

## **State Tournament Previews**

**By**

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The theme for this article is breaking through. If you keep pounding on that glass ceiling hard enough, long enough you should break through, shouldn't you?

Well, Delta is ready to break through in 3-A and establish its own dominance. They will shatter that glass ceiling by a large measure bringing to state 25 or so qualifiers and 11 Southern Section champions. Delta has only one other state title at 3-A and but are set to win some more if the current system remains. This is truly their breakthrough year and their margin of victory and points scored should be a 3-A record! It would end Wasatch's stranglehold on this classification as the Wasps have won six straight and eight this decade.

In 4-A (where I break down that tournament completely in a related story) it is time for a Utah County break through. Region 5 has dominated recent tournaments, especially Mountain Crest with three straight state titles and Box Elder has been second all of those years. Box Elder won the last non-Mountain Crest state title. The last Utah County team to take state was Spanish Fork with its back to back titles in '03 and '04 but the Dons have since moved up to 5-A but will return to 4-A next year. Payson had some great teams in the late 1990's under Ric Thompson. The Lions won their only state title (hard to imagine a program that has been this good for a pretty long time has taken state only one time) in 1998 and took second in 1999. Many are wondering if this team will be like their 1999 team where they won five individual titles and didn't bring home the gold, something that Thompson and many other Payson fans wouldn't think possible in the 4-A/5-A tournament. I've heard many times Thompson say the 1999 team was the better team, or best in school history. But perhaps 10 years later the young Lions can do something that their counterparts couldn't do in 1999, take state and have five or more individual titlists! They might need seven state finalists to do it and who knows as that might not be enough to take the gold trophy in 4-A home as Mountain Crest and Box Elder with its superior numbers and depth hope to take the trophy back north. Then there's Springville, perhaps this year under the radar, can they sneak in and win the thing? If so it would be the school's first ever state team title and with Maple Mountain to open next year, it will be their last shot (at least for a long, long time). On the other hand Maple Mountain will be a huge factor next year and many of Springville's wrestlers including their Head Coach, will be at the new school just wearing different colored singlets and coaching shirts.

In 5-A the breakthrough theme lies mostly with Davis. Yes, Davis was the wrestling dynasty in Utah in the 1940's and early 1950's but hasn't won a state title since, or even a trophy. A few years back they came in as the favorite but stumbled to a sixth place finish. The year before that Davis took third which seemed to telegraph a state title. This is Davis' best chance since those teams to go home with the big trophy. It took a while for a Region One team to break through besides Layton and then Viewmont did and the trophy has stayed in Region One hands ever since. Weber was trying to break through

and had to watch Fremont take home the gold one year, Layton one year and Viewmont several years before the Warriors finally broke through in 2006. Now Davis says it's their turn and with 21 qualifiers they might have the chance. Still, they haven't been able to get past Viewmont in any tournament they have met this year including Layton, Viewmont and the Region One meet last week, or in the dual meet. So at state? We'll have to see. The other breakthrough theme lies with Pleasant Grove who has been shut out of a state title this decade and wants to return to its glorious past and also be the first team since Brighton in 2001 to take 5-A gold that hasn't been from Region One.

In 1-A the breakthrough story lies with Monticello. Since Joe Wolfe Davis took the Buckaroos to six straight titles in late 1970's into the early 1980's Monticello has been shut out from taking home the gold trophy. The Buckaroos have ventured some years into 2-A but being reclassified to 1-A several years ago has given Monticello new life in chasing their state title dreams. They seemed like a big favorite but in a small field of teams where numbers of wrestlers mean everything, all of sudden Monticello looks vulnerable and Altamont might deny this southeastern Utah wrestling community a trip down memory lane.

In 2-A, who can breakthrough against Millard? And when will it happen--if ever? Two teams entertain those aspirations but one might have the stronger case and that team would be South Summit. They just won their sectional tournament and have a myriad of talented wrestlers, especially in the lighter to mid weights. Millard won't give up the gold trophy without a fight and the Eagles know how to get it done winning their sectional by a large measure. Still, the new scoring system where JV wrestlers can go to state but not score team points directly, has given South Summit and others, namely North Sevier this year as the other possible breakthrough team, increased hope.

So let's just see who I predict to breakthrough or not:

### **5-A Team Predictions:**

1. Viewmont
2. Davis
3. Fremont
4. Pleasant Grove
5. Weber
6. Layton
7. West Jordan
8. Bingham
9. Spanish Fork
10. Lehi

#### **4-A Team Predictions:**

1. Payson
2. Box Elder
3. Mountain Crest
4. Springville
5. Mountain View
6. Roy
7. Cottonwood
8. Tooele
9. Olympus
10. Provo

#### **3-A Team Predictions:**

1. Delta
2. Wasatch
3. Uintah
4. Cedar
5. Logan
6. Morgan
7. North Sanpete
8. Hurricane
9. Canyon View
10. Salem Hills

#### **2-A Team Predictions:**

1. Millard
2. South Summit
3. North Sevier
4. Juab
5. North Summit

#### **1-A Team Predictions:**

1. Altamont
2. Monticello
3. Duchesne
4. Wayne
5. Milford