

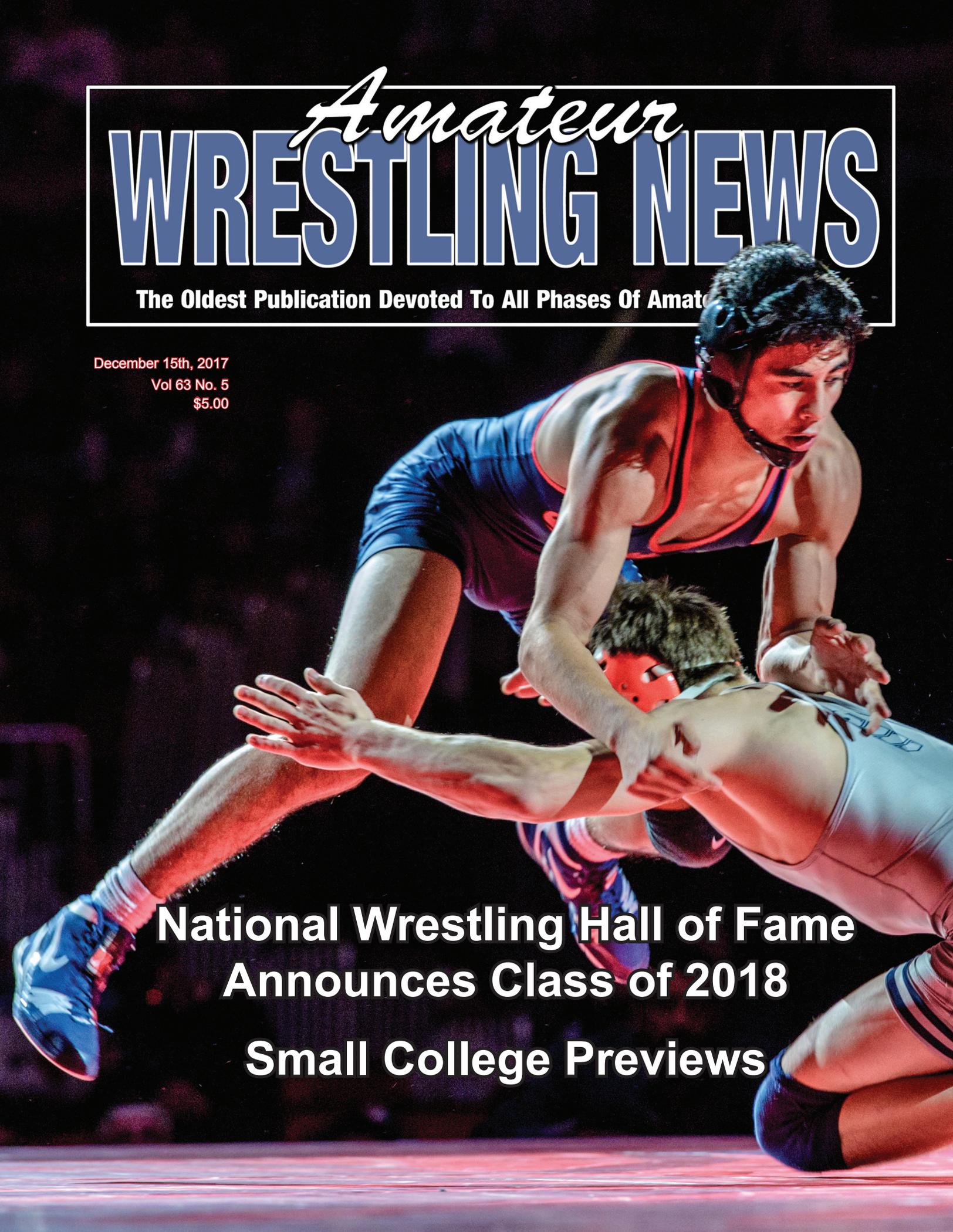
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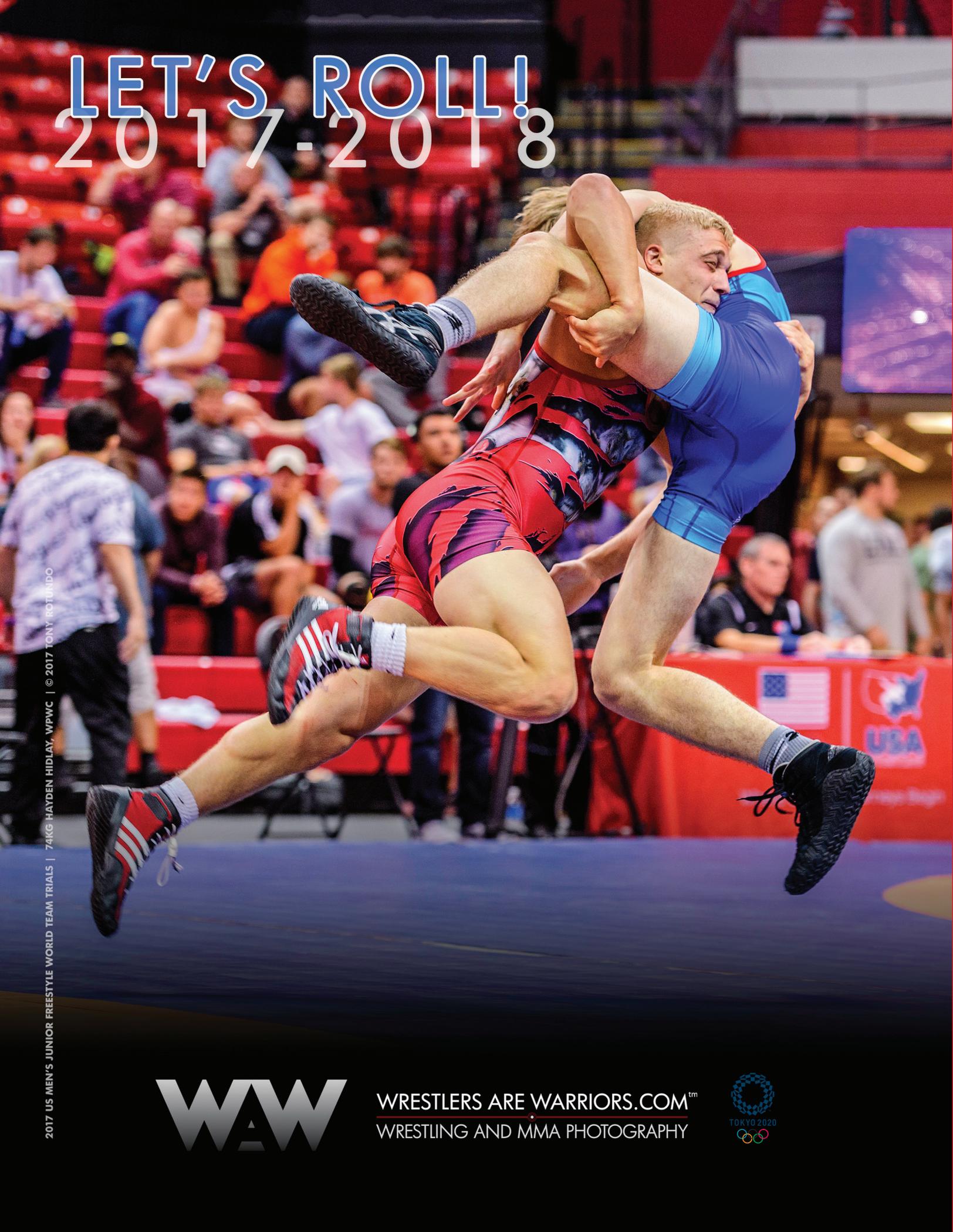
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**National Wrestling Hall of Fame
Announces Class of 2018**

Small College Previews

LET'S ROLL! 2017-2018



2017 US MEN'S JUNIOR FREESTYLE WORLD TEAM TRIALS | 74KG HAYDEN HIDLAY, WPWC | © 2017 TONY ROTUNDO



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On the Cover....

Illinois vs. Fresno State Dual Meet: 141--Michael Carr (Illinois) dec. Chris Deloza (Fresno State), 13-7. In front of the third-largest crowd in program history, Fresno State wrestling made its return to the Valley Nov. 8 in front of 6,840 fans at the Save Mart Center as the Bulldogs fell 33-10 to No. 14 Illinois. Photo by Tony Rotundo



High School Insider

"Life is not a matter of holding good cards, but sometimes, playing a poor hand well."
Novelist Jack London

PERRY, Okla. – This famed small town wrestling team in northern Oklahoma will get national exposure as part of ASICS documentary film *The Price of Legacy: Wrestling with a Dynasty* featuring the Perry high school Maroons. The film now in production is expected to be released during the second quarter 2018. Chance Leonard, the documentary's producer said, "Today is a very special day. Leonard, himself an Oklahoma high school state champ for Perry, said "ASICS is proud to support Perry Oklahoma's historic record-breaking high school wrestling program. It is incredible to think that such a small town could foster a culture that has consistently produced champions for decades. Impressive is an understatement." As a gesture, Perry received new ASICS shoes for every wrestler and coach. Perry has only about 5,000 residents, but its wrestling program has a 90-year legacy. Among the alumni Olympic gold medalist Jack VanBebber and all-time great Dan Hodge. Perry has 162 individual state champs and 41 Oklahoma high school team titles, both national records.

Life long Oklahoman and *AWN* editor Ron Good tells me, "The town of Perry is



consumed with wrestling. During the state tournament in Oklahoma City, Perry will have the largest cheering section in the arena even though it is small town compared to the larger schools. Hard to believe what this tiny town has consistently achieved for so long. One of the most impressive is the fact that half of the University of Oklahoma's 1957 national championship team was made up of wrestlers from Perry. Hodge (first), Rex Edgar (third), Gordon Roesler (third), Leonard Shelton (fourth), and national qualifier Don Studebaker led the Sooners to the national title. The program has produced four Division I NCAA champs, another three small college champs, as well as a long list of college All-Americans. It's a place where every varsity wrestler over the past 50 years has been a part of at least one state championship."

Buchanan In Nation's Top Three

In my opinion, possibly the top three teams

in the nation are Blair Academy (N.J.), Buchanan (Calif.) and Montini Catholic (Ill.) Last season Buchanan finished No. 2 in the nation, and the top public school, behind Blair Academy (N.J.). State guru Al Fontes tells me, "Buchanan high school from the tough Central Valley enters the 2017-18 season as the favorite to win it all this year (after a record setting performance at state last season). The Bears return eleven wrestlers



with state experience. They include returning state champions 113 Mathew Olguin, 120 Ethan Leake and 182 Anthony Montalvo, as well as state seventh 126 Tyler Deen, state runner-up 160 Joel Romero, and state sixth heavyweight Trevor Ervin." Scanning the national scene it appears Buchanan again will be ranked just beneath Blair at No. 2 or No. 3 in the nation pre-season.

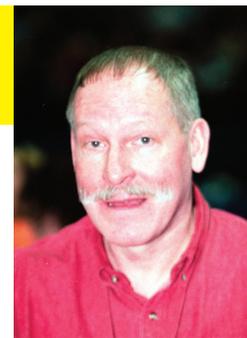
Buchanan head coach Troy Tirapelle tells me, "It should be a great year. We have a program that is established now. By no means are we a college, but that is the goal. We try to show them what the expectation will be at the next level so they are not caught off guard when they get there. All the hard work has come to a culmination for both the wrestlers and the coaches. We have a unique situation where we have 20 plus seniors this year who have stuck around for the four-year commitment and even more. Each year we are placing more and more into the college ranks, which is giving them that little bit of extra edge to drive them. So, we are going to get to see what we are made of. For so many years the staple of the West Coast has been Clovis high. Now it has kind of become our turn at Buchanan to carry the torch. We will head out to the East Coast in early January to try and represent and show how tough we, and California, really are." (To 'Whose No. 1 Duals', Saturday January 13 at Bergen Catholic high school New Jersey.)

California Preview

The top five teams in state according to Fontes are: 1. Buchanan 2. Gilroy 3. Clovis 4. Poway 5. Selma. "Challenging Buchanan for the team race is Gilroy. They return four state medalist, five state qualifiers, and two high caliber freshman, which include three-time

Cadet and Junior National champion Nicolas Aguilar. Clovis is young, but never count them out. Their roster includes three-time state champion Seth Nevills, Giano Petrucelli; and Brandon Paulson, each returning state medalists. The Green Machine from Poway are lead by three-time state medalist Chase Zollman, along with state medalists Jacob Allen, Carson Sauriol, Dominic Mata, and Nathan Tausch. The Green Machine from Poway. Also challenging for a top five finish is Selma from the central section. They return three state medalist, five state qualifiers, and top incoming freshman Richard Figueroa."

"Top wrestlers to watch include returning state champions Jonathan Prata (Downey), Jesse Vasquez (Santiago), Cleveland Belton (St. John Bosco), Anthony Montalvo (Buchanan), Mathew Olguin (Buchanan), Ethan Leake (Buchanan), and Seth Nevills of Clovis, who is in position to earn a fourth state title. Others to watch include Jaden Abas (Rancho Bernardo) and Joshua Kim (Santiago), each two-time state medalists with multiple All-American honors. Keep an eye on the following top level freshman; Richard Figueroa (Selma),



With Bob Preusse



Isaac Salas (St. John Bosco), Luka Wick (San Marino), Ryan Franco (Clovis North), Henry Porter (Oakdale), Jayden Gomez and Victor Jacinto, each from Gilroy."

Blair Academy Still Looms

While Buchanan may be the top public school, the No. 1 overall this season--as it has been so often--is private school Blair Academy. The now legendary program is almost 100 years old and has dominated high school wrestling since the mid-1990's under coach Jeff Buxton and continues now under coach Brian Antonelli. Of course Blair, as a private boarding school known for academics, has advantages over publics, that is why we always mention the best public school too. However Blair's individual excellence and superb coaching must be recognized. When a Blair kid meets a Buchanan kid at 'Whose Number One Duals' in January all that matters is who is the best wrestler that day.

Blair expert and super fan Dave Ritterpusch