

2010 4-A State Preview

by
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103—Rayden Lindley (Mountain Crest) and Britain Carter (Maple Mountain) are two freshmen stars that seem to be the big favorites to end up on top in this weight class. Carter's understudy Brandon George looks to upset his teammate's run while Spencer Davis (Salem Hills) is the most likely wrestler to threaten Lindley.

112—Zabanidi Smethurst (Mountain Crest) gets the job done when it matters. Sophomore sensation Mitch Brown (Payson) looks for his second straight title. Possible upsetters are relatively unknown Casey Stark (Bonneville), Chase Wilson (Salem Hills) and Box Elder's Ben Ferry, but again Smethurst and Brown are the big favorites to reach the finals.

119—A lot of young guns with big talent in freshmen Jed Mellen (Payson) and Grant LaMont (Maple Mountain), and sophomore sensation Cole Ford (Payson). They are hoping to disrupt the title hopes of two-time state champ and Uintah senior Colby Christensen. LaMont is on the same side of the bracket as Christensen while teammates Ford and Mellen are likely to meet in the other semi-final. One darkhorse candidate to note is Logan's Quinn Hickey, the Northern Divisional champ with his glossy 32-3 record. Hickey is also just a sophomore.

125—There will be a lot of exciting matches in the first round but none will be bigger than Rasten Yeates (Box Elder) vs. Tito Ortiz (Payson). Yeates was upset in the semi-finals of the Northern Divisional and finished third while his JV counterpart Zach Harris won the tournament. This put Yeates and Harris on the same side of the bracket giving Yeates a first round match-up with Ortiz who placed sixth at the Southern Divisional. I really believe the winner of this match goes to the championship finals but I believe the match will be more important for Box Elder to win. However, the winner likely meets Dakota Holmes of Uintah who had a great Southern Divisional tournament in a loaded upper half of the background that also has Chase Orwin (Orem), a returning state placer. Zach Loveless (Payson) should cruise to the finals on the bottom half but should be weary of Lehi's Dallin Rice.

130—This weight was loaded in the Southern Sectional with Region 8 studs. The finish at the divisional was somewhat shuffled from its previous week.

However, Box Elder's Cody Bunderson and Payson's Brock Brown seem to be a cut above the rest in a very good weight. The other possible contenders include Tanner Eastmond (Lehi), Zach Staheli (Springville), and fab freshman Jesse Carlisle (Maple Mountain). Bunderson should not overlook Spanish Fork's Traven Gardiner, though Gardiner took 8th at the Divisional tournament he was second at the Region 8 meet and gave Brown a good match losing by just two points.

135—Certainly Koleton Hardy (Box Elder) and Uintah's Damon Mele are impressive wrestlers who should meet in the finals if they wrestle up to potential. But there are some wrestlers that might upset the apple cart. On Hardy's side he'll need to navigate through another freshman sensation from Payson in Kaelen Loveless while Jacob Jensen (Provo) should have proved to Mele that he is dangerous if the Ute doesn't bring his "A" game. Tyson Kendrick of Mountain Crest is also one the favorites should be aware of.

140—Best weight class in the state in my opinion. 5A is loaded with talent but 4A is not far behind. This is also a wide-open weight class with as many as five serious contenders. The top half of the bracket has Brayden Anderson (Sky View) and Taylor Merkley (Uintah) on a collision course. Merkley placed second in state last year in 3-A and Anderson is a two-time returning placer who is wrestling extremely well. The bottom half of the bracket has three strong contenders, all hailing from the Southern Divisional. Brian Shepherd (Provo) won the South but will likely meet DJ Argyle (Timpanogos) in the quarterfinals. Argyle owns a win over the Bulldog while Jeremiah Guzman (Payson) likely waits the winner of that duel.

145—Corrick Knight (Mountain Crest) and Kaleb Ashworth (Spanish Fork) seem to be a bit above the rest of the field here. However, freshman Zach Coffman (Tooele) is dangerous and should meet Ashworth in the semi-finals.

152—Raider Lofthouse (Mountain Crest) is gunning for his fourth straight title. His best match from a 4-A foe came in the Northern Divisional final in Thomas Manning of Tooele. This is a good weight class with Payson's Colton (CJ) Ford, Maple Mountain's Brennen Hyatt and Springville's Dustin Jenkins, who like Manning, dream of dashing Lofthouse's dream.

160—Mountain Crest's Spencer Schwab and Mountain View's Zach Taylor should battle for the right to meet Payson's Colton Cannon who barring slipping on a banana peel should be there waiting in the finals gunning for his second straight title.

171—This weight should be a lot of fun. Certainly Brady Loveless (Payson) is the favorite but there are a lot of good wrestlers with realistic title hopes. Olympus always has a dangerous style and Jon Kacinski is the type of

wrestler that can beat anybody. Devon Montgomery (Pine View) is a physical specimen who placed 5th last year. Mountain Crest has a freshman star in Jaden Niederhauser who might meet Montgomery in a quarterfinal. Wade Young of Bountiful is a good wrestler and he finished fifth at the Northern Divisional but won the Region 6 tournament and has some big wins this year. His first round match with Orem's Seth Snow should be a dandy with the winner drawing Kacinski. Stansbury has a quality grappler in Glen Kummer, but he will be challenged by Mountain View's Bennett Maxwell. Uintah's Tj Hiatt is a stout foe for any challenger. Again, Loveless stands as the favorite, but as you see, this weight is deep with threats.

189—There are no strong favorites here as this weight is as open as any weight gets. Olympus' Steven Hendriks might head the list of competitors as the Titan won both the Region 7 meet and the Northern Divisional. But Hendriks has been beaten by the likes of Sean Smith (Box Elder). Smith is on the lower bracket with Taylor Savio (Lehi). Savio is wrestling extremely well right now winning the Southern Divisional and the Pioneer took second in 5A state last year. Another top competitor is Joseph Carley (Mountain Crest) while Highland's Julio Hernandez is dangerous and should not be taken lightly. The potential Savio-Smith match looms large in the team race.

215—Joel Spendlove (Tooele) has come on strong and might be the man to beat in this weight class. Lehi's Bubba Demke is a returning state placer with gold medal dreams. Dangerous wrestlers exist with Jeff Gueck (Springville), Sylas Wells (Mountain Crest), Chris Warren (Dixie) and Ryan Petit (Box Elder). A good first round match to eyeball will be Mountain Crest's Brennan Archibald vs. Spanish Fork's Cody Duncan—this is a match the Mustangs may need to entertain trophy dreams.

285—Some quality big men here with returning finalists Daniel Crook and Shane Hardy, both of Box Elder. Can this duo do it again and meet in the championship finals? There are plenty of tough hombres that stand in the way. One for Hardy will be Provo's Likio Pope who should meet the Bee in the quarterfinals. If Hardy can get through Pope, Southern Divisional champion Chad Gough (Snow Canyon) is lurking—if he can get past Mountain View's Clancy Holz. Daniel Crook's biggest threat may come from Robert Thompson (Woods Cross) but Southern Divisional runner-up Aaron Turley (Springville) is a quality grappler that might stand in Crook's way to a second straight title.

Predicted 4-A Finalists:

- 103—Rayden Lindley (Mountain Crest) vs. Britain Carter (Maple Mountain)
- 112—Zabanidi Smethurst (Mountain Crest) vs. Mitch Brown (Payson)
- 119—Jed Mellen (Payson) vs. Colby Christensen (Uintah)
- 125—Rasten Yeates (Box Elder) vs. Zac Loveless (Payson)
- 130—Cody Bunderson (Box Elder) vs. Brock Brown (Payson)
- 135—Koleton Hardy (Box Elder) vs. Damon Mele (Uintah)
- 140—Taylor Merkley (Uintah) vs. Brian Shepherd (Provo)
- 145—Corrick Knight (Mountain Crest) vs. Kaleb Ashworth (Spanish Fork)
- 152—Raider Lofthouse (Mountain Crest) vs. Thomas Manning (Tooele)
- 160—Zach Taylor (Mountain View) vs. Colton Cannon (Payson)
- 171—Devon Montgomery (Pine View) vs. Brady Loveless (Payson)
- 189—Steve Hendriks (Olympus) vs. Sean Smith (Box Elder)
- 215—Joel Spendlove (Tooele) vs. Bubba Demke (Lehi)
- 285—Daniel Crook (Box Elder) vs. Shane Hardy (Box Elder)

Team Race: Last year I boldly predicted a Payson triumph but I also predicted 8 finalists for the Lions. When they “only” got five in the finals I figured the Lions were doomed. They wrestled incredibly on the final day winning 14 of 15 matches and won four of five finalist matches including three by pin. I’m predicting Box Elder and Payson to have six finalists, Mountain Crest to have four and Uintah to put three in the finals. I doubt that I will get that exact, maybe not even that close. I don’t think the Lions will need 8 wrestlers in the finals though they are actually capable of putting nine in the finals as Ortiz (125), Kaelen Loveless (135) and Guzman (140) are certainly viable candidates. I think the Lions have some other wrestlers capable of winning matches such as Tyson Wilson (145), Westin Orton (103), Austin Riding (130) and Broden Parkin (189) and I think two of that quadrant will place. The Lions did not qualify the numbers of Box Elder and Mountain Crest but their qualifiers are quality and most of them finished first, second or third in what I believe is the much tougher Southern Sectional. It’s not that Payson is out of the woods or a lock. Box Elder seems to have separated themselves a bit from Mountain Crest, not sure exactly why since the Mustangs got them in the dual and at Richardson but the Bees seem to be buzzing and their JV has some tough wrestlers. People in Vernal are hopeful that I’m selling the Utes short and they will get a trophy, I’m not seeing that in the cards as I see the Utes in a fourth quite a

bit behind the top three. Maple Mountain is the team I see nailing down the fifth spot. Right now I'm favoring Lehi for the sixth spot followed by Tooele and their probable two finalists. The final three spots are anyone's guess but I will give it a shot and go with Mountain View 8th, Logan 9th and Pine View 10th. So what do I see in regards to who ends up at the top? Can the Lions roar back to the second straight title? Will Box Elder's number be too tough for anyone to overcome? Can Mountain Crest save it's best to last. Well let's just say I'm seeing Green.

Preece's 4-A Team Predictions:

1. Payson
2. Box Elder
3. Mountain Crest
4. Uintah
5. Maple Mountain
6. Lehi
7. Tooele
8. Mountain View
9. Logan
10. Pine View