

THE AAAAA WRESTLING REPORT: 2009 STATE TOURNAMENT EDITION

By Dr. Truth

With tons of help from ANDHAN, Skinnyposts and FBennett

You should know the routine by now: We are not experts, and this is not the gospel. We have tried to use the data available to us, but please keep in mind that this report is nothing more than an opinion. In the end, WE stand by the predictions and will be held accountable for them. Nonetheless, the primary purpose of this AAAAA Wrestling Report is to serve as a resource for those attending the AAAAA Tournament from across the State, to help identify the many superb wrestlers who compete in Class AAAAA and to lend some perspective to the State Tournament. We hope you enjoy it. Before we get too far along I need to recognize the guys who made this possible. ANDHAN, Skinnyposts and FBennett, without this group of guys and their knowledge this would not have been possible. This is a group effort and I say Thank You for all of your contributions and others who sent me pm's and emails like, mce2x, georgiagator1, cnsmuck and the wrestling expert. Thank you to Al Blashaw and Cliff Fretwell for their never ending contributions toward making things better for Georgia Wrestling. Last but certainly not least The Godfather of Georgia Wrestling, The Legend, my mentor and friend Bob Berg, you are the best, I appreciate your encouragement to do this, you may see a little bit of Berg Style in this report and I guess we all have a tendency to mimic our idols.

Here are the teams most likely to be in the hunt for the Top 12 spots at The Traditional State Tournament title, followed by a weight class by weight class assessment:

The Teams Most Likely to be in the Hunt for The Top 12 Spots at The Traditional State Tournament

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|--|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Camden County (2008 – 12 th) | Harrison (2008 – 2 nd) | Parkview (2008 – 5 th) | |
| Centennial (2008 – 6 th) | Kennesaw Mountain (2008 – 14 th) | Pope (2008 – tie 9 th) | |
| Collins Hill (2008 – 1 st) | Kell (2008 – 4 th) | Union Grove (2008 – 3 rd) | |
| Grayson (2008 – 22 nd) | Peachtree Ridge (2008 – 8 th) | Walton (2008 – 7 th) | [teams in alphabetical order] |

A Quick Comment: Collins Hill, Union Grove and Pope would appear to have the most depth, which can carry a team a long ways in the AAAAA State tourney. Just look back at any of the traditional team State champs over the past decade (Harrison, Starr's Mill, Sequoyah, McIntosh, Parkview, Collins Hill, McEachern) and you'll see that same level of depth. Still, the balanced fire power of teams like Centennial, Kennesaw Mountain, Camden and Grayson cannot be overlooked, and with a few bracket breaks and a few upsets, the 2009 AAAAA team title chase could wind up being a 5+ team free-for-all. So, too, the talented crews from Walton, Peachtree Ridge, Kell, Parkview and Harrison can certainly run with the big dogs, and if they bring their "A" games, the competition for spots in the top 10 could intensify significantly. In the end, as is true in most years, the top 3 teams will have all earned their positions, through 3 days of very tough wrestling. When the final mats are rolled up, Coach Ramos and The Eagles of Collins Hill will once again take the 1st Place Trophy home.

2009 AAAAA 103 Pound Weight Class Front Runners

Partridge (10) Collins Hill (KOH 1st 2008)
Sloan (12) Pebblebrook (103-4th AAAAA)

The Storyline: In the movie "The Usual Suspects", Kevin Spacey turns out to be the dreadful Kaiser Souza. You don't learn this until the last few minutes of the movie as he is walking down the street and he loses the limp and straightens out his hand. That's where we are in this weight class. The champ will be a complete mystery until the last few seconds of the 3rd period and the final whistle is blown. As of today the Front Runners have separated themselves from the rest of the field. Leading the pack is Area 7 Champ and East Sectional Champ Partridge of Collins Hill. He has been nothing short of stellar this year, currently 49-4, with all 4 losses coming out of state. He also took 5th at Toshiba in Kansas City, and 1st at Sham Slam. He holds 2 wins over Trott this year 8-6 at State Duals and 9-0 in the Sectional Final, he has defeated Cross 8-3 and two tech fall victories over Coltek 16-0 and 17-1, as well as 2 pins over Area 1 Champ Sharp and a 15-4 major over Brown from Lowndes. The impressive 11-4 win over Bullock in the sectional semis proved that he can wrestle with the bigger, stronger 3-pounders. The road to gold will not be easy, the late comer to the dance is Sloan, at 36-1 on the year with a solid 2nd at Lovejoy, 1st at Cobb County, Area and Sectional where he pinned Lutz and Sanders. The 1st at Cobb County where he beat Christakis and pinned Smith has shown he is a serious podium candidate. That performance coupled by his Sectional curtain call got him a lot of attention and he appears to be peaking at the right time. In the finals at state Sloan will be huge, fully hydrated and a very dangerous opponent. If this finals match up happens, there should be plenty of fireworks. When the smoke clears and the body-parts are identified, we are calling for Partridge to fly away with the gold. We debated this one for a while, because of Sloan's recent accomplishments. With that being said the group listed below have some plans and dreams of their own, so looking ahead to the semis could be a bad idea.

103 Placement Favorites

Trott (9) Camden County (Kids State Placer)
Bullock (10) Dacula
Lutz (9) Etowah (Kids State Champ)

Sanders (10) Kell
Cross (11) North Forsyth (103-sq)
Smith (10) Marietta

This group is filled with talent that could upset the apple cart and ruin plans quickly. Trott has seen Partridge twice this year and had a close match at state duals, but the sectional match was dominated by Partridge. Trott the Area 3 Champ took 3rd at the very tough Zac Jarzynka in FL. Coming off of an impressive USA Kids Career he has given Partridge his toughest match in Georgia this year. His bracket path to gold is filled with detours galore, he starts the tournament with Coltek and then he's looking at Lutz, Sloan or Bullock. Bullock took 1st at The Titan, 3rd at Gwinnett County, 1st at Columbia County Classic, 1st at Coal Mountain, 2nd at King of the Mat in NC and holds three decisions over Cross 4-2, 6-5 and 4-0 and will have to go through Sharp, Sloan and the winner of Lutz/Trott to make the finals. Bullock is a big physical 103 and will play a major part in the podium when this one is over (read on and I will explain). Lutz has taken some losses this year in the form of pins, one to AAAA stud Christakis of Allatoona, which he avenged with an 11-3 victory the next day, one to Smith of Marietta at Area Duals, which he returned the favor at Area and he suffered a pin at Sectional to Sloan. However when Lutz is on, he's really on, he took 1st at The Hooch, The Mohawk, Allatoona and Sequoyah and is the Area 5 Champ. If he is to get through the land mines planted for him in this bracket, he will need to put his sectional performance behind him and get back to the Lutz that we all know he is. I suspect we will see a great performance from Lutz at the arena. Cross took 2nd at The Titan, 3rd at The Hooch, 2nd at Starrs Mill, 2nd at Coal Mountain and 1st at The Santa Slam; he lost an 8-3 decision to Partridge in January, but lost 15-4 to Partridge at Area finals. Cross seems to be on the rise and headed for stardom, but may have to wait one more year before reaching his full potential. Sanders season has been all over the board; he took 2nd at Whitewater Wildcat Brawl, and is the Area 6 Champ with a finals victory over Coltek 10-4. Sanders first round match up with the very athletic Smith of Stephenson can't be overlooked and could play a significant role in how this bracket shapes out for the cons. Smith, 2nd at Knoxville Catholic, 2nd at Sequoyah, 2nd at Cobb County and 1st at The War Eagle and has a win by pin over Lutz at Area Duals, but lost to Lutz at Traditional Area by pin and then came back to beat Lutz in the Sectional Con Finals 11-6. The second round matches will be huge in this bracket with the losers meeting up in the consolation quarters and someone is going home without hardware, hence the comment regarding Bullock and his part in podium placement. Keep a close eye on this group as any of them could be in the finals when it's all said and done. Now let's roll to the 12's.

2009 AAAAA 112 Pound Weight Class Front Runners

St. James (11) Centennial (112-2nd/Region Champ; '07 103-sq)
Isburgh (11) Grayson (119-sq; '07 103-sq/Region Champ)

The Storyline: I'm going to show my age a little here. The chorus to Buffalo Springfield's classic hit "For What It's Worth" is, "***I think it's time we stop, hey, what's that sound, everybody look what's going down***". That was the case last year when BSJ upset TJ Mitchell in the qtr finals 4-3. It is the only loss Mitchell has had in Georgia since starting high school. BSJ went on to finish a very respectable 2nd behind Sartain. Well there are no bridesmaid plans for this 112 superstar this year. He has been untouchable this year winning 1st at The Hooch, Spencerport (Spencerport, NY beating 2 NY State runner-ups in the process), North Metro, Sequoyah, The Crossbone, Area and Sectional. He is 56-1 (that loss was to Dyer of Vestavia Hills, AL) and looks to be zoned in on finishing with a bang. Isburgh, the Area 8 Champion is a big 112 and wrestles with a very aggressive style that is hard to handle. He took 1st at Creekview, 1st at Coal Mountain (112 beating Wilson 10-6), 2nd at Gwinnett Co losing a heartbreaker to Hunt from Dacula and 2nd at Starrs Mill losing to Anderson from Hiram, 4th at North Metro, 2nd at Loganville and most of these were at 119. In a weight class where size definitely matters, Isburgh has the advantage. His sectional Championship win over Sawchuk has pushed him into the spotlight and center stage for a showdown with St.James. But the song we expect to be heard this year should be Roy Jones Jr singing "***Can't Be Touched***" for BSJ as he drapes the gold around his neck. Pay close attention to Isburgh's route to the finals, it is the tougher of the two. Now for some more good music, let's bring on the band.

112 Placement Favorites

Nickles (10) Pope (KOH Champ)
Sawchuk (12) Collins Hill (KOH-1st08)
Herrera (11) Kennesaw Mountain (103-6th)

Mosher (12) Harrison (112-5th; '07 6th 103 AAA)
Wilson (11) Roswell (119-sq)
Durden (9) Lowndes

Nickles has had a roller coaster ride this year with wins over Mosher, 5-4 in 2OT and he blanked Mosher 10-0 at Sectional, Sawchuk 10-4, Wilson 5-4 and Herrera 1-0, he also lost to Sawchuk at State Duals 3-1 and has given St.James his toughest match of the year a 6-5 loss in the Sectional Final. Sawchuk has managed to compile a 27-6 record this year while splitting time with Doyague. He majored Kane 13-3 and pinned Krantz on his way to the Sectional Finals where he lost a 6-2 decision to Isburgh. He took 2nd at Sham Slam and has a previously mentioned 3-1 win over Nickles at State Duals and a pin over Durden. Mosher, 1st at Area, 3rd at Cobb County has been up and down as well. He owns a 2-1 decision over Herrera at Area but his Sectional performance, 4th, losing to Nickles and Wilson with a combined score of 20-0 has left some questions and now he must beat Sawchuk and St.James to make the finals. Herrera is 51-18 going into State, 2nd at Area and 5th at McCallie, 6th at Tiger Classic in NC, 5th at Zac Jarznyka and was 1-1 with Nickles in head to head competition, but recent losses to Mosher, Doyague, Isburgh, Wilson and St.James have kept him from stardom. His projected 2nd round match up with Nickles will break their tie for the year, but he must get through Krantz in round one first. Wilson dropped to 112 late in the season to claim 1st at The Titan, 1st at Raider Rumble, 3rd at Red Rumble, 2nd at Coal Mountain and he also finished 2nd at The Hooch behind Lazor and 3rd at Area. After losing in the Sectional to Mosher 7-4, he went on to decision Crusselle, Herrera and avenge the Mosher loss with a 10-0 statement in the con finals to claim 3rd at Sectional. He also holds a 4-2 win over 119 projected placer Stringer and could be the surprise wrestler of this weight class. Rounding out this group is Durden at 50-14 on the year; he finished 3rd at Raider Rumble, 3rd at Valdosta Wildcat, 3rd at Blue Devil and 4th at Fayette County Christmas Tournament. He has a pin over Kane, but lost early at sectional to Crusselle and then fought his way through the cons to take 6th behind Herrera. This group of 6 all seem to be within a takedown or reversal of each other and I predict a lot of very close matches. Bring on the 19's.

2009 AAAAA 119 Pound Weight Class Front Runners

Mitchell (11) Collins Hill (112-3rd/Region Champ; '07 1st 103 AA)
Hunt (12) Dacula (119-1ST Region Champ AAAAA)

The Storyline: When you hear the names Michael Jordan, Pete Rose, Dale Earnhardt and Tiger Woods, you should think of two things 1) a competitive nature unmatched by few and 2) they're winners. The desire to win and setting the bar high are traits carried by both of our front runners in this weight class. In a weight class filled with 3 State Champs and a total of 5 State Placers and 6 returning Region Champs, this one is deep with talent. We kick off the weight class with Mitchell (Area 7 Champ, East Sectional Champ). Since his days of USA Wrestling there may be only 3 or 4 states this young man has not wrestled in. With two victories over Spradlin (7-2 & 10-5) and a 2nd place finish at Toshiba in Kansas City, 1st at Sham Slam he has stepped up front and center as the odds on favorite to get his first AAAAA State Title. He has shown no chinks in his armor this year, with his 3 losses coming out of state. Back at home he has taken care of business with an OT win over Hunt 7-5 at Sectionals and a quick pin of Epps in the Area finals. His speed is very hard to handle and his mat savvy is unmatched. With that same tenacious attitude Hunt steps up to 5A with a 4A State Title already under his belt and he has his sights set on another title. His resume looks good this year he took 1st at Columbia County Classic, 1st at Coal Mountain, 2nd at King of the Mat in NC, 1st at The Titan, Area and is the Gwinnett County Champion. His Overtime loss to Mitchell at Sectional was deemed the match of the tournament and set Hunt's record at 43-1 on the year. Although Hunt came up short on the score board in the Mitchell match, he has proven to be a very dangerous wrestler and when it's time to lace up for the finals we expect to see a Hunt/Mitchell rematch. If you missed it at the East Sectionals, don't make that mistake again, it could be the match of the tournament. In the end we believe Mitchell will hoist the gold and announce his true presence in AAAAA. Now that we have stuck our necks out, let's look at the plethora of talent that lurks.

119 Placement Favorites

Spradlin (11) Camden County (103-1st/Region Champ; '07 5th 103) Lazor (10) Union Grove (103-sq/Region Champ)
Mosher (12) Harrison (119-3rd; '07 3rd AAA 103) Stringer (11) Kell (112-6th)
Galloway (11) Pebblebrook (112-sq AAAAA) Scott (10) Valdosta (112-sq/Region Champ)

Just as last year, we see the 119 weight class shutting the door on the freshmen and only allowing a couple of talented sophomores in their club of studs. Spradlin, the Area 3 Champ, is coming off of a State Championship from last year and has had a spectacular season as well finishing 4th at the very tough Zac Jarznyka in FL and compiling 53 wins this season going into state. Spradlin has victories over AAAAA Front Runner Ulmer (4-3) and Wendel (4-0). Don't be fooled by the pretty hair, he's mean as a snake when you step inside the circle. Mitchell and Spradlin have a history of wrestling each other back in the days of USA Kids Wrestling and we could rekindle this match up with a State Finals Showdown. Mosher took 1st at Cobb County with a 3-1 win over Stringer, 1st at Area, 2nd at

hurdle he has yet to clear. Bell spent most of the year off the radar until his 1st place finish at Cobb County where he defeated Pifer and Winarzcyk on the way to gold. This victory catapulted Bell to the top tier of the weight class, but losses to Durr and Wagner at Sectional has raised a few red flags. Prior to that Bell took 2nd at Hoover, 2nd at McCallie losing to Winiarczyk. Bell is a State Runner-Up in 2008 and the Area 5 Champion. He also has a big win over AAA Stud Wallin of LaFayette 1-0. He could show up and perform like last years state tournament and find himself fighting for the gold. Solid performances at Sectionals have really helped these next two guys. Bourque finished 4th at Titan (119), 3rd at Area, 3rd at The Hooch, 2nd at Santa Slam, 2nd at Starrs Mill and 2nd at Coal Mountain. But it was his Sectional performance that pushed him into the top 8 with wins over Webster (Camden) and Bloodworth and put him in the finals against Devita, where he finished 2nd. His bracket draw has put him in a great position to place if he can get past this next guy. Wagner is 49-4 this year and has quietly gone about his business with wins over Sewell, Stringer and Mosher but again the Sectional wins over Land and Bell added value to his existence in the bracket and the 2nd round match with Bourque will decided his podium fate. All of these guys are capable of making me look real bad. Let's press on to 130.

2009 AAAAA 130 Pound Weight Class Front Runners

Westerman (12) McEachern (119 – 1st/Region Champ; '07 103-1st; '06 103-1st)
Willard (11) Collins Hill (119-4th/Region Champ; '07 112-sq)

The Storyline: If 125 is The Abyss, then 130 may very well be The Bermuda Triangle, when you go into this one, I'm not sure you will come out. You can't talk about this weight class without mentioning the number 4 and I'm not talking about Brett Favre, we're talking Westerman and the quest for his 4th AAAAA State Title, a feat only accomplished by two other wrestlers in Georgia (Tyler Parker and Carrington Banks). Westy has been spectacular, 1st at McCallie, Area 5, Cobb County beating Bushart in the finals 8-3, 2nd at Northcoast Classic in Cleveland, OH and 1st at Sectional beating Bushart in the semis and Maus in the finals. Over the years Westerman has amassed 9 total state championships, 2 Kids Titles, 3 High School Folkstyle Titles, 2 Greco Titles and 2 Freestyle Titles and 188 wins, he accumulated a record of 104-0 for 2007 & 2008. Don't let this well mannered young man fool ya, when he toes the line, it's all business. Westerman has been pushed to the edge by a few opponents and this next front runner has pushed him the farthest. His projected final high school opponent we feel will be Willard, at 36-7 he took 1st at Sham Slam; he is the Area 7 Champion and East Sectional Champion. He has 2 wins over Bushart 8-3 and 9-2, an 11-4 decision over Armstrong, a 4-2 decision over Harrison at the Area finals and a 2-1 decision over Crozier in the Sectional Final. This is actually a rematch from last years 119 State Semi Finals where Westerman pulled out an 8-6 Overtime win over Willard. Willard is a gritty hard-nosed wrestler that seems to adjust to his opponent and their style quickly and this makes him a very dangerous adversary. Willard should get a third match this year with Bushart and a possible rematch with Area 7 Runner up Harrison or a chance to redeem an early season loss to Maus 6-4. Winning Sectional seemed too rocky the road a little for Willard to make the finals, but we feel he gets there unscathed. In the end we feel Westerman's winning ways will continue as he avoids the danger and lays claim to number 4. Let's check out the rest of the Juniors and Seniors that make up, what I believe, is the most talented bracket we offer this year in AAAAA.

130 Placement Favorites

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| Bushart (11) Pope (112 – sq; '07 103-4 th) | Maus (11) Kennesaw Mountain (112-4 th /region champ) |
| Crozier (12) Union Grove (125-sq/region champ ;07 125-1 st) | Harrison (12) Mill Creek |
| Epps (12) Brookwood (125-sq/region champ) | Howard (12) Centennial (130-sq) |

This is where the rubber meets the road and if you make one small mistake, this group will make you pay for it. Any one of these guys can really dampen your day. With only 6 spots on the Podium and 8 High Caliber Wrestlers and a few other studs as well, somebody's not going to make it. Let's jump start this one with Bushart, 2nd at Cobb County, 5th at McCallie, 5th at Brecksville, OH, 1st at Area and 3rd at Sectional. He has wins over Crozier, Armstrong, Howard and 125 stud Pifer. He is as solid and steady as they get in this weight class, with his 3rd at Sectional he pretty much sealed the deal to a 2nd round rematch with Willard and with two losses to Willard already, he will need to find a way through that barrier if he's going to make the finals. Crozier has had some ups and downs this year; 1st at South Metro, 2nd at Loganville, 8th at Brecksville, OH, 2nd at The Hooch, 2nd at North Metro, 1st at County, 1st at Area and 2nd at East Sectional. Along the way he had wins over Fultz (140), Howard, Wainwright (135) and Galloway. He suffered late season losses to Bushart 3-2 at State Duals and Epps 9-5 at North Metro. But his Sectional performance with a semi final win over Harrison earned him a finals match and lines him up for a decent shot at the state semi finals to try and dethrone King Westerman, who beat him 4-2 in overtime this summer. At 52-3 and the best win/loss record in this weight class, Epps brings speed and flare to this one, following his 1st place finish at North Metro where he defeated Howard and Crozier; he won The Area 8 Title, 1st at Gwinnett and 2nd at Brookwood and headed to Camden on a roll. Facing Harrison, whom he's already beaten twice, in the second round he takes a loss that sends him to the cons. After beating Harris from Chattahoochee, he wrestles Harrison again in the con finals and this time pulls out the 6-3 victory and with that win, he will get a second round shot at Westerman. Maus took 1st at The Tiger Holiday Classic in NC, 3rd at Cobb County losing to Bushart 3-1, 2nd at Raider Rumble, 3rd at Zac Jarzynka, 2nd at Area and Sectional behind Westerman both times.

Maus holds an early season victory over Willard 6-4 and if he can get through Cross and Harrison/Drew, he should get another shot at Willard. He also has wins over Bloodworth, Olson (135), Howard and AAAA Stud Rinehart and is currently at 51-10 looking to add more to the win column. Harrison will be back on the mat this year at state and that's where he belongs. He has had a very solid 39-7 season and his losses have been quality losses to Epps (three times), Devita, Crozier, Willard and AAAA Front Runner Denova. He took 2nd at North Metro, 3rd at Sequoyah, 3rd at Gwinnett, 3rd at Fayette Christmas Classic, 2nd at Region and 4th at Sectional. He comes out of the gate with a very tough Drew from Coffee County and if he can get through that he should have Maus in round 2 with hopes of a rematch with Willard, a match he lost 4-2 in the Region Championship. Howard is a physical monster and by far the largest of this 130 group, he is the Region 6 Runner-Up to Bushart, finished 1st at The Hooch, 1st at Spencerport, NY, 4th at North Metro, 1st at Crossbone and 2nd at Sequoyah (135). His Sectional 4th place showing with wins over Galloway, Armstrong and Drew set him up for a possible second round rematch with Crozier, a match he lost 9-0 early in the season. Don't be fooled by his 48-14 record this senior can get on a roll and do some damage to this bracket. As I previously mentioned, this group is so talented, there are 8 or 10 possible state champs here. Serve me up some 135's please.

2009 AAAA 135 Pound Weight Class Front Runners

Lazor (12) Union Grove (130 – 1st/Region Champ; '07 119-2nd; '06 103-5th)

Holloway (12) Walton (130 – 6th; '07 119-1st/region champ)

The Storyline: The Georgia Funk Master vs. The Walton Brawler, sounds like the old days of NWA doesn't it? That's what we have predicted for the 135 finals match with Lazor and Holloway. This may be the two most contrasting styles of all the finals match ups. Lazor brings a degree of funk that Georgia has never seen, just when you think he's in trouble, you find yourself fighting off your back. Holloway on the other hand will come right at you, bang on your head, tie up and throw you into a different area code. If you find yourself conscience after the landing it's normally too late, the match is over. Lazor took 1st at South Metro, County Championships, North Metro, Brecksville Ohio, Loganville, Region Champ and Sectional Champ He is 61-0 and has not lost a match, in or out of state, since the state finals his sophomore year and who was that loss to? You guessed it, Holloway. Lazor will be headed to Northern Iowa to wrestle after High School and wants one more state title to take with him. He is a pin specialist and is very difficult to figure out. Holloway struts into the Arena with a 39-7 record, he has 4 victories over Payne, the most recent being the 1-0 Sectional Final, he finished 1st at Alexander Hardcore beating Olson 7-5 in the finals, 6th in a very tough Brecksville, OH tournament, 2nd at McCallie, 1st at Cobb County, 1st at Region and Sectionals. It appears his closest matches with Georgia opponents have come with Payne. With Payne on the other side of the bracket Holloway seems destined for a rematch with his '07 119 Finalist Partner Lazor. When this ones over we will have a two time state champ standing in the center of the mat and the head to head matches tied at 1 each with Lazor taking home the 135 Championship Belt. Now let's turn it over to Gordon Solie for a few words about the placement favorites.

135 Placement Favorites

Payne (11) Pope (125-sq)

Hillis (12) Parkview (130-sq)

Wainwright (12) Camden (135-sq)

Moody (12) Lowndes (130-sq)

Olson (11) East Paulding (130-4th AAAA)

Jackson (12) Kennesaw Mountain (135-sq)

Payne has done something that most in the state have not and that is he scored a takedown on Lazor at State Duals. With a record of 42-10 and half of those losses coming from the two front runners, it's fair to say Payne is a solid contender. He placed 5th at McCallie, 2nd at Cobb County, 2nd at Region and 2nd at Sectionals. He has wins over Jackson 7-1 and 10-5, Enriquez 4-1, Hillis 9-2 and beat two time Tenn state champ David Graham of Bradley Central 7-5 in OT. Hillis has wrestled 71 matches so far this year and is 65-6, AA stand out Anderton has beaten him twice, Payne beat him as well as Moody and Lazor, his other loss was to South Carolina stud Eddie Coles 9-0. Hillis was 3rd at Southern Slam, 1st at Brookwood, 2nd at Gwinnett County, 3rd at North Metro, 1st at Coal Mountain, 1st at Region and 2nd at East Sectionals. He gets a first round rematch with Moody and if he pulls that off he should have Olson and Holloway to deal with consecutively. Wainwright is the Area 3 Champion with a 36-8 record. He took 5th at Zac Jarzynka and 3rd at Sectionals. After a second round loss to Reynolds at Sectionals, he blasted through the cons and took 3rd which sets him up for a 2nd round match up with Holloway. Moody was rolling until the Sectional tournament where he ended up 7th, his record is 57-4, prior to the Sectional he had no losses at 135. He took 1st at Raider Rumble, Fayette Christmas, Valdosta, The Blue Devil and Region 1 Tournament. He has a 7-5 win over Payne, but his Sectional performance has left him with a very difficult bracket to make the finals. Keep an eye on this guy, he can get hot and do some damage. Olson is our only East Paulding placer so far in the state tournament. He won 1st at The War Eagle and The Titan, he was 2nd at Alexander Hardcore, Sequoyah, The Crossbone and 4th at Sectionals. He is the sleeper in this weight class and if he can put together two early performances like the 7-5 loss to Holloway, that may be enough to earn him another shot at Phil. Jackson has 2 wins over Olson 5-3 and 6-5 with the latter coming in the Sectional Con Finals. He is the Area 5 Champion and took 1st at Dalton Carpet Classic and 3rd at Cobb County. The unfortunate for Jackson is the 2nd round match up

with Lazor will send him to the cons and he will have to deal with Hillis/Moody and then O'Connor to make the podium. 4 thru 6 look relatively close in this bracket, but 1-3 are set in our minds. Let me get comfortable and relax as the 140's are next.

2009 AAAAA 140 Pound Weight Class Front Runners

Smith (11) Collins Hill (135-2nd/region champ; '07 130-4th/region champ)
Schneider (11) Milton (135-4th)

The Storyline: Get your popcorn, hot dogs, pizza and coke early because you don't want to miss one second of this one. The projected finals match for this one is a rematch of last years semi finals @ 135 where Smith won an OT match 8-6. These two guys are juniors and we may get to see them tangle again next year as well. Nothing fancy here, just good ol rasslin at it's finest. I am a gambler and because of that, I will say that these two guys are my only Guaranteed Finalist in this years tournament. Smith rolled into the finals last year and ran into some kid named Carson Fields (Fargo Champion). Smith is 46-1 this year and that loss was to Houdashelt from Missouri in the finals at The Toshiba Midwest Classic in Kansas City, other than that Smith has made everyone look mediocre, taking 1st at Sham Slam with 3 pins, 1st at Region with 3 pins and 1st at Sectionals 4 pins. He is a returning State Finalist and is blistering the competition with grace and ease. He will need all of his skills to get through his finals match with Schneider though, as this will be his first real test in Georgia this year. Schneider is 46-0 and has taken 1st at every tournament this year, Riverwood, The Hooch, Coal Mountain, Region 6 and The West Sectionals. Along the way he has beaten Elliot of Jefferson, Ballard, Lanier, Mallard and Legg (twice). This is one of my favorite projected finals of the night and I can't wait for the first whistle. With Fields now wrestling at UTC, Smith can focus on winning *his* first state championship and we believe this year he gets it done in a barnburner that is almost to close to call. It could be the match of the entire tournament, so don't get caught at the concession stand on this one. Now that we've had the main course, let's get a little dessert to top off this weight class.

140 Placement Favorites

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|---------------------------------------|--|
| Fultz (12) Kennesaw Mountain (140-sq) | Legg (12) Walton (125-5 th ; 07 103-3 rd) |
| George (11) Grayson (135-sq) | Lentz (11) Camden (130-sq/Region Champ) |
| Mallard (12) Pope | Gamble (9) Union Grove (Kids State Placer) |

Fultz is a solid 56-8 on the year and took 1st at Raider Rumble, Dalton Carpet Classic and Cobb County where he beat Legg in the finals 3-1. He also took 3rd at Tiger Classic in NC, 6th at Zac Jarzynka, he is the Region 5 Champion and West Sectional 3rd place finisher where he lost to Legg 5-3 and with that 3rd place finish he will have a date with Smith in round two that may be too much and send him to the cons to do battle with Gamble or Fishback. George has proven to be worthy of a high placement position on the podium this year with 1st place finishes at Starrs Mill, North Metro, Creekview, Gwinnett County and Region 8 Tournaments. He also took 3rd at Loganville and 2nd at Coal Mountain. In order to make the finals he will have to get past Schneider, a task nobody has accomplished this year. Mallard will get Lentz in round one and we have the winner of that match making the semis and a guaranteed spot on the podium, he took 4th at McCallie, 3rd at Cobb County losing only to Fultz and 3rd at Area beating Ballard 5-2 in the con finals. Legg and Fultz have had this ongoing battle all year and Legg pulled out the win when he needed to at Sectionals and that put him in the finals against Schneider and should all but guarantee him a semis match up with Smith. Legg was 2nd at Cobb County, 2nd at Region and Sectionals and has wins over Mallard, Fultz and Ballard. I have Legg and Fultz settling their war in the con finals this year. Lentz is the south Georgia hopeful in this bracket, he finished 4th at Zac Jarzynka and is the Region 3 champ. His 2nd place performance at Sectionals put him in position far enough away from the front runners to make the semis, but early challenges from Mallard and Ballard will need to be handled prior to trying his skills out on Schneider. We close out this weight class with the freshman Gamble; he is only the fourth freshman we have included in this years report so far. His 5th at South Metro at 145 was a bit of a surprise, he then took 4th at Loganville, 3rd at North Metro with a 5-2 win over Ballard in the con finals, 1st at Henry County, 1st at Region and 4th at Sectionals. He has steadily improved all year, but may be a year away from gracing the podium. 145's, you're up!

2009 AAAAA 145 Pound Weight Class Front Runners

Rivera (10) Kennesaw Mountain (145-sq/ Region Champ)
Markley (12) Pope (145-sq)

The Storyline: After the Area and Sectional tournaments I am left speechless with this weight class. I am working without a net on this one. It could turn out real close on the predictions or it could get ugly early. Nevertheless here we go. This bracket does not lack talent, it lacks separation. These guys must hang out after tournaments together and talk about which one will win the next time they meet and then draw straws for the top spot. Rivera, Rivera, Rivera, that's what I've said all year long and I don't intend on changing it now. He is 59-8 with a 1st at Raider Rumble, 5th at McCallie, 2nd at Tiger Classic in NC, 2nd at Zac Jarzynka, 3rd at a very tough Cobb

County weight class; he is the Region 5 Champ and West Sectional Champ. He has solid wins over Markley 8-4 and 5-3 and a 2-1 decision in overtime of the West Sectional Finals. He took out Holloway and Pitts on his way to the finals, however he is beatable as proven by Hoppenbrouwer 5-3, Holloway 11-5 and Markley 4-3, all early in the season. Since the Cobb County semi final 4-1 loss to AAAA Front Runner Hudson on January 31st he has not lost a match beating Markley (twice), Hurst, Holloway and Pitts among others. He should get Hoppenbrouwer in the second round and start working his way through this bracket methodically. We have Markley as the chosen opponent for Rivera and getting there will not be easy. He is 46-9 on the year; he's the Region 6 Champ, 4th at Cobb County and 7th at Brecksville. He holds wins over Hoppenbrouwer, Hurst and Holloway, so he has no problem with guys last names starting with "H", it's the "R" guy that has been his nemesis. He will need to have the perfect tournament to get through what is laid out before him, Holloway and the winner of Dunster/Mack round out the potholes waiting to take him out. If he makes the finals he will get one more shot to win his final battle with Rivera who holds a 3-1 lead in their head to head match ups this year. We have selected 6 seniors and 2 sophomores for this weight class and a sophomore as our choice for 145 Champion, Rivera of Kennesaw Mountain. The group listed below is hot on the heels of the front runners and poised for battle.

145 Placement Favorites

| | |
|---|--|
| Dunster (12) Grayson (145-sq) | Hoppenbrouwer (12) Collins Hill (140-sq) |
| Holloway (12) Walton (135-6 th ; '07 130-sq; '06 119-sq) | Mack (10) Tift (145-sq) |
| Mobbs (12) Camden (145-sq) | Pitts (12) East Coweta |

Dunster in my opinion could be the most likely to knock off one of the front runners, he took 2nd at Loganville, 2nd at Creekview, 3rd at Gwinnett County, 1st at Region and is the East Sectional Champ where he beat Mobbs and Hoppenbrouwer. He is big and physical and will not be muscled around. This could be trouble for most of the combatants in this bracket. Holloway is the Region 6 runner up, Cobb County Runner Up, 1st at Alexander Hardcore, 3rd at McCallie and 6th at the very tough Brecksville, OH Tournaments. But the 5th place finish at Sectionals has left me wondering if the tough schedule this year has played a part in his late season slide. If Holloway has the stamina to put together one more top shelf performance, like we know he's capable of, you may find him sporting an ankle band in the finals, it would not surprise me one bit. Mobbs made the finals at East Sectionals by way of Burton, Lawler and Chapman and then ran into Dunster where the story ends with an 8-0 loss. But the 38-12 Region 3 Champ did well enough to position himself for a very good possibility of reaching the semis against Rivera. Hoppenbrouwer took a tough 2-0 loss to Dunster in the semis at Sectionals but rolled back through and took 3rd over Chapman 6-4. Sam is 26-14 this year and has had his fair share of ups and downs, like wins over Markley, Rivera and Chapman and losses to Markley and Holloway. But think about his coaching staff, drill partners and practice schedule and you can bet your last dime that he will be ready at the arena. Don't count out Sam, he does hold a win over Rivera in their only head to head this year. If you would have asked me last week who Mack and Pitts are, I would have guessed maybe an Air Conditioning Installation Company located in Muscle Shoals, AL and yes, I would have been wrong. So let me introduce everyone to Mack and Pitts. Mack is 42-6, wrestles for Tift County and is the Area 1 Champion, he also took 2nd at The Blue Devil, 2nd at Starrs Mill (152), 3rd at Loganville losing only to Dunster, 2nd at The Rebel (152), 1st at Fitzgerald, 4th at Fayette and 3rd at Sectionals beating Holloway, Turner and Pitts in the process. Pitts is 32-10, wrestles for East Coweta and (despite below average coaching) I'm only kidding Josh, you know I'm a fan buddy, he is the Area 4 Champ that finished 6th at Starrs Mill (152), 2nd at Sham Slam, 4th at Fayette (152) and 4th at Sectionals beating Hurst and Williamson in the process. So beware of this weight class as anything could happen with this group. Let's go get some help at 152, I know just the guy to call on.

2009 AAAAA 152 Pound Weight Class Front Runners

Sealy (12) Centennial
 Tiller (12) Collins Hill (152-2nd Region Champ; '07 160 sq; '06 171-6th)

The Storyline: I would like to dedicate this bracket to my friend Bob Berg. He always said there are some weight classes that you will ask for help in a very different and strange way, Corn Plant Guy, The magic 8-ball, etc. Since I am known as a gambler, I have elected to go with a single deck of cards and a make-shift game of Blackjack. It's pretty simple really, play the deck all the way out as many times as possible and at the end if I win more hands than the dealer then it's wrestler A. If the dealer wins more hands than I do, then I go with wrestler B. Well the first 4 hands were so bad, I was ready to surrender each hand, but I didn't and I beat the dealer 3 out of the 4. That's an indicator to me, so my decision has been made. Let's deal the first hand to Mr. Tiller and see how it looks. With a healthy Tiller the cards go back in the desk. Tiller has had a great career, with more than 150 wins and plenty of them, out of his weight class. He went 25-3 this year and had some health issues. He is the Area 7 Runner-up, 2nd at Sham Slam and 1st at Sectionals, taking out Sutton, Gigolaev and Rider. He also has wins over Savransky, Gigolaev, Beck, Power, Bourne and Polsin throughout the year. He is one of the toughest kids in the entire state tournament and can keep a match close with any caliber opponent. In addition, he is the only returning state placer in this bracket. Sealy is 60-2 this year with a not-so-easy schedule. He is undefeated in Georgia;

his 2 losses were in New York. He took 1st at The Hooch, North Metro, Sequoyah, Crossbone, Region 6, West Sectionals and 4th at Spencerport, NY. He took out Sortes, Jackson and Power on his way to the Sectional Championship. Another impressive win was over one of my favorite wrestlers in the state Genthert from Wesleyan. If you are looking for his weakness, you are going to be here a while because there's not many at all. He will get his first test at state in round 2 against Gigolaev assuming he can get past Sortes. But Sealy's only true test should come in the finals against Tiller. Don't look for high scoring in this bracket, my prediction is either a pin or 5-3 decisions being the average match throughout. Since Tiller's motto this year seems to be "Never Surrender", I'm stacking my chips on him to finally catch a 5 while hitting on 16 to make 21 and leave out as a winner. Now let's shuffle these cards and see if there is a joker in the deck that we don't know about.

152 Placement Favorites

Power (11) Pope
Gigolaev (12) Peachtree Ridge
Rider (9) North Gwinnett

Moot (11) Wheeler
Hunt (11) Dacula (152-sq-AAAA)
Jackson (12) (140-sq)

Power took 1st at Cobb County beating Moot 4-3 in the finals and is the Region 6 runner up to Sealy. He is 26-11 and draws a Sutton in the first round at state and if he gets through that Jackson/Hunt will be waiting. Power is the West Sectional runner up taking out Moot on the way 3-2 and losing a close 7-6 decision to Sealy in the finals. Gigolaev had four solid tournament performances this year 3rd at Zac Jarzynka, Gwinnett County, Region and Sectionals, losing at Sectionals only to Tiller 11-4 in the semis. The second round match up with Sealy will determine his fate in the tournament. Now we come to the last freshman to grace the pages of this years report Rider from North Gwinnett. I have limited data on Rider, 2nd at Gwinnett, 3rd at The Crossbone at 145, 1st at Area and he lost in the Sectional Finals to Tiller, he is 41-10 on the year and I will get a better look at him this weekend, because he appears to be here for the long-haul. Moot was 2nd at Cobb County to Power and 3rd at Sectionals with a 13-0 statement put on Manous in the Con Finals. Moot will have to deal with Tiller in round 2 and this could make for some difficult wrestle backs in his future. Hunt was a surprise to me at Sectionals where he lost twice to Gigolaev, the first coming in the quarter finals 13-4 and then he ripped off 3 straight wins to make the con finals and lost 5-2, he is 47-5 on the year and gets an all important first round match up with Jackson. Speaking of Jackson who only wrestled 24 varsity matches this year and ended up 17-7, how did he get in over Manous? Because of his bracket placement Jackson has a better chance of squeezing out an extra win than Manous who has a tougher wrestle back draw. There's not a lot of excitement in this bracket after you look past Tiller and Sealy, but many close and I predict Overtime Matches. It's time to take a Knapp at 160.

2009 AAAAA 160 Pound Weight Class Front Runners

Knapp (12) Collins Hill (145 – 1st/Region Champ; '07 135 – 1st; '06 119-3rd)
Gilbert (10) Camden (160-sq)

The Storyline: A college buddy of mine, Dan, works out west repairing and changing out lights on cell phone and radio towers. At times Dan said he can be as high as 1500 feet in the air working on these towers. I asked if he ever gets scared being that high all by himself? Dan replied, "You don't get scared being on top of the world, you just get lonely". Well Knapp must know how Dan feels because he's all alone in this bracket and it's a long way down to the competition. Knapp finished a very respectable 2nd at Toshiba in Kansas City, 1st at Sham Slam, 1st at Area and East Sectional. He went through State Duals undefeated and is working on a third State Title. Gilbert could end up South Georgia's highest place finisher in the AAAAA Tournament. The sophomore is 42-9 and took 6th at Zac Jarzynka, 1st at Region and 2nd at Sectionals losing to Knapp in the finals 16-1, but taking out Delgado, Bourne and Gigolaev along the way. It appears a semis match up with Savransky or Gigolaev is in his future and is an obstacle that will need to be accomplished for another shot at Knapp. The 16-1 performance was not Gilbert's best and we feel he will get another chance at Knapp. When this one is over Knapp will once again climb to the highest spot on the podium and collect another Gold Medal and cap off an excellent High School career. Let's leave the nose-bleed seats and see what's down at the floor level.

160 Placement Favorites

Gigolaev (12) Peachtree Ridge (152-5th)
Harris (12) Lovejoy
Savransky (11) Pope (152-sq; '07-140-sq)

Bourne (12) North Forsyth
Forte (10) Parkview
Campbell (12) Creekside

Gigolaev has had some shining moments in the sun this year with his 1st at Gwinnett County and 3rd at McCallie performance he's recognized as a top competitor in this weight class. There will be no sneaking up like last year at the state tournament where he got in

as an alternate and placed 5th at 152. I believe he will see Gilbert again and this time the winner will get to face Knapp in the finals at state. Harris poured it on late in the year taking 1st at Lovejoy, 2nd at Starrs Mill, Fayette and 3rd at South Metro, he went on to win Region and finished 2nd at Sectionals behind Savransky losing 3-1 in the finals. TO as he is called should make the semis and a chance to wrestle Knapp, a match that he thought was going to happen earlier in the year, but didn't. Savransky, 1st at Cobb County, 1st at Area and Sectional gets what I believe to be the tough draw in this weight class, having to deal with Gigolaev and Gilbert. If he can pull off back to back wins that big, he has earned the respect of, well we will say 14 guys in the bracket and they should cheer loud and proud for him in the finals. The Coal Mountain, Santa Slam Champion Bourne gets to hook it up again with Gilbert and it's in the second round as well, if the results are the same it will mean a 12-5 loss for Bourne, if he pulls off the win, then the sky's the limit. Bourne also took 2nd at The Titan and 4th at The Hooch and 5th at Sectionals. Forte grabbed a 2nd place finish at North Metro, 4th at Gwinnett and 4th at Coal Mountain, his 3rd place finish at Sectional losing to Knapp and Gigolaev made him a player in this weight class. Campbell finishes off the 160 class with his 1st at Crossbone, 3rd at Lovejoy, 4th at Fayette and 2nd at Area he rolled into Sectionals and took out Zimmerman, Griffin and Lancaster on his way to a 3rd place finish and only losing to Savransky 4-2 in the Semi finals. My work here is done, let's see whaz up at 71.

2009 AAAAA 171 Pound Weight Class Front Runners

Roberts (12), Union Grove (171 – 4th/Region Champ; '07 145-2nd, '06 140-sq)
Nabors (12) Centennial ('07;160-6th; '06 160-sq)

The Storyline: About 10 years ago Dave Roberts took his son Jack to his first wrestling practice. He handed his son off to Frank Bennett who was running the practice and he asked Frank to “check him out and see if he's got what it takes to be a wrestler”. Dave went back to pick him up after practice and asked Frank, “well whatta ya think”? Frank replied, “You better buy him a basketball”. Dave refused on the basketball purchase and Jack continued his wrestling practice and boy are we glad that Frank Bennett was wrong for a change. Jack has been spectacular over the last 3 years in high school and his senior year has proven to be his best, taking 1st at South Metro, The Hooch, North Metro, Loganville and a very solid 3rd at Brecksville Ohio, all while maintaining a 4.2 GPA and securing a scholarship to Brown University. Nabors took a year off and just like riding a bike he forgot nothing, going 34-2 this year taking 1st at Sequoyah, The Hooch, 2nd at Spencerport, NY all three at 189, Area and Sectionals at 171 where he beat Dupree in the finals. His second round match up with Holbert will be his first true challenge in Georgia when he faces the very talented sophomore Holbert from Collins Hill, if he gets through that match; I have him on a collision course with Roberts. While Nabors and Holbert have proven to be very worthy adversaries, it's “Dr. J” Roberts with the slam dunk and Gold when this one is over. Let's drill down on the other high flyers in this weight class and see who's capable of stealing away their thunder.

171 Placement Favorites

Holbert (10) Collins Hill (Virginia Transfer)
Chapman (12) Peachtree Ridge (160-2nd)
Dupree (11) Lassiter

Abraham (11) Kell (171-sq)
Steele (11)
Manson (12) (171-6th)

Holbert busted into Georgia this summer and has not slowed down at all winning the Area 7 title over 08 state finalist Chapman 6-3 and solid victories against Beane, Harden, Swartz and Caputo. He placed 1st at Sham Slam beating AAA Front Man Gilbert in the finals. His Sectional 3rd place finish was due to a semi finals loss to Roberts 4-2 and this will get him a second round match up with Nabors which will be crucial for the grand finale. His stamina will prove to be his biggest asset and make him a very tough opponent for anyone looking to stand in his way. Chapman is a returning State Finalist that finished 1st at McCallie and Gwinnett, 2nd at Region losing to Holbert and injury defaulting out to 6th after losing a close match to Steele 12-10. If Chapman is healthy he can make a run at state, but the second round match up with Roberts may be too much if he's not at 100%. Dupree has been busy this year taking home the hardware 1st at Cobb County beating Abraham 3-1, 2nd at The Mohawk, 2nd at whitewater, 5th at Fayette County, 2nd at Area losing to Nabors in the finals and 2nd at Sectionals losing again to Nabors and taking down Abraham along the way 3-0. I am expecting Dupree to get a shot at Roberts in the semis and then meet up with the Nabors/Holbert loser in the Con Semis for a solid tournament performance from the Lassiter junior. Abraham gets the toughest draw of all, he first has to beat last years state finalist Chapman, then try and takedown Roberts. Abraham took 3rd at The Hooch losing to Roberts, 2nd at Cobb County losing to Dupree, 2nd at Area and 3rd at Sectionals. This draw could make for a short tournament or some very long days of wrestling for Abraham. The most impressive loss of the year for Abraham came against AA 160 Front Runner and defending State Champ Fretwell who is also the national record holder for pins in a season with 67 shattering the old record of 58 and Abraham lost on a decision 7-4 and not a pin. Steele the Area 3 Champ and 4th at Zac Jarzynka pulled the upset at Sectionals by beating Chapman 12-10 in the quarter finals, then knocking off Roman from Brookwood before participating in a takedown clinic performed by Roberts in the finals. By making the finals at Sectionals his reward should be smooth sailing to the semi finals where he will run into Holbert/Nabors. Now for the last of our 71's we give the nod to Manson for his three in a row performance following the loss to Roberts at Sectionals. He has placed 3rd at Starrs Mill, Loganville and Gwinnett County. The second round match with Dupree will be a stretch for Manson, but his con matches could possibly lead to an outside shot at 6th. Nuff here, lez move ta 89.

2009 AAAAA 189 Pound Weight Class Front Runners

Olsen (12) Walton (171 – 1st/Region Champ; '07 145-5th; '06 125-4th)
Kuntz (12) Peachtree Ridge (189 – 2nd/Region Champ; 07-152-sq))

The Storyline: I enjoy the one-liners that make certain movies famous and you can always associate the movie with that one line. In **Cool Hand Luke**, we had “*A failure to communicate*”, with **A Few Good Men**, we heard “*You can't handle the truth*”, and **Apollo 13** gave us “*Houston we have a problem*”. For this predicted finals match up we are going with the one-liner that is recognized in **The Terminator**, “*I'll be back*”. With Sarah Connor out of the picture, the camera will be focused on Olsen and Kuntz, both looking to return to the state finals. Olsen is looking for his second state title as he took the Gwinnett Arena by surprise last year when he beat Nick Smith in the finals at 171 10-9. Olsen is 41-2 heading into the state tournament with the two losses coming to AAAAA 171 Front-Runner Williamson 4-2 and Ohio stud Nick Mills 4-0 in the finals at Brecksville, Ohio. He is the Area 6 Champion and West Sectional Champ, 1st at Alexander Hardcore and Cobb County. Olsen has quality wins over Kuntz 3-2, 3 wins over Griffin, a 7-0 shut out over Brooks and a pin over Brooks in the Sectional Finals, an 8-0 major over Hasty, a pin over Bennett and an impressive 8-2 victory over AAAAA 189 Front Runner and Fargo All American, Blackstock. Kuntz is headed to Rutgers after high school and he plans on taking a state championship with him. He made the finals last year at this same weight, but ran into a machine known as Dukes. He has put together some top shelf wins of his own this year. He has beaten Ardilla (twice), Bennett, Kennedy and Taylor. Sam took 1st at Gwinnett County, 1st at Zac Jarzynka, 3rd at McCallie, 1st at Region and 1st at Sectionals. What I'm saying here is these two guys have the same exact record on the year and they both know how to win the big matches. So with an Arnold Schwarzenegger voice I say, **THE BRACKETS ARE FREE OF ALL DEBRIS AND YOU BOTH SHOULD BE BACK IN THE FINALS**. When the critics get their hands on this one, we believe Olsen will win the Oscar for Best Performance. Now let's have a look at the stunt doubles listed below.

189 Placement Favorites

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|---|-----------------------------|
| Ardilla (12) Grayson (189-5 th) | Taylor (12) Camden (171-sq) |
| Brooks (11) Marietta (189-sq) | Harris (11) Berkmar |
| Kennedy (11) North Forsyth (171-sq) | Hasty (11) Tift Co |

I personally think the close battles in this weight class will be for 3rd – 6th and it all starts with East Sectional Runner up Ardilla who suffered only his second loss of the season and it was to the same guy that gave him the first one Kuntz. He has taken 1st at Starrs Mill, Loganville, North Metro, Coal Mountain, Creekview, 2nd at Gwinnett County, 1st at Region and 2nd at Sectional. Ardilla should be fine in the bracket until he reaches Olsen in the Semis. Brooks has been the victim of Olson more than once this year, but the only way that can happen at state is if he gets through Bennett, Taylor and Kuntz. He finished 2nd at Sequoyah, Cobb County, 1st at Area and 2nd at Sectional behind Olson. The tough draw candidate for this one is Kennedy, the second round will give him Olson and a loss there will get him Bennett/Brooks loser and that will be a tough match as Bennett does hold a victory over Kennedy. Taylor is the Area 3 Champion and had a fantastic Sectional tournament going 4th to Kennedy, beating Harris and Hines along the way. Harris (Berkmar) was 4th at both The Gwinnett County and North Metro, but rolled into Sectionals and stepped up his game enough to take 6th place. Hasty is another tough draw candidate, he gets Harris first round and the winner is lucky enough to toe the line with Kuntz. Hasty took 1st at Fitzgerald, 2nd at Blue Devil, The Valdosta Wildcat and 3rd at Starrs Mill and The Rebel. As we put the lid on this 189 weight class, I will just say there could and should be some surprises throughout this bracket as some of the guys not mentioned will bring their A game to the arena. OH YEA!!!, Another one of those rematch brackets coming up at 189.

2009 AAAAA 215 Pound Weight Class Front Runners

Collins (12) Collins Hill (189 – 6th)
Scruggs (12) Valdosta (189 – 3rd /Region Champ; '07 189-sq)

The Storyline: As you can tell from previous storylines, I am a huge movie buff. My favorite movies are the old westerns where there is a good guy and a bad outlaw. The score is usually settled at the end of the movie, in the middle of town, right in front of a saloon. Two guys square off and the quickest to the draw is your winner and 99% of the time it's the good guy. I'll let you decided who the good guy and bad outlaw are in this one and let's see if the percentages hold true. We are expecting a rematch of last years state tournament bout # 807 Collins vs Scruggs. The outcome last year at state was Scruggs winning 5-3 and advancing on to take 3rd and Collins finished 6th losing to Ardilla 4-1. With that being said Collins has already avenged that loss by beating Scruggs 2-0 at the Walton Duals to start the season. Collins has been splendid this season. He holds wins over Scruggs, Farr, Cassidy, Smith (twice), Jones (twice) and Robertson. He took 1st at Sham Slam and 5th at Toshiba in Kansas City; he is the Area 7 Champ and East Sectional

Champ. Scruggs on the other hand is looking to become the first state champ from Valdosta since Paul Bess and Jamal Scott went back to back at 171 & 189 in 2005. Scruggs took 1st at The Blue Devil, Valdosta, Fitzgerald, Area and West Sectional. He has wins over Walker, Farr, Major, Noble, Powell and Lawson. With the exception of the early season loss to Collins he has kept his porch pretty clean. So here we are 1-1, and these two grapplers are squared off in the middle of the Gwinnett Arena, as this duel is settled we believe Collins will ride off into the sunset with gold around his neck, is he the good guy or the bad outlaw, I don't know, we'll just call him champ if he's successful. Now with the showdown behind us, let's look at the bounty-hunters listed below.

215 Placement Favorites

Major (12) Alpharetta
Walker (12) Lassiter (215-sq)
Farr (11) Pope

Robertson (12) Camden (215-sq)
Johnson (11) Parkview (171-sq)
Jones (11) Chattahoochee

Major has been the late season threat in this weight class with close decisions over McHorter, Cassidy, Walker and Farr. His 1st at the Area 6 Tournament caught the eye of many, but a loss to Johnson leaves him a bit questionable. He also took 4th at North Metro and 3rd at Coal Mountain, but was pinned by Scruggs in the Sectional Finals. Walker appeared to be on a roll with his 1st at Cobb County, Knoxville Catholic and Fayette he seemed headed to the top of the class, but the Area loss to Major, followed up with a 4th at Sectionals kept him from joining the front runners. Farr has been the most difficult to figure out, his 2nd at Cobb County, 4th at McCallie and 8th at Brecksville Ohio was impressive but losses to Collins, Covert, Walker and Major leave me to think he's a year away from the top spot on the podium. Johnson has sound victories over Major, Cassidy, Jones and Nilson and is the Area 8 Champ and finished 3rd at Sectionals which gets him a second round match with Scruggs. Johnson was undefeated going into Sectionals and then a time running out escape was awarded to Robertson and the streak ended at 49, but he picked it up and finished 3rd by defeating Greer and Jones. Johnson took 1st at Southern Slam in South Carolina, Gwinnett County, Brookwood and Coal Mountain and the Area 8 Championship as well. Jones has wrestled Collins closer than anybody this year, losing two decisions 3-2 and 3-1 he took 1st at The Hooch, beating Rechsteiner in the finals and 2nd at Area losing only to Collins. He took 2nd at Coal Mountain, 3rd at Santa Slam and 4th at Last Man Standing. We believe the battle for 3rd – 6th will be a good one and look for 3 of these guys to be back next year ruling this weight class. WHERE'S THE BEEF, OK now I see it, the 285's.

2009 AAAAA 285 Pound Weight Class Front Runners

Mena (12), Union Grove (285-3rd/ Region Champ; '07-sq/Region Champ)
Francis (12) Walton (285-sq)

The Storyline: It took 91 holes to decide the 2008 US Open Championship, a historic battle between two incredible golfers, Tiger Woods and Rocco Mediate, neither guy wanted to go home as this marathon golf tournament seemed to just keep going forever. Just as the 08 US Open, we see this finals match going into overtime after overtime as we have finally reached the big guys. For the first time since Drake wrestled, I am finally excited about the Heavyweights and the group we have this year. Mena and Francis have taken the place of Tiger and Rocco in the battle of the big boys. Mena comes rolling into Gwinnett like a freight train with 1st place finishes at South Metro, Loganville, Henry County, 2nd at Brecksville Ohio and North Metro. He is 55-2, with both losses coming to out of state wrestlers and one to the #11 ranked kid in the country Johnson of Brecksville. He has wins over Orielly, Malone, Aiken-Phillips, Hagan and Elakatt. Mena is 287 lbs and runs a 4.9 40, power cleans 320lbs and bench presses 405, he's a freak. He will need all he has for the finals as we have him squaring off with Francis a guy just as big as himself. Francis has been hurt most of the season with only a 16-2 record, but he came back just in time to win The Cobb County with a pin over O'Reilly, 2nd at Area and beat Hodge in the Sectional finals 3-1 and that sealed his fate for a finals showdown and rematch with Mena from the 08 Brecksville, OH tournament where Mena pinned Francis in the 1st period. Francis is big enough to handle Mena size and strength and that's what will make this an interesting match up and let's see who scores the first point because we all know, that could determine your state champ in this one. As we wrap up this report, we chose the Big Guy Mena over Francis in what we think will be a very long 285 final. As we approach the last green, let's look at the other hackers in this weight class.

285 Placement Favorites

Hodge (12), Kell (215-2nd)
Aiken-Phillips (10) Central Gwinnett (285-sq)
Chumley (12) Cherokee (285-sq AAAAA)

Elakatt (12) Parkview
Hagan (10) Mill Creek
Crenshaw (11) Lowndes (285-sq)

Hodge is no joke; he is 54-1 with wins over Francis, Chumley, O'Rielly and Thomas. Hodge wrestles with a different style than the normal big guy and this can pose a problem for Mena in their semi finals match up. Hodge took 1st at The Hooch, Mohawk, Whitewater, Area and 2nd at Sectionals. If there is a guy that can stop Mena before he reaches the finals, this would be the top candidate. Aiken-Phillips has been very solid throughout the year with 1st at Apalachee, The Panther, Santa Slam, 3rd at North Metro, Gwinnett County losing to Hagan, 1st at Region and 4th at Sectional losing again to Hagan 4-3. He will get Hodge in round 2 and the winner should see Mena in the semis. Chumley had a rather unique Sectional tournament; he gets defaulted during his first match and then rips off 5 in a row to take 3rd at Sectionals, taking O'Reilly, Thomas, Timpano, Harp and Crenshaw down in the process. The goal at state will be to start that winning streak in the championship bracket and then keep it going. Elakatt took 1st at Brookwood and 4th at North Metro, finished 2nd at Region and that proved to be a blessing in disguise as it kept him away from Mena until the finals at Sectionals. His bracket draw is rather friendly until he reaches the semis and takes on Francis. Hagan gets a second round match up with Francis, his reward for beating Aiken-Phillips in the Sectional Con Finals. Hagan was 2nd at Sequoyah, Fayette and Gwinnett County. He has proven to be a worthy opponent with now two victories over Aiken-Phillips this year. Crenshaw comes to us via South Georgia where Football is king. Since he's only a junior, I suspect we will see him again next year. He took 2nd at The Blue Devil and 5th at Fayette County. He actually pulled a Chumley at Sectionals as well, or at least he tried, he lost his first match to Thomas and then proceeded to hammer out 4 in a row before losing to Chumley in the Con Finals. So to quote the great Forrest Gump after running for 3 plus years, "I'm tired, I think I'll go home now".

CLOSING COMMENTS: I hope you've enjoyed this report and again I apologize for any mistakes made along the way. I would like to close by saying, that it has been a pleasure being involved in Georgia wrestling for the past 10 years. I have met some of the best friends of my life through this sport and the most competitive kids and dedicated parents imaginable. Don't lose sight of what matters most, the kids, be a role-model and a trend setter, get a child involved in the sport that builds character and instills discipline, bring wrestling into their life, you'll create memories that you cherish together. Take Care and Be Safe.