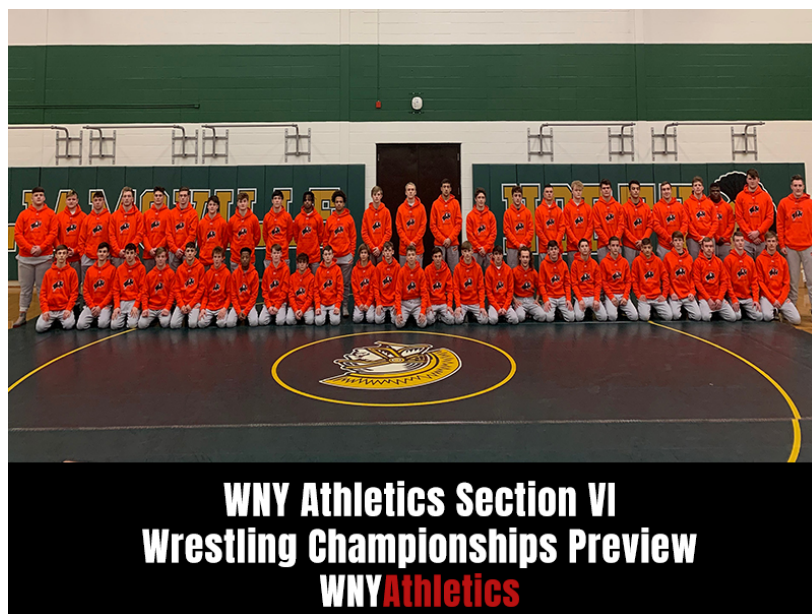
"I don't feel like it's pressure. I'm ready for it and I feel like I should be in the state tournament," Crumpler said. "I'm just going to keep training hard and hopefully I make it."

The Division I state qualifier begins at 10 a.m. Saturday, with the finals to start at 5 p.m.

Section VI Wrestling Championships Preview

By Matt O'Rourke February 11, 2022

Last Saturday's four Class tournament championships provided all of the competitive, high level wrestling, twists and turns, and dramatic finishes that were missed in 2021. The Class tournaments serve as qualifiers for the sectional championships and are attended by schools within similar BEDS numbers. Only the top four place winners in each bracket in Class AA and A advance to the sectional tournament while the top five in B and C/D move on.



While Niagara Falls and Starpoint ran away with the Class AA and A titles, respectively, the small school tournaments literally could not have been closer. Pioneer and Iroquois again showed why they are the class of the Class as they tied for the B title with 216.5 points with both squads entering thirteen wrestlers in the tournament. Iroquois crowned four champions to Pioneer's three and had

eight finalists compared to the Panthers' seven, but Pioneer placed eleven wrestlers overall compared to the Chiefs' ten.

Meanwhile in Class C/D, all three of WNY's top ranked small schools battled to a wild ending that had #3 Chautauqua Lake edge out #2 Falconer/Cassadaga Valley 212.5 points to 212 for the Class C/D team title. #1 Newfane finished in third place with 172 points. Unlike in the B tournament, the top two teams in C/D were low on champions as CL's Jordan Joslyn was the only individual weight class winner amongst either team. Joslyn was one of four finalists for the Thunderbirds while Falconer was led by two runners-up. Both squads placed eleven wrestlers while Falconer had a big consolation final round as six Golden Cougars claimed 3rd place out of thirteen weight classes.

The return of the Class tournaments resulted in a number of intriguing matches, wrestlers appearing unexpectedly at new weights for the postseason, and highly competitive matches amongst all four tournaments setting up the sectional championship brackets that could make for some very competitive races and some with really no clear favorite.

In Division I, only four sectional champions departed due to graduation in the spring with a whooping nine returning champions and thirty-one total place winners this year. The opposite is in effect for Division II as seven sectional titles won by 2021 seniors are vacant with only six returning champions meaning a number of wrestlers could and will be crowned sectional champion for the first time on Saturday night.

In Division I, Starpoint leads all teams with thirteen entries this weekend, followed by Niagara Falls (12), Niagara Wheatfield (9), Frontier (8), and Lancaster (7). In Division II, Chautauqua Lake and Pioneer each have eleven entries followed by Iroquois (10), Falconer (9), and Newfane (6).

Besides the actual wrestling, perhaps the single most impactful change between 2020 and 2022 will be showcased as Section VI will compete for true 2nd places at the sectional championships. The New York State Wrestling Committee proposed doing away with the wildcard system in favor of an automatic qualifier system to be implemented state wide. The concept was approved by NYSPHSAA before last season, but will be used for the first time this year. Section VI Division I and II will send both the individual weight class champions and runners-up at every weight class to the state tournament automatically; some other parts of the state have three 'auto-qualifiers' and some have only one. However, at the conclusion of the championship bouts, the runner-up will have to wrestle the athlete who placed 3rd in the weight class *if* those two wrestlers did not already meet in the tournament. *If* the 3rd place and 2nd place wrestlers meet for the 'true second' and the 3rd place

wrestler wins, that wrestler now assumes the runner-up position and thus an entry to the state tournament.

Wrestling at both tournaments begins at 10am on Saturday at Starpoint for Division I and at Jamestown C.C. for Division II with the finals locked in to begin at 5pm.

Weight classes

Division I

102-pounds

Top seeds:

1. Eian Peterson (9th grade, 22-8 record) – Niagara Falls
2. Sean Gordon (8th, 33-6) – Hamburg
3. Cullen Edwards (8th, 30-7) – Frontier
4. Mason Evarts (10th, 18-10) – North Tonawanda
5. Tommy Crumpler (9th, 12-8) – Niagara Falls
6. Kole Haseley (8th, 21-15) – Starpoint

No place winners return from the 2021 championships meaning a first time sectional champion and five more place winners will be awarded for the first time in Division I 102-pounds. Niagara Falls' Eian Peterson earned the top seed in the bracket after claiming the Class AA title with a 5-4 decision over Frontier's Edwards. Peterson also has a head to head over Gordon, who won the Class A title last weekend, to effectively toss out the seed points (Peterson has the third most at the weight) and ascend to the top spot. A likely semifinal matchup could be with either Evarts or Crumpler (Evarts was an 11-4 winner over Crumpler on January 26th) versus Peterson while Gordon/Edwards round three could be on deck on the bottom side; both wrestlers have a 4-2 decision win over the other going back to January 5th. Nonetheless, two young wrestlers will be making the trip to Albany from this weight but on Saturday but the question is who?

Prediction

Champion: Edwards

Runner-up: Gordon (wins true 2nd)

118

Top seeds:

1. Jaden Crumpler (12th, 26-2) – Niagara Falls
2. Zach Dellinger (12th, 36-8) – Williamsville North/East
3. Nik Massaro (10th, 35-8) – Grand Island
4. Ja'shad Bumpers (12th, 22-9) – Niagara Falls
5. Chase Richards (8th, 26-13) – Niagara Wheatfield
6. Simon Cuvelle (12th, 20-8) – Orchard Park

A deep weight class with plenty of experience and a returning champion highlight a packed house at 118-pounds. Top seeded Jaden Crumpler is the defending Section VI Division I 110-pound champion looking to repeat. Crumpler has been outstanding for the Wolverines especially this season, with his only loss in Section VI Division I coming up a weight at 126. Jaden has met each of the following five seeds (with the exception of Richards) and recorded pins over those opponents this season.

Crumpler met the 2-seed Dellinger in the Class AA final last weekend and secured a first period pin in the championship match. A possible semifinal could put teammates against one another should Bumpers, also a returning place winner, hold off the very talented Falcons 8th grader and returning sectional placer if they are to meet in the quarterfinal. Bumpers was a 7-5 winner over Richards hardly two weeks ago. On the bottom of the bracket, Dellinger could meet GI's Massaro in the semifinal in what could be their first meeting of the season. Dellinger has had a breakout senior campaign and is looking to not only place in the section for the first time in two years but also punch a ticket to states. Massaro, a 2020 sectional place winner, who has only lost twice since the last day of December, has been very good as of late and shouldn't be looked past on the way to the final. However, don't look past what could be a really good quarterfinal matchup when OP's Cuvelle and Massaro meet.

Prediction

Champion: Crumpler

Runner-up: Dellinger

126

Top seeds:

1. Amarfio Reynolds, Jr. (11th, 27-1) – Niagara Falls
2. Myles Gronowski (12th, 39-5) – Lancaster
3. CJ Uptegrove (11th, 31-11) – Starpoint
4. Garrett Chase (9th, 31-11) – Niagara Wheatfield
5. Riley Kirst (10th, 22-10) – Amherst

The top two seeds in the bracket have been on a collision course from the start of this season that finally resulted in their first meeting, a 6-3 decision win for “Junior” Reynolds in the Class AA tournament final. Reynolds is the defending Section VI 118-pound champion who also was a finalist and state tournament wildcard in 2019-2020. Lancaster journeyman Gronowski was a 3rd place winner in the spring following back to back runner-up finishes in 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 now looking for one more shot to make it to the floor of the NYS championships. A possible rematch in this weekend’s final could result in one of the best head to head matches in all of championship weekend. On the way to the final, a very realistic semi matchup between two battle hardened opponents could put Gronowski against Starpoint’s dangerous CJ Uptegrove, also a returning place winner who has been tested over and over this season in high pressure situations. Young up and comers Chase and Kirst, both Section VI place winners in 2020, will meet for the second time this season for the chance to compete in the semifinal. Chase was a winner in their first meeting in the Class A semifinal, 4-0.

Prediction

Champion: Reynolds, Jr *MOW

Runner-up: Gronowski

132

Top seeds:

1. Griffin LaPlante (8th, 39-5) – Starpoint
2. Tremell Mathews (11th, 36-8) – Niagara Wheatfield
3. AJ Didas (9th, 33-8) – Clarence
4. Grady Peterson (11th, 20-8) – Niagara Falls
5. Brandon Heh (12th, 34-15) – Clarence
6. Zach Caldwell (8th, 21-20) – Starpoint

Another 'collision course' matchup may be on deck between the top two seeds at 132-pounds. Wheatfield's Mathews was a winner in the 2021 Section VI 126-pound final over Starpoint's ultra-talented then 7th grader Griffin LaPlante. However, LaPlante has held the advantage this year with two 3-0 decision wins over Mathews. A potential finals matchup could see a third meeting in one of WNY's top rivalries this year. Seeded 3rd is Clarence's very talented freshman Class AA champion AJ Didas, a returning sectional place winner as well. Didas will meet fellow returning sectional placer Caldwell in the quarterfinal in an intriguing matchup for both wrestlers. Didas may own a better looking record, but Caldwell is dangerous in his own right and has taken on some of the best in WNY this season as an 8th grader. Should Didas advance, a third showdown with Mathews could be on deck. Mathews owns wins in both of their head to heads this season, an 8-6 decision and a 12-6 decision. One of the big moves of Class weekend saw Clarence's Heh move up to 132 as double entry for the Red Devils. Heh will meet 'Falls' returning sectional placer Peterson in the quarterfinal round. Peterson was a slight 7-6 decision winner in their semifinal matchup last weekend.

Prediction

Champion: LaPlante

Runner-up: Mathews

138

Top seeds:

1. Collin Coughenour (11th, 22-3) – Niagara Wheatfield
2. Carter Tadasz (11th, 34-11) – Lancaster
3. Te'Shaun Mathews (10th, 34-5) – Niagara Wheatfield
4. Darren Christian (12th, 21-8) – Niagara Falls

The top four seeds all bring sectional placement pedigree led by Coughenour, one of the most experienced wrestlers in WNY. Coughenour is the defending sectional champion and is looking for his fourth title and trip to Albany in five years. A double entry in the bracket by the Falcons puts 3-seeded Mathews in a prime spot to make a run at the final and a third shot at his teammate should the two make the championship bout. Coughenour has two close decision wins over "Juicy" in recorded matches this season, both coming within the last two weekends. If the Falcons pair is to meet in the final for the second weekend in a row, Mathews would have to possibly take down Lancaster's Class AA champion and returning sectional finalist Tadasz if the two meet in the semifinal.

Tadusz and Mathews have not meet this season, so that could be a showdown with big time implications on state tournament advancement in this bracket. Meanwhile, on the top side, a realistic semi between Coughenour and NF's Christian would be their first meeting of the season too.

Prediction

Champion: Coughenour

Runner-up: Mathews

160

Top seeds:

1. Mike Syposs (11th, 27-6) – Niagara Falls
2. Jesiere Carter (12th, 27-5) – Niagara Falls
3. Michael Schaefer (10th, 41-4) – Lancaster
4. Luke Smeader (11th, 29-5) – Hamburg
5. Jake LeClerc (12th, 29-8) – Amherst

One of the biggest results of the entire Class weekend saw Niagara Falls' gamble with Syposs at 160 work out as the Wolverines junior was first a winner by pin over Schaefer in the semi and then an 8-7 decision winner over Carter in the final, taking down a defending and a former sectional champion in the same day. Syposs earned MOW honors in AA and set himself up with the top seed for the sectional championships after having missed placing in 2021. Carter is one of three defending champions for Niagara Falls, and, in all likelihood, could have a 2021 finals rematch with Schaefer assuming the two meet in the semifinal which would be a highly anticipated showdown since the pair have not met this season. Schaefer captured the sectional title in 2019-2020 and placed in 2018-2019. On the top side of the bracket, LeClerc/Smeader are set up for a fourth result of the season with a big opportunity to advance to the semis on the line. Smeader was a decision winner in both of their contested matches this season including a 6-3 decision in the Class A final. Whoever wins between the two will get their first and only shot at Syposs in the semifinal round. LeClerc was a sectional place winner in 2021, but Smeader last placed in Section VI in the 2018-2019 season.

Prediction

Champion: Schaefer

Runner-up: Syposs (holds true 2nd)

172

Top seeds:

1. Brian Bielec (12th, 39-0) – Grand Island
2. Evan Stencil (11th, 39-8) – Lancaster
3. Max Hill (12th, 25-5) – Niagara Falls
4. Landon Grainy (11th, 30-12) – Starpoint

Defending sectional champion Brian Bielec will try to repeat this weekend as part of his quest for state tournament glory. A 3rd place sectional finish in 2019-2020 set the stage for a productive junior campaign, however the limited spring 2021 season meant a missed change to compete in Albany for the first time. Bielec, who became the Vikings' all-time wins leader last weekend, could have a Class A final rematch with Grainy should the two meet in the semifinal. A Class AA final rematch could be on hand on the bottom side should Stencil and Hill match up again. Stencil, a returning sectional placer, was a 10-4 decision winner over Hill last Saturday. All things considered, a pair of wrestlers will compete in the actual state tournament for the very first time from this pool in two weeks.

Prediction

Champion: Bielec

Runner-up Stencil

Five Niagara Falls wrestlers move to states; Grand Island's Bielec remains unbeaten

By Aidan Joly February 12, 2022



Amarfio Reynolds of Niagara Falls beat Myles Gronowski of Lancaster in the 126-pound weight class during the Section VI Division 1 wrestling finals at Starpoint High School in Lockport on Saturday.

James P. McCoy / Buffalo News

Five Niagara Falls wrestlers qualified for the state meet, one of Western New York's most dominant wrestlers cleanly swept the day and a pair of brothers advanced at the Section VI Division 1 championships state qualifier Saturday at Starpoint.

Niagara Falls all but dominated three of the four lowest weights, with Eian Peterson winning the 102-pound weight class by 2-1 decision over Cullen Edwards of Frontier; Jaden Crumpler winning at 118 pounds with an 8-1 win over Zach Dellinger of Williamsville North/East; and Amarfio Reynolds winning by fall against Lancaster's Myles Gronowski. Top seeds Crumpler and Reynolds repeated as Division 1 champions. Edwards, Dellinger and Gronowski also earned state berths.

The New York State Public High School Athletic Association championships are Feb. 25-26 in Albany.

“I think a lot of teams think of us as kind of the evil villain with all of the winning, so winning for the team feels good,” Crumpler said. “We’re ready to go to states and prove something.”

The fourth and fifth Niagara Falls representatives came from the 160 weight class. Mike Syposs defeated teammate Jesiere Carter 5-4 in the class final in a rematch of the pair’s bout in the Class AA tournament last weekend.

At 145 pounds, nationally ranked Michigan commit Cameron Catrabone of Williamsville North/East had an easy 7-3 win against Gage LaPlante of Starpoint.

“Coming into sectionals, I was pretty confident and ready to wrestle no matter what,” Catrabone said. “I had a bye in the first match so in the semis I came ready to wrestle. No matter what, no matter who it is, no matter how much I’m favored to win by, I’m always ready to go to war and drag it deep no matter what it takes.”

Catrabone, the fourth-ranked wrestler in the United States, is sure to be a favorite in the state tournament in his weight class.

Gage LaPlante advanced to the state tournament by a win in the second-place bout against Dylan Pringle of Niagara Wheatfield. He will join his brother, Griffin, in the state tournament after Griffin won the 132-pound weight class with a 4-1 finals victory against Tremell Mathews of Niagara Wheatfield.

“That’s going to be sick. Me and him are the best competitors, he’s my practice partner, I’ve given him the best and he’s given me the best,” Griffin LaPlante said.

Mathews advanced to the state tournament with a second-place finish via an earlier victory against AJ Didas of Clarence.

Teammates also battled at 138 as Niagara Wheatfield’s Collin Coughenour, the top seed, earned a 4-2, sudden-death victory against Te’Shaun Mathews, who also moves to the state meet.

In the 172-pound weight class, Brian Bielec of Grand Island continued his undefeated streak, extending it to 43-0 on the season after three victories Saturday, which included a win against Evan Stencil of Lancaster in the finals by fall in 4:31, with Stencil advancing via a win against Landon Grainey of Starpoint in that class’ second-place bout.

Bielec was also named the tournament’s most outstanding wrestler as he tries to give Grand Island its first state champion wrestler in school history.

“No pressure. I don’t like to or let myself feel the pressure, I just wash it all away and focus on what I need to do to win the next match,” Bielec said.

Frontier’s Konrad Krzyszton, the top seed, beat Stefaan Fearon of Lockport, 8-3 in the 285-pound final, one that was extremely physical.

Fearon will also head to the state tournament and be joined by teammate and 215-pound winner Kevin Daskavitz, who beat Starpoint’s Matt Caldwell by 6-1 decision. Casey Robinson of Niagara Wheatfield beat Caldwell, 1-0, for second place.

Krzyszton also will have a teammate with him as Travis Browning won by 17-2, technical fall over Ken Schmitz of Hamburg at 110. Browning, the top seed, has only one loss on the season. Schmitz took the second-place bout via no contest to move on.

At, 152, Carson Alberti from West Seneca/Depew earned his third state championship appearance with a victory by pin in 1:28 against Sweet Home’s Cameron Millender, who is heading to the state event as well.

At 189, Chris Bargy of Olean/Allegany-Limestone took a sudden death victory against Orchard Park’s Jack MacDonald, who also advanced.

Catrabone, Alberti, Browning Lead Seasoned Group of Large School Wrestling Veterans; Section VI Division I Championships Roundup

By Matt O’Rourke February 17, 2022

Last Saturday’s Section VI Division I Wrestling Championships at Starpoint High School put on display some of the best individual talent in all of WNY that featured three 2020 NYS tournament place winners and ten total defending or former sectional champions just in the finals matches alone.

Niagara Falls led all teams with four individual tournament champions

including repeat Section VI champions Jaden Crumpler at 118-pounds and Amarfio Reynolds, Jr at 126. 9th grader Eian Peterson and junior Mike Syposs claimed their first sectional title each at 102 and 160-pounds, respectively. And, all four wrestlers impressively defended their top 1-seed positions



on the day. Wolverines senior and 2021 sectional champion Jesiere Carter was the runner-up to Syposs at 160 but earned an auto-qualifier entry to the NYS championships.



Niagara Falls NYS state tournament qualifiers and coaches

While Falls had the most champions in the tournament, Starpoint had the most place winners with twelve wrestlers finishing in the top six of their brackets. Niagara Falls and Niagara Wheatfield followed with ten top-6 placers each while Lancaster and Frontier also tied with six top-6 place winners apiece. Frontier, Starpoint, and Wheatfield all had three finalists, but two Frontier wrestlers claimed individual titles compared to one champion each for the other two squads.

41% of the tournament's 78 place winners represented Falls, Starpoint, or Wheatfield and just under 45% represented the **five** Niagara County teams that placed wrestlers in the event. 53% of the individual champions represented Niagara County schools while half of the 26 Division I wrestlers who qualified for states represent only **five** Niagara teams.

2020 state tournament place winners Cam Catrabone (Williamsville North/East), Carson Alberti (West Seneca/Depew), and Travis Browning (Frontier) all earned Section VI titles and automatically qualified for the state championships next weekend in Albany. Catrabone, who is only a sophomore, claimed his fourth straight sectional title joining Wheatfield junior Collin Coughenour as the only two four-time champions in the tournament. After missing the spring 2021 season, Alberti claimed his third Section VI title while Browning captured his first career sectional title after three previous runner-up placements.

“Within the section I think there’s a weight off my shoulders. I beat the best of the best in the section,” said Browning after the championship match. “Going into the state tournament, I don’t think there is any weight off my shoulders. I still think I have to go out there and do my job cause it’s not over. I need to beat the best of the best in the state now.”

Browning, who was the runner-up in Section VI Division I in the spring season at 118-pounds, certified for 110-pounds this season and made the choice to go lighter for the stretch run. Being disciplined to stay down on weight is, for many wrestlers, not a popular choice, especially for seniors. However, Browning knew that a path to the sectional title and ultimately a state title may favor him being a bigger and older wrestler at the lower weight.

“A lot of people don’t like going to practice and cutting weight...it can be a miserable feeling,” said Browning. “The reason I went down is to chase some kids at states. Some of them have beat me in the past, so I just need to go out there beat them now.”

Twelve of the top seeded wrestlers at each weight class made the Division I finals on Saturday with eleven of them claiming titles and auto-qualifiers to states. Ten of the 2-seeds also reached the final with only two winning their respective weight classes. The true second round had only half as many bouts as the Division II tournament with five and only one non-finalist ‘true 2nd’ winner in Wheatfield’s Casey Robinson at 215-pounds.

102

Top seeded Falls freshman **Eian Peterson** emerged victorious on Saturday in a weight class that featured no returning sectional place winners. Peterson earned two opening round pins before meeting Frontier 8th grader Cullen Edwards in the final. The 3-seed Edwards was an impressive 7-1 decision winner the 2-seed Sean Gordon from Hamburg in the semifinal round to advance to the championship. In the final, Peterson earned an early takedown which proved to be the difference maker as he held on to win, 2-1, to win the fourth individual title of the night for the Wolverines. Since Gordon went on to claim 3rd place, no true second was contested after the finals so Edwards will also compete for the first time at the state tournament. Starpoint’s Kole Haseley finished 4th overall with North Tonawanda’s Mason Evarts finishing 5th and Falls’ Tommy Crumpler in 6th.



Niagara Falls' Eian Peterson – Section VI Division I champion

“102 was wide open,” said Falls head coach Josh Eagan after Peterson’s win. “Why couldn’t it be him? He works hard, he’s in the right room. He’s around three section champs who are working hard around him so there’s good role models in there. He had a different focus about him the last couple of weeks. The whole week going into the sectional tournament he was locked in.”

110

The top three seeded wrestlers at 110-pounds distanced themselves from the rest this season, but Frontier senior **Travis Browning** proved he’s one of the best in WNY with a dominate performance on Saturday. Browning earned a tech fall in the quarters, a pin in the semifinal, and an impressive tech fall in the final over 3-seed and returning sectional champion in Hamburg junior Ken Schmitz to earn a long awaited Section VI title. Browning, a 2020 7th place NYS Division I place winner, should be in the championship conversation next weekend in Albany. Schmitz advanced to the final with a 3-1 decision over Starpoint 2-seed JR Leuer in the semifinal to even their season head to head rivalry

at two wins apiece in their four meetings. Leuer's 3rd place finish guaranteed for Schmitz an auto qualification to states. Jamestown's Aiden Senear finished 4th in the bracket, Amherst's Payton Mack finished 5th, and the Red Raiders' Connor Bush finished 6th.



Frontier's Travis Browning – Section VI Division I champion

118

Niagara Falls got the first champion of the night at Starpoint as senior **Jaden Crumpler** repeated as Section VI champion to guarantee a trip to the state championships. Crumpler earned two opening round pins to set up a Class AA finals rematch with Williamsville North/East senior Zach Dellinger in the final. Crumpler was a winner by decision, 8-1. Dellinger gutted out a late pin over Grand Island's impressive sophomore Nik Massaro in the semifinal to advance. One of the day's earliest upsets saw impressive Wheatfield 8th grader Chase Richards earn a hard fought 9-7 overtime decision over 'Falls senior Ja'shad Bumpers in the quarterfinal round. Richards wrestled back to a 4th place finish but not after pushing Massaro in a 4-2 overtime defeat. Dellinger earned the runner-up auto qualifier spot in the bracket to advance to the state tournament. Orchard Park's Simon Cuvelle earned 5th in the bracket while Bumpers finished in 6th place.



Niagara Fall' Jaden Crumpler – Section VI Division I champion

126

Falls earned back-to-back champs to start the finals courtesy of their back-to-back defending Section VI champions in Crumpler at 118 and **Amarfio Reynolds, Jr** at 126-pounds. 'Junior' claimed his

second sectional crown with an impressive late first period fall over Lancaster journeyman Myles Gronowski in the title match. Reynolds earned a quarter round pin before holding off NW's star freshman Garrett Chase in the semifinal, 9-5. Gronowski earned two 15-0 tech falls in the first two rounds including one in the semis over eventual 3rd place winner CJ Uptegrove from Starpoint. Reynolds will get his second opportunity to compete at states next weekend while Gronowski earned an automatic qualification for his first chance to wrestle at states; Myles was an alternate for the state pool two years ago. Chase finished 4th in the bracket followed by Amherst's Riley Kirst in 5th and Frontier's Rory White in 6th.



Niagara Falls' Amarfio Reynolds, Jr (top) – Section VI Division I champion

132

The first of two 2021 sectional final rematches put Starpoint super 'star' 8th grader **Griffin LaPlante** against defending Section VI champion Tremell Mathews in the 132-pound final. Griffin captured his first Section VI title with a 4-1 finals decision over Mathews in their third meeting of the season, all of which LaPlante won by a three point margin over the inner-county Falcons rival. LaPlante earned two pins in the championship rounds leading to the final while Tremell tactically managed decisions over high quality opponents in the first two rounds. 3-seed Clarence freshman AJ Didas fell to Mathews, 5-2, but wrestled back to an important 3rd place finish which resulted in no true 2nd at the weight and an automatic entry in the state tournament for Mathews. NF's Grady Peterson finished 4th, Starpoint's Zach Caldwell 5th, and the Red Devils' Brandon Heh finished 6th.



Starpoint's Griffin LaPlante – Section VI Division I champion

“The difference between last year at sectionals to now was my mindset,” said LaPlante after the finals win. “I wasn’t putting the same amount of work and effort into practice last year as I was this year. My mindset is that I mentally and physically break my opponents...just go and win. I think back in practice, the tough times, the last sprints, I just think about these moments and training harder than my opponent. You’ve just got to go in with a mindset of ‘I’m winning this...I’ve put way more work in.’”

138

Wheatfield teammates **Collin Coughenour** and Te’Shaun Mathews squared off in the sectional final which resulted in a highly entertaining overtime 4-2 Coughenour victory for his 4th Section VI title. For Mathews, it was the Falcons sophomore’s third sectional placement and first appearance in the final. In the semis, both wrestlers held off strong opponents as Coughenour was a 6-2 winner over Niagara Falls’ Darren Christian while Mathews was an impressive 8-1 decision winner over Lancaster’s Carter Tadusz. The first true 2nd match of the night set up Mathews against Christian, but ‘Juicy’ earned a third period pin to defend 2nd place and an auto-entry to the state tournament. Tadusz finished 4th in the bracket followed by Amherst’s Zakira Saeed in 5th and Grand Island’s Kaleb Rang in 6th.



Niagara Wheatfield’s Collin Coughenour – Section VI Division I champion

145

Two of the best in WNY faced off at 145 in a 2021 finals rematch as Williamsville North’s **Cam Catrabone** earned his fourth title in as many years with a 7-3 decision over Starpoint’s 2020 sectional champion Gage LaPlante. LaPlante got the first takedown in the bout, but Catrabone answered back with a reversal early in the first period. Catrabone should be one of the top seeded wrestlers in the states bracket with LaPlante not far behind next week. LaPlante did have to wrestle for true second after the final and earned a 2nd period pin over NW freshman Dylan Pringle who started the day as the 4-seed and had to meet teammate Joe Cicco twice on Saturday, earning decisions both times. Those two placements earned Wheatfield two very important sectional place finishes going into next year. Also, both Falcons underclassmen defeated seniors in the consolation semis. Starpoint’s Peyton Lyness claimed 5th in the bracket while Clarence’s Peter Panero finished 6th.



Williamsville North's Cam Catrabone (left) – Section VI Division I champion

"I'll be ready to wrestle in Albany," said Catrabone after the finals victory. "I've got to be ready not only to win, but to dominate. I feel like I have a lot on the line this time."

152

Top seeded Depew senior **Carson Alberti** dominated the field on Saturday with an opening round major decision, a semifinals technical fall, and a finals pin over 2-seeded Sweet Home junior Cameron Millender in the final. Millender was challenged right off the bat on Saturday morning when he used a five-point combination to defeat Clarence's 7-seeded Andrew Le in the quarterfinal round. Millender again had an exciting finish in the semifinal earning near fall points to overcome a late deficit to Starpoint's Keith Coleman to advance to the final. Alberti earned his third individual sectional title with the win and will look to make another NYS tournament podium finish after placing 5th in NYS in 2020 Division II. 4-seeded Lancaster junior Micah Harry fell in the first round of the tournament but wrestled to a 3rd place finish to set up a true 2nd place match with Millender. The SH junior was a 3-1 winner to secure an entry to the state tournament, the first Panther to do so since the 2016-2017 season. Finishing in 4th place was Jamestown's Keith Miller, in 5th was Amherst's Giovanni Russo, and Coleman rounded up the top six.



West Seneca/Depew's Carson Alberti – Section VI Division I champion

160

One of the most intriguing weights of the last weeks had all three top Class AA place winners start the day seeded in the top three at sectionals. Ultimately, Niagara Falls junior **Mike Syposs** captured the sectional title on Saturday as the top seed in the bracket, capping off a remarkable last two weeks in which his move to 160 from 152 paid off big time. Syposs met teammate and 2021 Section VI champion Jesiere Carter in the final and was a 5-4 decision winner for 1st place. In the semifinal round, Carter was a 2-1 overtime winner in a critical head to head with 2020 Section VI champion Michael Schaefer from Lancaster, which was also a rematch of the 2021 sectional final. A true second place wasn't necessary at the conclusion of the finals so a Niagara Falls double entry at 160 is on hand for the NYS championships next weekend. Schaefer earned two valuable wins in wrestling back to a 3rd place finish ahead of Amherst's Jake LeClerc in 4th, Hamburg's Luke Smeader in 5th, and Williamsville South's Brad Evelt in 6th.



Niagara Falls' Mike Syposs (bottom) – Section VI Division I champion

172

Tournament MOW **Brian Bielec** cruised to his third consecutive Section VI Division I title on Saturday with a third period pin in the final over Lancaster junior Evan Stencil. The Grand Island senior, who owns the all-time Vikings program win record, is eyeing more than a top eight placement in Albany next weekend. Bielec earned a first minute pin in the quarters before an 8-1 decision in the semifinal. Meanwhile, Stencil held off Niagara Falls' Max Hill in the semi with a third period pin to reach the 172-pound championships match. Starpoint's Landon Grainy wrestled back to a third place finish to take on Stencil for true second. However, the Lancaster junior defended his runner-up position to earn an automatic qualification to states. Hill finished 4th overall in the weight followed by Orchard Park's Brody Stevens at 5th and Frontier's Clay Drew-Deeds in 6th.



Grand Island's Brian Bielec – Section VI Division I champion

“I’m looking forward to making a name for myself and showing people what I can do and how hard I’ve worked over the years,” said Bielec looking ahead to the state tournament. “Since 7th grade I’ve done nothing but work hard to achieve this goal...I’m going to be Grand Island’s first state champion. I’m just really thankful for all the opportunities I’ve been given. I’m thankful for my coaches, my family my friends, everyone who has been by my side to support me...just everything all together. I wouldn’t be able to do it without my support system.”

189

The only match of the night that didn’t feature the weigh’s top seed saw Olean/Allegany-Limestone’s 2-seed **Chris Bargy** cruise to the final for a showdown with Orchard Park sophomore Jack MacDonald. The 4-seed MacDonald took down top seeded Reilly Popa from Clarence in the semifinal with a late pin with only six seconds remaining in the bout to advance to the final. In the championship bout, Bargy led 5-2 late in the third period, but MacDonald stormed back to tie the match with time nearly expiring. However, Bargy earned the overtime sudden death takedown to secure the 189-pound title and an entry to states. Meanwhile, Popa wrestled back to a hard won 3rd place finish but the true 2nd wasn’t needed as MacDonald was already a head to head winner on the day with an auto-qualifier entry to states in hand. Lancater’s Sam Judasz finished in 4th place, Kenmore’s Connor Grohman finished 5th, and Starpoint’s Thomas Browne claimed 6th place.



Olean/Allegany-Limestone's Chris Bargy – Section VI Division I champion

215

Lockport junior **Kevin Daskavitz** made a comeback for the ages in the last two weeks after having missed the entire season up to the Class AA tournament. Daskavitz entered the Class tournament drawn in but captured first place to set up a 2-seed position for the sectional tournament. Daskavitz met top seeded Starpoint junior Matt Caldwell in the final and cruised to a 6-1 decision victory for his first Section VI title in his second finals appearance. Niagara Wheatfield’s Casey Robinson fell to Daskavitz in the semifinal round, but gutted out two decision wins thereafter to earn the 3rd place position which set up a true 2nd showdown with Caldwell. Robinson earned a late match escape for a 1-0 lead in literally the last match of the tournament to hold on and capture the ‘true 2nd’ and with it an auto-entry to states. Kenmore’s Charlie Marzec finished in 4th place ahead of Sweet Home’s Jared Harris at 5th and Hamburg’s Henry Vallant in 6th.



Lockport's Kevin Daskavitz (top) – Section VI Division I champion

285

The highly anticipated fourth meeting of the season between defending Section VI champion Stefaan Fearon and Frontier strongman **Konrad Krzyszton** materialized in the heavyweight final on Saturday night. Konrad claimed the top seed in the bracket and earned two first period pins leading up to the final. Fearon was pushed in a 3-2 decision win over NW's Trevon Mathews in the semifinal round but held on to advance to the final for the second straight year. Krzyszton was an 8-3 victor in the final in which he scored five of his eight match points in the first period after nearly earning the fall. Mathews wrestled back to a 3rd place finish in the bracket but the Fearon loss in the final blocked him from the true 2nd match. Krzyszton and Fearon should make an extremely interesting duo in the state tournament bracket in Albany. Starpoint's Jeremiah Verstrete wrestled back to a 4th place finish in the weight followed by Drew Mascio from Frontier in 5th and Andre Clause from Wheatfield at 6th place overall.



Frontier's Konrad Krzyszton (left) – Section VI Division I champion

Section VI Division I entries by weight:

102 – Eian Peterson, Niagara Falls – Cullen Edwards, Frontier

110 – Travis Browning, Frontier – Ken Schmitz, Hamburg

118 – Jaden Crumpler, Niagara Falls – Zach Dellinger, Williamsville North

126 – Amarfio Reynolds, Jr, Niagara Falls – Myles Gronowski, Lancaster

132 – Griffin LaPlante, Starpoint – Tremell Mathews, Niagara Wheatfield

138 – Te'Shaun Mathews, Niagara Wheatfield

145 – Cam Catrabone, Williamsville North – Gage LaPlante, Starpoint

152 – Carson Alberti, West Seneca/Depew – Cameron Millender, Sweet Home

160 – Mike Syposs, Niagara Falls – Jesiere Carter, Niagara Falls

172 – Brian Bielec, Grand Island – Evan Stencel, Lancaster

189 – Chris Bargy, Olean/Allegany-Limestone – Jack MacDonald, Orchard Park

215 – Kevin Daskavitz, Lockport – Casey Robinson, Niagara Wheatfield

285 – Konrad Krzyszton, Frontier – Stefaan Fearon, Lockport



LaPlante, Krzyszton, Sweeney Top Seeds For NYS Championships; WNY Wrestling State Tournament Preview

By Matt O'Rourke February 23, 2022

Fifty-three wrestlers representing western New York schools will compete in the 59th Annual NYSPHSAA Intersectional Wrestling Championships Friday, February 25th and Saturday the 26th at MVP Arena in downtown Albany.

The 2021-2022 NYS federation championships mark the return of the tournament that was cancelled in the 2020-2021 season due to the pandemic.



Both Section VI divisions I and II each have twenty-six entries in the respective large and small school tournaments while one wrestler representing Monsignor Martin will compete in the large

school event. Tournament wide, forty-five 2020 state place winners and four state champions return to the field; seven such 2020 state placers from Section VI will represent again in Albany this weekend.

With the implementation of the new auto-qualifier system state-wide, each bracket is seeded 1 to 20, 21, or 22. Wrestlers earned seeding points for previous state placement, winning 2021-2022 sectional titles, and beating previous state place winners, current section champs, and current state qualifiers. Also important to note, only a section's individual champion representative in each weight is eligible to score team points for the sectional team race and for major power point considerations for the future.

Section VI has three top seeded wrestlers amongst the twenty-six weight classes, two in Division I and one in Division II. In Division I, Starpoint 8th grader Griffin LaPlante is the top seed at 132-pounds while Frontier senior Konrad Krzyszton is the top seed at 285-pounds. Iroquois senior Ryan Sweeney at 138-pounds is the lone Section VI top seed in Division II.

In Division II, Southwestern's Carmine Calimeri (102-pounds) and Dontae Hoose (215) and Newfane's Simon Lingle (189) earned the only 2-seeds out of all Section VI entries in the tournament.

Wrestling is scheduled to begin at 10am on Friday. Wrestling begins on Saturday at 9:30am with the finals scheduled to begin at 6:05pm on Saturday night.

Preview

102

Div. I: Chenango Forks (IV) 8th grader Ryan Ferrara holds the top seed position going into the tournament that consists entirely of first time state tournament qualifiers at the weight. Section VI champion **Eian Peterson** (9th grade, 25-8 record) from Niagara Falls earned the 6-seed in the bracket and has a first round bye on Friday morning. Peterson will take on Section XI champion Mason Mangialino from Comsewogue in the pre-quarterfinals. Mangialino (9th, 36-0) is the 11-seed in the bracket after capturing the Suffolk County large school title. The winner will likely get a shot at 3-seed Dunia Sibomana (8th, 31-2) from Section VIII Long Beach in the quarters.

Section VI finalist **Cullen Edwards** (8th, 33-8) will be one of the first wrestlers on the mats on Friday morning with an opening round preliminary bout. Edwards is the 21-seed in the bracket and will meet Section V champion Kiernan Magee (11th, 24-4) from Penfield in the very first round of the

tournament. The winner of that match will meet Section I champion Joe Tornambe from Yorktown High School in the pre-quarters.

Div. II: A Section IV wrestler also owns the top seed at 102-pounds in Division II as BGAH's Darren Florence, a 2020 NYS 6th place finisher, is the top seed in the bracket. Southwestern's Section VI champion **Carmine Calimeri** (8th, 37-1) earned the 2-seed in the bracket with a big opportunity to make some serious noise in Albany. Calimeri will wrestle the winner of 15-seed Krish Ghandi (Horace Mann-AIS) and 18-seed Brock Frederick (South Jefferson/Sandy Creek-III) in the pre-quarterfinal round. Two wins on Friday would put Calimeri in the semifinals for a very possible matchup with Section III champion Gene Edwards (Central Valley Academy).

On the top side of the bracket, Medina's **Dominick Callara** joins Florence as the only other returning wrestler with 2020 state tournament experience in the field. Callara (11th, 25-3) is the 5-seed in the weight class and will await the winner of 12-seed William Grass (Clarke-VIII) and 21-seed Quade Mather (Bayport-Blue Point-XI) in the pre-quarters. A potential quarterfinal matchup for Callara with 4-seeded Section V champion Christopher Noto (8th, 31-1) from Honeoye Falls-Lima would be a rematch of their December 4th meeting in which Noto was a winner by pin. However it happens, Section VI small schools could very possibly have two place winners at this weight.

110

Div. I: Three returning state place winners highlight the large school 110-pound field, one of whom is 5-seed Section VI champion **Travis Browning** from Frontier. Browning (12th, 28-1), a NYS 7th place finisher in 2020, will see the winner of 12-seed Jason Kwaak (Brentwood-XI) and 21-seed Joe Gabriele (John Jay-Cross River-I) in the pre-quarters on Friday morning. A possible semifinal could be Browning against the 4-seeded Section III runner-up Aidan Cali (12th, 24-6) from Baldwinsville. In all likelihood, the winner of that match would meet 2020 NYS finalist Joseph Manfredi (10th, 47-0) from Section VIII's Herricks High School who is the top seed in the weight.

On the bottom side of the bracket, Section VI finalist **Ken Schmitz** (11th, 36-5) from Hamburg earned the 6-seed overall and will meet Section VIII finalist Angel Banegas (11th, 31-3) from Uniondale in the pre-quarters. That winner will *likely* see the winner of 3-seed Tomah Gummow (Indian River-III) and Wantagh's (VIII) Anthony Clem in what could be a very interesting pre-quarters match, should Clem win in the opening round.

CHSAA champion **Austin Zimmerman** (10th, 29-8) from St. Joe's earned the 15-seed in the bracket and will meet Burnt Hills' (II) 'true runner-up' Tyler Whiteley (9th, 26-12) in the opening round on

Friday morning. The winner of that match will have the task of taking on 2020 NYS 3rd place winner Mikey Manta (12th, 38-1) from Section XI Hauppauge in the pre-quarter round.

Also, keep an eye on the Dom Attardi (Victor-V) vs. Dillon Arrick (Arlington-I) pre-quarters bout that could be a very good matchup early in the day as well.

Should WNY area teams come out of the weekend with one or three place winners, they will certainly have to earn those podium spots this weekend in Albany.

Div. II: Section VI hosts another pair of top-5 seeded wrestlers in the small school light weights. With only one returning NYS tournament qualifier from 2020 in the weight class, an opportunity for two WNY place winners is a highly realistic goal.

Sectional champion **Bryce DellaPenta** (8th, 33-1) earned the 4-seed in the bracket and has an opening round bye on Friday morning. DellaPenta will await the winner of 13-seed Trevor Tufano (IX) and 20-seed Ryan Mashaw (Gouverneur-X) in the pre-quarters. Tufano is a two-time sectional champion from Port Jervis and the lone returning athlete with past state tournament experience in the entire bracket.

Just behind DellaPenta in the 5-seed spot is Southwestern's sectional 'true runner-up' auto-qualifier **Kenji Walters** (10th, 31-11). Walters wrestled back to earn a spot in the NYS tournament at the Section VI Division II championships two weekends ago. Walters will see the winner of 12-seed Aidan Shufelt (Groton-4) and 21-seed Ryder Cox (Coxsackie-Athens-II) in the pre-quarter round. Should Walters and DellaPenta both win their first matches, a state quarterfinals showdown will be on deck for the Section VI pair.

Expect big-time fireworks in this weight as any combination of eight wrestlers will look to podium for the very first time in their careers.

118

Div. I: The higher the weight, the bigger the stakes in Division I as the bracket features three 2020 NYS place winners and **six** total state tournament qualifiers. Two-time Section VI champion **Jaden Crumpler**(12th, 29-2) from Niagara Falls will take on Section IX champion Alex Greco (11th, 30-2) from Warwick Valley in the pre-quarterfinal round. Greco is a 2020 NYS 8th place finisher. The winner of that match will most likely meet 3-seeded Section II champion Michael Santore from Shaker HS in the quarterfinal round. Santore was a state tournament qualifier two years ago.

On the top side of the bracket, Williamsville North's **Zach Dellinger** (12th, 38-9) is the 17-seed and will meet 16-seed Section I champion Neil Paulerico from Briarcliff/Byram Hills in the opening round. The winner gets a pre-quarters bout with top seeded Matthew Marlow, the Section XI champion from Northport HS. 4-seeded CHSAA champion Mike Adams (Msgr. Farrell) and 2-seed Christian Lievano (Ward Melville-XI) are the other returning NYS place winners from the 2020 championships in the bracket.

Div. II: Section VI state title hopefuls **Dan Kirsch** and **Jordan Joslyn** landed in the 4 and 5-seed spots, respectively, in the brutal Division II 118-pound bracket meaning a huge showdown *could* be coming up in the state quarterfinals. Pioneer's three-time sectional champion and 2020 NYS 4th place winner Kirsch (40-1) is one of **five** returning 2020 state place winners and **seven** state qualifiers in the bracket that includes top seeded 2020 99-pound champion Gianni Silvestri from Tioga (IV) and the runner-up, Xavier deJesus-Remchuk from Canisteo-Greenwood (V) as the 2-seed.

Kirsch will meet the winner of 13-seeded Section VIII champion Jack Godoy from Seaford and 20-seed Section X champion Ashtyn Amo from Ogdensburg Free Academy in the pre-quarters. A Godoy/Kirsch might be a very good match so keep an eye on it. Meanwhile, Chautauqua Lake sophomore Joslyn (41-1) will take on the winner of Section III 3rd place winner Patrick Grimsey from Lowville (12-seed) and 21-seed Section XI true runner-up Cade Delgado from Port Jefferson. Should Kirsch and Joslyn win those pre-quarterfinal matches, a state quarterfinal head to head for their third meeting of the season will be inevitable. Regardless of the deep bracket, Section VI boasts two talented wrestlers with state title darkhorse capabilities.

There is a strong likelihood we will see at least two quarterfinals that feature 2020 state tournament place winners in this bracket. BGAH's Joey Florence (7th) and Onondaga/Marcellus's (III) Carl Santariello (6th) are the other two returning 2020 place winners in the weight class.

126

Div. I: Get ready for an all-Section VI pre-quarters matchup as 8-seed sectional champion **Amarfio Reynolds, Jr** (30-1) from Niagara Falls and 9-seed sectional finalist **Myles Gronowski** (41-6) from Lancaster will meet for the third tournament in a row when they face off on Friday morning. 'Junior' Reynolds is one of **eight** returning state tournament qualifiers from 2020 that also includes three returning place winners. The winner of the Reynolds/Gronowski match will likely take on Section IV champion and 2020 Division I finalist Tyler Ferrara from Chenango Forks who is the top seed in the weight class. A number of high level quarterfinals could take place in this weight, especially on the

bottom side of the bracket. If Section XI finalist and 2020 state placer Vincent Ziccardi wins an opening round match against Rome's (III) returning qualifier Ashton Thompson, he would meet Mt. Sinai's 2020 Division II 3rd place winner Brayden Fahrback just in the quarterfinal round.

The path to a podium finish for each of the Section VI representatives in this weight is certainly possible, but expect this bracket to be battle in every single round.

Div. II: Both Section VI wrestlers will be presented with competitive, winnable matches in Friday's pre-quarters and with wins could each see the top 1 and 2-seeds, respectively.

Eden's sectional champion **Johnny Vicario** (12th, 37-7) is the 7-seed in the bracket and will meet 10-seeded Section II runner-up Dylan Winchell (12th, 43-2) from Warrensburg in his first match at states. A win for Vicario could set up a meeting with the 2-seeded 2020 NYS 7th place finisher Mason Welch from Tioga in the quarters.

Meanwhile on the top side of the bracket, Section VI true runner-up **Gavin Ciarfella** (30-2) will make his second appearance at the NYS tournament, this time as the 8-seed in the weight class. Ciarfella is one of **seven** 2020 state tournament qualifiers in the bracket. The sophomore from Medina will meet Section II champion Dylan Devine (9th, 33-6) from Schalmont in the pre-quarterfinal round. A win for Ciarfella would likely put him against top seeded 2020 NYS Division II finalist Max Gallagher from Section XI Bayport-Blue Point.

Despite plenty of returning state-level talent, only two wrestlers in the bracket have placements on their resumes leaving a big opportunity for the Section VI wrestlers and the rest of the field to earn guaranteed podium finishes.

132

Div. I: Newly crowned Section VI champion **Griffin LaPlante** (8th, 42-5) earned the top seed in the weight class in his first trip to the NYS tournament. Out of 21 athletes in the bracket, Griffin is the youngest and only one of four sophomores and younger. LaPlante has an opening round bye but will see the winner of Section I champion 16-seed Justin Gierum (11th, 28-3) from Fox Lane and local rival and sectional finalist 17-seed **Tremell Mathews** (11th, 38-9) from Niagara Wheatfield. Mathews, the 2021 sectional champion, will make his first appearance at the NYS tournament as well. Griffin does have all wins in three head to heads with Tremell this season, and also owns a head to head win over Gierum from the state dual meet tournament, 6-4.

LaPlante and Mathews each have a big opportunity to go far in the top side of the bracket that does not feature any wrestlers with past state tournament experience, however a potential quarterfinal matchup with Eastport-South Manor's (XI) Stephen Lukas could present a challenge for any opponent.

The bottom side of the bracket features all three of the returning 2020 state qualifiers in the weight class in the 2, 3, and 7-seed positions, none of whom are returning placers.

A path to the final is there for both Section VI wrestlers, and even when someone inevitably falls in or by the pre-quarterfinal, a big opportunity for two placers is still very realistic at this weight.

Div. II: Five 2020 state tournament qualifiers and three place winners highlight the small school bracket which includes two-time sectional champion and 2020 NYS 4th place winner **Aidan Gillings** from Newfane. 'Gilly' (9th, 38-1) is the 3-seed in the bracket behind fellow 2020 state placer Caden Bellis (10th, 37-1) from Tioga who is the 2-seed. Bellis handed Gilly his only loss of the season, a 4-3 decision in the state dual meet tournament on January 29th. Aidan will meet either Section III finalist Culley Bellino from Canastota or Section IX champion Rocco DeAveiro from Rondout Valley in the pre-quarters. A very possible Gillings/Bellis rematch might make for some serious fireworks.

Also representing Section VI is Chautauqua Lake junior 9-seed **Trent Burchanowski** (36-6). Burchanowski earned an auto-entry to states with his runner-up finish in the sectional championship. Burchanowski will meet Warrensburg's Section II champion Tanner McKenna (12th, 40-3) in the pre-quarter before a potential showdown with top seeded Section V champion Nick Noto from HF-L in the quarters.

Also keep an eye out for Mattituck's (XI) 2019 NYS 4th place winner Joe Sparacio in this bracket who has potential to upset things as the 4-seed. Eagle Acadmey's (PSAL) Cameron Mayfield is the other returning NYS place winner from 2020 in the bracket.

138

Div. I: Some of the most individually talented wrestlers in the entire tournament will convene at 138-pounds large schools this weekend. **Seven** returning state qualifiers and **four** place winners populate the 22-man ranks led by top seeded 2020 NYS champion PJ Duke from Minisink Valley (IX). Four-time Section VI champion **Collin Coughenour** (11th, 25-3) from Niagara Wheatfield is the 9-seed and will make his fourth appearance in Albany starting with a pre-quarters match against Section III

champion Manuel Gonzales from Indian River. The winner of the match will most likely face Duke in the quarterfinal round.

Wheatfield's **Te'Shaun Mathews** (10th, 37-6) will make his first appearance at the state tournament representing the Falcons as the 14-seed in the bracket. 'Juicy' will meet Section V runner-up 19-seed Tyler Jeffers from Churchville-Chili (12th, 33-6) in the opening round on Friday. Waiting for the winner of Mathews/Jeffers is 3-seeded George Oroudjov (12th, 32-0), the Section IV champion from Ithaca and returning 2020 NYS finalist. MacArthur's (VIII) Killian Foy and Attica/Batavia's (V) Casper Stewart are returning 3rd and 4th place winners respectively and are the 2 and 5-seeds, respectively in the weight.

There are a number of other returning qualifiers as well as first time competitors in this bracket that could make 138 Div. I possibly the best bracket in the tournament.

Div. II: Division II may not have the same the same top-4 place winner pedigree as Division I coming into the tournament, however **eight** total 2020 state tournament competitors and three place winners lead a very experienced small school group.

Iroquois senior and two-time sectional champion **Ryan Sweeney** (39-4) earned the top seed in the weight class with more than a podium placement in mind. Sweeney will meet the winner of returning qualifier 16-seed Cole Joseph (11th, 27-4) from Hackley School (AIS) and Eden's sectional finalist and 17-seed **Shane Walczyk** (12th, 40-5) in the pre-quarterfinal round. 2020 state placers Kieran Cullen (Greenville-II) and Craig Jablonski (Shoreham-Wading River-XI) are also in the top side of the bracket which could make for some big quarter and semifinals showdowns. Returning NYS 5th place winner Jordan Soriano from Clarke (VIII) is the 2-seed in the weight class.

By Saturday night this could be anyone's title to claim, and so could all seven of the other top podium spots.

145

Div. I: 145 presents another powerful lineup led by 2020 NYS finalist and University of North Carolina commit Jayden Scott from Rush-Henrietta (V) as the top seed in the weight class. Section VI representatives **Cam Catrabone** (10th, 42-1) from Williamsville North and **Gage LaPlante** (10th, 38-3) are two of the five past state qualifiers here and Cam is one of three returning placers with a 6th place finish in 2020.

The 3-seeded Section VI champion Catrabone will meet the winner of 14-seed Paul Lichter from MacArthur and 19-seed Nicholas Campanella from James Madison HS (PSAL) in the pre-quarter round. A quarterfinal bout would put Catrabone against either the Section V runner-up or Section II champion before a very possible semifinal showdown with 2020 NYS 7th place winner and 2-seed Angelo Centrone (12th, 35-1) from Mahopec (I) which would be a top-tier tournament bout.

In the top side of the bracket, sectional finalist LaPlante will look to disrupt things as the 5-seed in the weight class. Gage has a first round bye but will meet the winner of 12-seed Daniel Parker from Ithaca and 21-seed Matthew Masch from Section I Roy C. Ketcham HS. A pre-quarters win for LaPlante would most likely set up a rematch with Minisink's 4-seed Luke Greiner in the quarters. Greiner was a 3-1 decision winner in their meeting this season in the NYS dual meet championship semifinals. Besides Greiner, another first time state qualifier to keep a close eye on is Massapequa's (VIII) Anthony Conetta in the 10-seed spot. Conetta/Centrone could be big fireworks if they meet in the quarters.

Div. II: Seven past qualifiers or placers fill out the 22-man field in this weight with only one 2020 state placer, leaving a prime opportunity for one or both of Section VI's entries to reach the podium.

Maple Grove's **Luke Tomlinson** (12th, 41-1) will make his second appearance in Albany this time as the sectional champion representative. Tomlinson is the 8-seed in the weight class with a first round bye. Luke will meet Section III runner-up Aaron Briones (12th, 24-4) from SJ/SC in the pre-quarters round. Awaiting the winner of that match will most likely be top seeded returning NYS 3rd place winner Jackson Polo from Section VIII's Cold Spring Harbor in the quarterfinal.

Meanwhile, Newfane senior 19-seed **Adam Huntington** (31-6) will get his first ever states action with an opening round bout with Section XI champion 14-seed Joe Steimel (11th, 24-11) from S-WR. That winner will take on the very tough 3-seed Section III champion Sixx Cook from CVA, another in a long line of Cook brothers from Ilion in the quarterfinal round. Section IV champion Donovan Smith from Tioga is the 2-seed in the bracket.

152

Div. I: Some of the most seasoned state tournament veterans appear in this bracket as all seven of the returning state qualifiers are seniors and likewise all six of the 2020 place winners. Only five of the twenty entries in the bracket are juniors, the rest are seniors.

Three-time Section VI champion and 2020 NYS 5th place winner **Carson Alberti** (12th, 20-2) from West Seneca/Depew is the 3-seed overall in the weight class. Alberti will meet the winner of 14-seed Aslanbek Sharipov from Franklin D. Roosevelt HS (PSAL) and 19-seed Gordon Murray from Saratoga Springs (II) in the pre-quarter round. A win in that match would likely set up a quarterfinal showdown with fellow returning NYS top eight place winner Ben Rogers, the Nassau County champion from Wantagh (VIII).

Sweet Home's sectional finalist **Cam Millender** (11th, 27-11) is the 18-seed in the bracket with his first appearance at the state tournament coming up. Millender will meet Section X representative Rocco Ferriero (12th, 13-5) from Massena in the opening round. The winner gets a match with Arlington's (I) undefeated returning NYS 7th place winner Tim Bova in the pre-quarters.

Stay tuned for some very possible top-tier quarterfinal matches in this weight should Alberti/Rogers meet, should Bova meet past state qualifier and 7-seed Eric Tigue from Minisink, and should Brockport's (V) returning 8th place winner Isaiah Rodriguez (12-seed) meet 4-seeded Fox Lane NYS 5th place winner Jake Hoffman, all before the semis. The top seed in the bracket is Hilton's (V) unbeaten returning 3rd place winner Rocco Camillaci.

Div. II: State title hopeful **Dakota Mascho** (32-0) is the lone unbeaten wrestler in the field that includes six 2020 state qualifiers. The Portville senior is a returning NYS 5th place winner and will start the weekend as the 3-seed in the weight class. Mascho should be in favorable position to reach the semifinal round, assuming he collects wins in the pre-quarters and quarterfinal. Dakota will first meet the winner of 14-seed Anthony Evangelista from Port Jefferson (XI) and 19-seed Joey Reed from Section III's Mexico. A quarterfinal matchup would put Mascho against any three potential wrestlers who are all making their first appearances at states.

On the bottom side of the bracket, Pioneer's sectional finalist **Brady Heckathorn** (11th, 37-5) is the 7-seed and will take on Section IV champion Ryan Kennedy (12th, 29-10) in the pre-quarter. A win in that match will most likely put Heckathorn against the 2-seeded Ousmane Duncanson from Tioga in the quarterfinal round.

Alexander's (V) Mitch Gaiser is the 4-seed in the bracket and a returning NYS 6th place winner. Gaiser could meet in-section rival 5-seed Braidon Woodward from C-G, also a 2020 NYS qualifier, in the quarterfinals. Another Gaiser/Woodward showdown would be their fifth meeting of the season with the head to head record currently split, 2-2.

Div. I 160: Top seeded 2020 NYS champion Zack Ryder (Minisink) has over half as many points as the 2-seed in the bracket and is the odds-on favorite in the weight.

Niagara Falls junior **Mike Syposs** (11th, 30-6) has earned the 3-seed in the bracket coming off his first sectional title. Syposs will meet the winner of 19-seed Luke Ciolino from Massapequa and 14-seeded Wolverines teammate **Jesiere Carter** (12th, 29-6) in the pre-quarter. Carter and Syposs will each make their state tournament debuts in a bracket that features only three 2020 state tournament qualifiers which leaves an incredible opportunity to be had for Section VI and Niagara Falls to place both wrestlers in the top eight and possibly reach the Saturday morning semifinal.

The Syposs/Carter or Ciolino winner will get either Section I champion Dillon Carter from Yorktown or Section XI champion Tom Andria from Islip in the quarterfinal.

The only quarterfinal between returning state competitors in the bracket that could happen is if 2-seeded Section V champion Nick Sanko (Pittsford), defending NYS 4th place winner, meets returning qualifier Ethan Hart from Corning (IV) in that round.

Div. II: Top seeded 2020 NYS champion Carter Baer from Gouverneur (X) and returning 7th place finisher 2-seed Emmett Wood (Tioga) are the only two returning qualifiers and placers in the weight.

Section VI champion **Nick Brown** (12th, 31-5) is the 7-seed in the bracket will wrestle Suffolk County small school runner-up Anthony Pipia (11th, 29-5), the 10-seed, from Port Jefferson in the pre-quarter with the winner getting a bout with Wood in the quarters. For Brown, any placement at all this weekend would make him the first Griffin since Ryan Feltz in 2002 (3rd, 189) to make the podium at the NYS tournament.

Another Section VI on XI match will take place in the top side of the bracket between sectional finalist **Donald Bennett** from Pioneer (12th, 21-7) who is the 8-seed going into the weekend. Bennett will meet Pipia's counterpart in 9-seeded Section XI champion Joe Lacorte (12th, 26-2) from John Glenn HS in the pre-quarter. Likewise, the winner most likely gets the top seed in the quarters. An opportunity is there for one or both of WNY's representatives to place here this weekend.

172

Div. I: Grand Island senior **Brian Bielec** is the lone undefeated wrestler (42-0) left in WNY this season going into his third and final NYS tournament. The three-time Section VI champion is the 5-seed in the weight class with some other contenders appearing on his side of the bracket.

Bielec will see the winner of 21-seeded Jaiden Burdick (12th, 23-7) from Section III's Central Square and familiar foe **Evan Stencel** (11th, 42-9), the sectional runner-up from Lancaster who is the 12-seed in the weight. For the wrestler that moves on from that pre-quarter match, they will likely have to meet 4-seeded Section V champion Elijah Diakomihalis (9th, 28-1) from Hilton in the quarterfinal bout.

Besides Bielec, the only other wrestler in the bracket with 2020 states experience is top seeded returning NYS 5th place winner Mikey Altomer from Minisink. The 2- and 3-seeds on the bottom aren't returning qualifiers, though both are undefeated in Queensbury's (II) Dylan Schell in the 2-spot and Sayville's (XI) Mack Murtha as the 3-seed.

A final run at a state title and podium finish is on the line for Bielec, and a top placement for Stencel would be huge for the Legends going into next season.

Div. II: It's anybody's title and podium spots to take in the small school bracket where no 2020 state qualifiers return for the 2022 tournament. Section III wrestlers own the top 1 and 2-seed spots but Section VI champion **Tavio Hoose** (8th, 37-4) ascended to the 3-seed position for his first appearance in Albany. Hoose will meet the winner of the Section IX champion 14-seed Wyatt Konjas from Onteora or the 19-seed Trevor Harrington from Section IV's Sidney HS in the pre-quarter. Hoose has as good a shot as any to go deep into the championship side of the bracket with no other wrestlers with state tournament experience ahead of him.

Randolph senior **Luke Pagett** (34-3) earned an auto-entry to states with a runner-up performance in the sectional tournament. The 21-seed Pagett will take on 12-seed Ryan Mastropaolo (12th, 31-2) from Section VIII Island Trees HS in the preliminary round on Friday morning. Pagett could see Section II champion 5-seed Reed Douglas from Canajoharie/Fort Plain with an early round win.

189

Div. I: First time state tournament representatives **Jack MacDonald** from Orchard Park and **Chris Bargy** from Olean/Allegany-Limestone will represent Section VI in another wide open (for the most part) upper weight division. Central Square's top seeded returning NYS 3rd place winner Kole Mulhauser is the only returning past qualifier and place winner and is the likely favorite to capture a state title going into the weekend.

Sectional champion Bargy (11th, 32-6) is the 10-seed and will take on 7-seed Section V champion Joe Marcello (12th, 29-0) from Spencerport in the pre-quarter round. The winner there will likely see

2-seeded Section VIII champion Kwasi Bonsu from Baldwin in the quarters. Meanwhile on the top side of the bracket, 20-seeded MacDonald (10th, 27-5) will meet the 13-seed Connor McGannon (12th, 22-4) who is the Section I champion from Lakeland-Panas. That winner will meet Minisink's 4-seeded Andrew Filip in the quarterfinal round.

Div. II: Newfane's **Simon Lingle** (12th, 38-1) earned the 2-seed in the bracket after claiming the Section VI title and an auto-entry for his first trip to states. The top seed in the bracket is Section IV champion and 2020 NYS 4th place winner Gabriel Monroe from Windsor who is one of two returning qualifiers but the only place winner in the field.

Lingle will meet the winner of 15-seed Alon Alkeali from John Glenn and 18-seed Ivan Figueroa from Port Jervis in the pre-quarter round. A win there would put Lingle against either the Section I or II champion, and a likely semifinal could be against the 3-seed and returning state tournament qualifier Ethan Randall from CVA.

On the top side of the bracket, Barker/Royalton-Hartland's **Zack Hill** (12th, 31-9) is the 21-seed coming off an incredible run to the 'true 2nd' spot in Section VI two weekends ago. Hill will face 12-seeded Section XI champion Brad Brockhaus (12th, 9-1) from Southampton in the preliminary round with the winner of that match moving on to meet Section III runner-up 5-seed Jared Bilinski from Dolgeville.

215

Div. I: Returning state qualifiers take up three of the top four seeds in the weight led by unbeaten Minisink junior Ethan Gallo (34-0) who returns as the only state placer in the bracket, taking 6th in 2020.

Section VI champion **Kevin Daskavitz** (11th, 6-0) from Lockport may be primed to cause some damage in Albany as the 14-seed in the weight class in his first trip to states. Daskavitz will wrestle PSAL champion 19-seed Jake Gulino (12th, 21-2) from Tottenville in the preliminary round before possibly moving on to have a shot at the 3-seed Robert Smith from Huntington (XI). Daskavitz's size and athleticism may surprise some folks in Albany who may be wondering about his limited mat time this season. Also on the bottom of the bracket is 2-seed returning state qualifier and Section II champion Ryan Stein from Shaker.

Wheatfield's **Casey Robinson** (10th, 37-11) earned the 'true 2nd' in the sectional tournament and with it a trip to Albany. Robinson enters as the 21-seed and will wrestle Section II finalist Darrien Insogna (11th, 29-6) from Ballston Spa in the preliminary round.

It would be huge for Section VI to have one or both underclassmen place at a heavy weight that is usually dominated by outgoing seniors.

Div. II: Southwestern star athlete **Dontae Hoose** (12th, 38-1) is the 2-seed in the weight class looking to make a final run at an individual state title which would be the first for the Trojans since Matt Mazgaj in 2005. Hoose, a two-time sectional champion and 2020 NYS 6th place finisher is one of two returning qualifiers & placers in the weight; undefeated top seed Sam Sorenson (43-0) from Section III Homer is a retuning 5th place winner in the state.

In order to make it to the final, Hoose will of course have to advance out of the bottom side of the bracket. Dontae will meet the winner of 15-seed Sean Roberts from Locust Valley (VIII) and 18-seed Trey McGee from Northern Adirondack (VII) in the pre-quarter. Down the road, a possible semifinal against Section IV champion 3-seed Garrett Bidwell could be on deck for Dontae on Saturday morning.

Section VI cohort **Trevor Barry** (10th, 40-5) from Iroquois earned the 5-seed in the bracket. Barry will meet either the 12-seed Liam Abraham from Hackley School or 21-seed Luc Angus from John Glenn in the pre-quarters. A potential matchup in the quarterfinal with 4-seed Logan Marissal (12th, 29-1) from Hadley-Luzerne/Lake George (II) might be a big opportunity for the Chiefs' sophomore to land a spot in the Saturday morning semi, most likely against the strongman from Homer.

285

Div. I: Surprisingly, no 2020 state qualifiers appear in this bracket. However, it does look like there will be plenty of talent to make up for the overall lack of state tournament experience. The field features four unbeaten wrestlers, three with only one loss, and six more with only two or three losses on the season.

The third of Section VI's top three seeds in the tournament is Frontier senior **Konrad Krzyszton** (33-1) in the large school bracket. Konrad will meet the winner of 16-seed Roy Gamble from Massena and 17-seed Nicholas Rozo from Benjamin Cardozo HS (PSAL) in the pre-quarter round. A win in that match would guarantee for Krzyszton a quarterfinal showdown with one of the two representatives from Nassau County teams.

Lockport's sectional runner-up and auto-qualifier to Albany, senior 5-seed **Stefaan Fearon** (29-4), has a bye in the first round too. Fearon will meet either Section V runner-up 12-seed Bobby Foltz from Pittsford or 21-seed Dylan Page from Kellenberg HS (CHSAA). A potential quarterfinal showdown with 4-seeded Marc Berisha from Fox Lane could be a huge match, especially if Krzyszton is in position to make the semifinal as well. Could we get Konrad/Stefaan round five in the state semifinal?

Either way, at least one of the Section VI wrestlers is guaranteed to not make the final, however both are completely capable of earning at least a top eight place finish.

Div. II: Count the small school heavyweight bracket in as one that is essentially up for grabs as well. Only two past state tournament qualifiers return here, but neither are place winners. Warrensburg junior Tristen Hitchcock (11th, 43-2) is the top overall seed in the bracket. Section VI champion **Charles LaRose** (12th, 31-5) from Newfane will start the weekend as the 9-seed and meet Camden's Josh Salsman (11th, 32-9), the Section III runner-up, in the pre-quarter. Should Hitchcock and LaRose advance to the quarters, a very exciting bout could ensure with a big opportunity for LaRose to take the 'upset' victory.

Meanwhile, Randolph's **Ryan Carpenter** (11th, 23-8) is the 20-seed in the bracket entering as a 'true 2nd' winner at sectionals. Carpenter will take on returning qualifier Brody Fountain (12th, 18-4) from Malone (X) in the prelims. Carpenter could meet both returning qualifiers in the weight if he advances from the prelims to see 4-seeded Connor Bushey from Beekmantown (VII) in the quarterfinals.

Niagara Falls' Jaden Crumpler 2nd at state wrestling; 11 locals place

February 28, 2022

A total of 11 Greater Niagara Region wrestlers placed at the NYPHSAA individual championships this weekend in Albany.

Niagara Falls' Jaden Crumpler was the best of the bench, taking second in the Division I (large schools) 118-pound bracket. The junior was the No. 6 seed and advanced the semifinals with a pair of wins Friday.



He started his Saturday with a 2-0 sudden-death overtime victory over second-seeded Christian Lievano (Ward Melville) but fell to No. 1 Matt Marlow (Northport) by 3-1 decision in the championship. Crumpler made it four straight years — not including the COVID-canceled 2020-21 season — with a Wolverine in a state championship match and helped Niagara Falls finish top-10 in team scoring at the state tournament for the first time in program history.

The other two locals to make semifinals, Newfane's Aidan Gillings and Simon Lingle, lost their first matches Saturday and ended up placing fourth.

Gillings, a freshman, was Division II's No. 3 seed at 132 and fell in the semis by 11-8 decision to No. 2 Caden Bellis (Tioga), who had handed Gillings his lone loss of the season up to that point, a 4-3 decision in the state dual tournament. Gillings bounced back to beat No. 5 Tristan Petretti (Shoreham-Wading River) 9-4 after a tiebreak period. He then fell to top-seeded Nick Noto (Honeoye Falls-Lima) by 10-2 major decision in the third-place match.

Lingle, No. 2 at 189, dropped a tight 6-5 semifinal decision to third-seeded Ethan Randall (Central Valley Academy) before beating No. 14 Troy Austin (Whitehall), 2-0. The senior then fell 3-0 to No. 6 Justin Soriano (Clarke) in their battle for third.

Also finishing fourth were Lockport's Stefaan Fearon (D-1 285) and Medina's Gavin Ciarfella (D-2 126), both of whom were knocked out of title contention with losses Friday.

Fearon, a senior and the No. 5 seed, won three straight wrestleback matches by decision Saturday — 5-1 over No. 18 Joel Venables (Carmel), 3-2 over No. 8 Jacob Maiorano (Hewlett Woodmere) and 6-4 over No. 3 Stephan Monchery (Middletown) — before meeting a familiar foe for third place, top-

seeded Konrad Krzyszton (Frontier). Fearon handed Krzyszton his first loss this season in the Section VI Class A championships, but Krzyszton returned the favor in the following state qualifier and scored the decisive victory Saturday, 7-3.

Ciarfella, the eighth seed and a sophomore, opened Saturday with a 9-1 major decision over No. 12 Evan Shriberg (Locust Valley) before earning a pair of close decisions — 3-2 over No. 9 Dylan Devine (Schalmont) and 2-1 over No. 3 Tyler Roe (Tioga) — to earn a spot in the third-place match. He fell there to fourth-seeded Trey Kimball (Camden) by 3-0 decision.

Starpoint's LaPlante brothers, Griffin and Gage, both finished fifth, as did Grand Island's Brian Bielec and Medina's Dominick Callara. Newfane's Charles Larose took sixth while Niagara Falls' Amarfio Reyonlds placed seventh.

Griffin LaPlante, the top-seed at D-1 132, started Saturday with a 14-0 major decision over No. 12 Taylor Beaury (Saratoga Springs) before battling to a 6-4 sudden victory over No. 5 Darren Walker (Brentwood). He was then pinned by second-seeded Alex Booth (Indian Rivers) in 2 minutes, 48 seconds. The eighth-grader won the fifth-place match by forfeit over No. 20 Jake Frustace (Arlington).

Gage, No. 5 at D-1 145, won a 6-0 decision over No. 17 Sean Degl (Iona Prep) but fell 11-6 to No. 8 Justin Klein (Miller Place), sending the sophomore right to the fifth-place match. There, he earned a 7-5 sudden victory over second-seeded Angelo Centrone (Mahopac).

Bielec, a senior who took his first loss of the season Friday, was the No. 5 seed at D-1 172. He started Saturday with two wins — a 10-2 major decision over No. 9 Travis Shaver (Plainedge) and a 5-3 decision over No. 20 Eric Wetherbee (Sachem North) — before falling to No. 6 Jake Scherbyn (Spencerport), 7-0. Bielec then earned another major decision in the fifth-place match, 9-1 over No. 3 Macklin Murtha (Sayville).

Callara, a junior, was No. 5 at D-2 102 and earned a 15-0 tech fall over No. 16 Ciaran Egan (Pleasantville) in 3 minutes, 25 seconds to start Saturday's wrestlebacks. He then split a pair of 7-2 decisions, losing to No. 9 Jacob McVige (Honeoye Falls-Lima) but beating No. 6 Anthony Valls (Chenango Valley) for fifth.

Larose, ninth at D-2 285, worked extra time during his first two Saturday matches, earning a 5-3 sudden victory over No. 14 John Zabielski-Ramos (North Shore) and a 4-0 decision after a tiebreak period against No. 5 Noah Wazinski (North Rose-Wolcott). The senior then fell by pin in 1 minute, 54

seconds to No. 19 Evan Day (Salem Cambridge) and dropped a tight 2-1 decision to No. 6 Mason Peterson (Marcus Whitman/Penn Yan) in the fifth-place match.

Reynolds, a junior and the No. 8 seed at D-1 126, pinned No. 19 Luke Nieto (Plainedge) in 1 minute, 43 seconds before dropping a 3-2 decision to No. 5 Justin Fortugno (Briarcliff-Byram Hills-Valhalla-Westlake). He then topped No. 6 Ayden Robles (Shenendehowa), 1-0, in the seventh-place match for the final placing position.

Niagara Falls junior Mike Syposs (No. 3 D-1 160) and senior Jesiere Carter (No. 14 D-1 160) were both eliminated with losses in their first matches Saturday, as were Newfane senior Adam Huntington (No. 19 D-2 145) and Niagara Wheatfield's Collin Coughenour (junior, No. 9 D-1 138) and Te'Shaun Mathews (sophomore, No. 14 D-1 138).

GNN WRESTLER OF THE YEAR: Confidence carried Niagara Falls' Jaden Crumpler to state finals

Niagara Falls' Crumpler named GNN wrestler of the year

By Nick Sabato April 7, 2022

“Why can’t we be the studs?”

That was the question Niagara Falls wrestling coach Josh Eagan asked himself repeatedly as he scoured the 118-pound brackets for the Division 1 state tournament. Eagan never saw a dominant wrestler in the weight class and knew Jaden Crumpler had a chance to win it all.

Crumpler had been a sectional champion prior to this season, but he had never been to states. That didn’t stifle his swagger or



belief that he could win the tournament. He may not have won a state title this year, but he was on the doorstep.

The Niagara Falls junior was the 118-pound runner-up, losing a 3-1 decision to Northport's Matt Marlow in the waning moments of the final. It was the capper of a prolific campaign, during which he went 32-3 and won Section VI Division 1 and Class AA championships.

The accolades matched the attitude and now Crumpler has been selected as the Greater Niagara Newspapers wrestler of the year.

"Going into the tournament I was really confident," Crumpler said. "I was watching a lot of people I thought I could beat. So I was going into every match feeling confident, feeling strong. I was feeling good before the tournament, so I knew I'd go far. I think feeling confident brought me far."

The natural ability to win a state championship was already there, as was the work ethic during practice. But entering the season, Crumpler did not possess the discipline to build endurance, partly coming from lacking healthy eating habits to make weight for matches. He always made his weight, but it was typically a challenge and he wasn't at his peak when he trimmed.

After all, Crumpler was a defending sectional champion and went 10-1 during the COVID-abbreviated season. He didn't think he could lose. But within the first few weeks, it was obvious Crumpler didn't have the gas tank to pair with his talent.

Crumpler was running out of steam late in matches and it finally cost him in an overtime loss to Chautauqua Lake's Jordan Joslyn in the semifinals of the Linda C. Knuutila Memorial Tournament in December. He would lose another tight match to Lancaster's Myles Gronowski as the top-seeded Wolverines were stunned in the sectional dual semifinals.

That's when his season began to shift. Crumpler improved his diet and built his endurance through extra practice. He began to stay within 5 pounds of his target weight and he did not lose a match before the state final, rattling off 17 consecutive wins.

"We let him and we kept letting him hear after that," Eagan said. "... You need to be working hard in practice the week before so a couple days before, you can have your body ready. His body wasn't ready and it didn't have anything to do with not working hard. It was him not being smart with his nutrition. We monitored it a lot more closely afterwards."

Crumpler started to build momentum, winning eight of those 17 matches by fall and having the endurance to close five of by decision, including two in the state tournament.

“It’s hard to beat people without endurance,” Crumpler said. “I knew I had the technique to beat people, but as long as I have my endurance, I thought I could beat anyone. ... At the finals match, I was confident.”

He scored the match-clinching takedown with 1 minute, 28 seconds remaining against Sachem East’s John Tietjen in the quarterfinals and then recorded a takedown 36 seconds into overtime to defeat Ward Melville’s Christian Lievano 2-0 in the semifinals.

“He wasn’t emptying the tank early in the match,” Eagan said. “He was more methodical. We had gameplans going into each match. In the semifinals, we told him to keep it close and it’s going to come down to a takedown at the end of the match or overtime.”

Now that Crumpler has tasted the state final, the next goal is to win it next season. Eagan does not envision his pupil will make a big jump in weight next year and the talent is already there after losing a 3-1 decision to Marlow on a takedown with 7 seconds left in the championship.

Crumpler said 80% of his emotions after the match were heartbreak, but now he is putting all of those feelings toward motivation for next year.

Winning a state championship would put Crumpler — who is 72-16 in his varsity career — in a rare company. Current University of Oklahoma standout Willie McDougald is the only other Niagara Falls wrestler to win a state title, having won in 2018 and 2020.

“I think he’s got to get a little better on bottom because a couple of close matches he lost because he couldn’t get out,” Eagan said. “He’s got to stop relying on athleticism on bottom and using technique, but it’s nothing dramatic. He’s been wrestling since he was 5, so you’re not going to make a drastic change in technique. ... If he hits the weights, those moves he hits are going to work better.”

The rest of the GNN all-area wrestling team

• **Brian Bielec, Sr., Grand Island:** Nobody in Grand Island history had more wins than Bielec. He finished his six-year varsity career with 197 wins and went 46-2 this season. Both losses came in the Division 1 state tournament after starting 44-0, but Bielec earned a fifth-place finish at 172 pounds. Bielec recorded 34 pins this season, tied for seventh in the state, and went 81 consecutive matches without being pinned. He is a three-time overall Section VI champion and a four-time Class A sectional champion.



• **Dominick Callara, Jr., Medina:** Callara went 28-5 this season and took seventh at 102 pounds at the Division 2 state tournament. Each loss this season came to a state placewinner. He went 20-1 during the regular season, finishing second at the Section VI Division 2 and Class C/D tournaments. Callara had 16 wins by fall and nine came in less than a minute. He was a 2021 sectional champion.

• **Gavin Ciarfella, So., Medina:** In his first season after transferring from Roy-Hart, Ciarfella went 34-4 and placed fourth at 126 pounds at the Division 2 state tournament. He recorded 15 wins by fall and was not pinned until the state quarterfinals, but responded by winning three consecutive matches to reach the third-place match. Ciarfella also rallied from a sectional semifinal loss to win the third- and second-place matches to qualify for states. He is a two-time Niagara-Orleans League champion.

• **Collin Coughenour, Jr., Niagara Wheatfield:** Few collect sectional titles like Coughenour. He won his fourth Section VI championship this season and is a two-time Class A sectional champion. Coughenour went 26-5 this season winning the 138-pound Class A sectional title, while also winning the Division 1 sectional crown by defeating teammate Te'Shaun Mathews in overtime. He also advanced to the state quarterfinals before bowing in the consolation rounds.

• **Stefaan Fearon, Sr., Lockport:** Among the most explosive heavyweight wrestlers in the state, Fearon won 14 matches by pin and five by major decision. He went 33-6 overall and was the fourth-place finisher at 285 pounds during the Division 1 state tournament. Fearon won the Class AA sectional tournament and was second at the overall sectional tournament. After losing in the state quarterfinals, Fearon won three consecutive matches before falling in the third-place match. He was the 2021 285-pound sectional champion.

- **Aidan Gillings, Fr., Newfane:** After taking second at sectionals last season, Gillings rebounded to become one of the top wrestlers in Western New York. The freshman finished 41-3, winning the Section VI Division 2 and Class C/D championships at 132 pounds while also finishing fourth at states. He started the season 32-0 and his first two losses came to Tioga's Caden Bellis, once at the state dual tournament and again in the state semifinals. Gillings recorded 26 pins, including first-round falls in all three of his matches at the C/D tournament.
- **Gage LaPlante, So., Starpoint:** LaPlante won his second Class A sectional title and qualified for the state tournament for the second time in his career. He went 41-5, winning his first 29 matches of the season. LaPlante took seventh place at 145 pounds in the Division 1 state tournament, defeating Mahopac's Angelo Centrone in a 7-5 overtime match in the final match. He had 19 wins via pin, five by technical fall and four by major decision. He was not pinned at 145 pounds all season, and just once total.
- **Griffin LaPlante, 8th, Starpoint:** A runner-up finish at sectionals as a seventh-grader launched LaPlante to become one of the top rising wrestlers in the state. He went 46-7, winning championships at the Division 1 and Class A sectional meets, as well as winning an ECIC title. LaPlante was the top overall seed at 132 pounds at states, finishing fifth overall. He went 20-5 in the first month of the season, then rattled off 23 consecutive wins before the state quarterfinals. After losing by technical fall in the quarterfinals, LaPlante won a 14-0 major decision and an overtime win in back-to-back matches.
- **Charles Larose, Sr., Newfane:** Larose built on a 2021 sectional championship by posting the best season of his career. The senior went 34-8, winning the Division 2 and Class C/D sectional tournaments and finishing sixth in the state at 285 pounds. Larose reached the state quarterfinals before losing, but scored back-to-back overtime wins in the consolation bracket to stay alive. He also notched a third-period fall in the final match to clinch Newfane's win over Falconer in the Division 2 sectional dual finals. He earned 24 falls, including pins in the first seven matches of the season.

• **Simon Lingle, Sr., Newfane:** Prior to this season, Lingle had never won a sectional title nor reached the finals. But this year he won the 189-pound titles at the Division 2 and Class C/D tournaments, while losing one match before the state semifinals. Lingle finished the year 41-3 and took fourth at states, losing a one-point match in the semifinals. All three losses came to state placewinners, while winning 21 matches via fall. He became one of the top defensive wrestlers in the state, with 11 matches decided by three points or less.

• **Amarfio Reynolds, Jr., Niagara Falls:** Beating Reynolds was a task few accomplished this

season, when he put up a 33-3 record, with two of his losses coming at states. He won his second overall Section VI championship and his second Class AA title, while being the 126-pound seventh-place finisher in his second state tournament appearance. The junior won 19 straight matches before falling in the state quarterfinals. Three of his matches at states were decided by one point, including a 1-0 win over Shenendehowa's Ayden Robles in the seventh-place match.

• **Mike Syposs, Jr., Niagara Falls:** Syposs had a strong regular season, but when he jumped to 160

pounds for the postseason, he became a different wrestler. He went 24-6 between 145 and 152 pounds during the regular season but won his first seven postseason matches at 160. Syposs finished the year 31-8, capturing the Section VI Division 1 and Class AA titles after not placing last season. He defeated teammate Jesiere Carter in the finals of both sectional tournaments and again in the second round at states.



WNY Wrestlers, Coaches, Contributors Honored With Postseason Awards

The 17th Annual WNY Wrestling Coaches Association Awards Banquet was held on Sunday, March 6th at Ilio DiPaolo's Restaurant in Blasdell to recognize the outstanding wrestlers, coaches, and contributors of the 2021-2022 high school wrestling season in WNY. The WNYWCA hosts a number of fundraising events throughout the year to help support area wrestling. The annual banquet recognizes award winners as well as the recent sectional champions, state tournament qualifiers, and state place winners. New inductees to the WNY Wrestling Hall of Fame are



also recognized for their services and contributions to high school wrestling at the banquet each year.

The following individuals were recognized for their outstanding effort and contributions by the WNYWCA:

Hall of Fame inductees

Jim Kloc – wrestler – Iroquois High School

Jason Wartinger – wrestler – Cheektowaga Central High School

Kyle Colling – wrestler – Pioneer High School

Dan Fire – coach – North Tonawanda High School

Norm Thomas – contributor/official/coach

2021-2022 outstanding wrestlers

Division I ‘Champion of Champions’ – **Konrad Krzyszton, Frontier**

Division II ‘Champion of Champions’ – **Nick Brown, Springville**

Outstanding Female Wrestler of the Year – **Tina Evans, West Seneca/Depew**

Contributors

Al Feuz Memorial Contributor of the Year – **Brian LaPlante**

Ilio DiPaolo Family Commitment to Wrestling Award – **Scotty James**

Jon Vesper Memorial Award – **Dave Recor, West Seneca/Depew**

WNYWCA Media Award – **Frank Wolf, WNY Athletics**

Coach of the Year awards

Rookie Head Coach – **Josh Eagan, Niagara Falls**

Assistant Coach – **Don McCoy, Niagara Falls**

Niagara Frontier League – **Wally Maziarz, North Tonawanda**

Niagara-Orleans – **Mike Carlo, Wilson**

ECIC I – **John Chowske, Frontier**

ECIC II – **Steve Hart, Starpoint**

ECIC III – **Chris Edwards, Pioneer**

CCAA Div. I – **Drew Wilcox, Falconer/Cassadaga Valley**

CCAA Div. II – **Matt Milne, Portville**

Msg. Martin High School Athletic Association – **Mike Messore, St. Francis**



WNY Wrestling Hall of Fame member coach Dan Fire and 2021-2022 WNYWCA Media Award winner Frank Wolf

'He's going to give everything': OU wrestling's Willie McDougald maximizing opportunity as Sooners' 149-pound fill-in

With No. 9 Missouri pulling away from No. 21 Oklahoma in their Jan. 20 dual, the Sooners needed a huge upset victory from redshirt freshman Willie McDougald to keep themselves within striking distance.

McDougald came through for OU in the 149-pound matchup, taking down Missouri's No. 21-ranked Josh Edmond in his first college start.



Trailing late in the third round, McDougald slipped free of Edmond, granting the newcomer a point to force overtime. McDougald scored a riding time advantage in the additional period to help the Sooners come within one point of the Tigers after they trailed 9-5.

“The crowd as the match went on definitely got me into it,” McDougald said. “That was one of the best things I’ve ever felt.”

Though OU ended up losing to Missouri 23-14, McDougald’s victory was a significant bright spot. Given his acclaimed background, his ability to score such an upset isn’t all that surprising.

McDougald hails from Niagara Falls, New York, about 20 miles northwest of Buffalo. The former Niagara Falls High School standout was a three time All-American and two time New York state champion, earning him the No. 17 ranking nationally in the 2020 recruiting class.

As a high school senior, McDougald’s recruitment was altered by COVID-19. Though he was unable to visit OU, he was aware of the wrestling program’s prestige.

Like McDougald, Sooners coach Lou Rosselli began his career in the Buffalo area and took home two state championships in high school. Rosselli was inducted into the Greater Buffalo Sports Hall of Fame in 2009.

Since his days on the mat in New York, Rosselli has coached 36 wrestlers to the NCAA Championships in his six seasons at OU and was also the USA Freestyle Wrestling Coach of the Year in 2007. The Buffalo connection, combined with Rosselli’s coaching accolades, proved enticing and landed McDougald in Norman.

“I knew he was an Olympian and I knew he coached Olympians,” McDougald said. “I knew he was who I wanted to wrestle for.”

The 149-pound class has been a revolving door this season for OU, which has started three wrestlers in the weight class.

No. 14-ranked Mitch Moore was the Sooners starter to begin the season, going 10-4 before suffering an injury during a match at the Cliff Keen Invitational in early December. The redshirt senior has missed OU’s last seven matches.

In Moore's absence, Oklahoma continues to be successful in the 149-pound class. Redshirt senior Dom Demas, a two-time 141-pound Big 12 Champion, went 3-1 there before he was also forced off the mat by an injury.

McDougald was next on the depth chart and has filled in admirably.

"I think he's grown in confidence," Rosselli said. "I'm confident that Willie will perform. I think Willie loves wrestling and I think he's tough, and I'm excited to watch him go out and compete. He's going to give everything he's got to give, and if he gets himself into a nice little war, I think it'd be good for him."

In his true freshman season, McDougald only saw action in an extra match against Stanford, winning 9-3, but he made his 2022 debut in the Sooners' starting lineup against Missouri and defeated Edmond. According to McDougald, the two knew each other from high school wrestling events and he enjoyed taking Edmond down.

McDougald won his next match against Dillon Nichols 15-2 when the Sooners traveled to wrestle Northern Illinois on Jan. 23. McDougald says his constant practice against Moore and Demas — two of the best college wrestlers nationally, in his opinion — gives him confidence to wrestle anyone in the country.

"Those dudes are so good," McDougald said. "Competing with them everyday took me to another level."

Now at 2-0 on the season, McDougald has a chance to earn his second ranked win when he meets Iowa State's No. 21-ranked Jarrett Degen on Friday. Degen is 12-1 this season, winning his last eight matches.

Even going into a match against an imposing opponent, McDougald remains calm, and ready to take care of business. Despite his youth, he's confident and poised heading into his next match.

"I try to never get too worked up for my matches," McDougald said. "I've been training at a high level for a very long time. I knew whenever I was getting my shot to get into the starting lineup, I'd be ready."