

2014 DIVISION I STATE TOURNAMENT

DIVISION I

Trey Grine became Fremont Ross' first state-placer since 2005 when he placed fourth at 145 pounds last March at the Division I state meet.

This year, he'll be one of the favorites for top spot.

Grine has been dominant en route to a 37-1 record entering Thursday's prelims. He'll take on Youngstown Boardman's Mario Graziani (40-7) in his opening match.

Grine earned a dominating 17-1 tech fall over Nordonia's Mike Decesare to win the district title this past Saturday.

"He looked absolutely dominant to where the kids he was facing couldn't do anything against him," Little Giants coach Mike Mezinger said. "Before he went out for that title match, we talked and I told 'let's make a statement right here.' And he went out and got it done. He's looking good. He's confident and ready to go down with the mindset that needs to have four good matches."

Grine became Ross' all-time winningest wrestler earlier this year when he passed Tylor Trautwein's all-time career-win total.

"Right now, he's wrestling as best as he's wrestled all year," Mezinger said. "We took him over to Clyde (Tuesday) and he and Beau (Minnick) were going at it on the mat. The best thing that ever happened to him was when Beau beat him at the Clyde tournament. Right after that, Trey ended up getting refocused for the second half of the season.

"He's really been working hard and he's really peaking at the right time."

Ross' Trayvion Scott (113), Bailey Mezinger (126), Tyler Grine (138), Peyton Geary (152), Jordan Weissinger (160) and Kieler Foster (182) all were district qualifiers.

"As a team we wrestled well," coach Mezinger said. "That's the best we've ever wrestled all the way thru the tournament. We were very aggressive throughout.

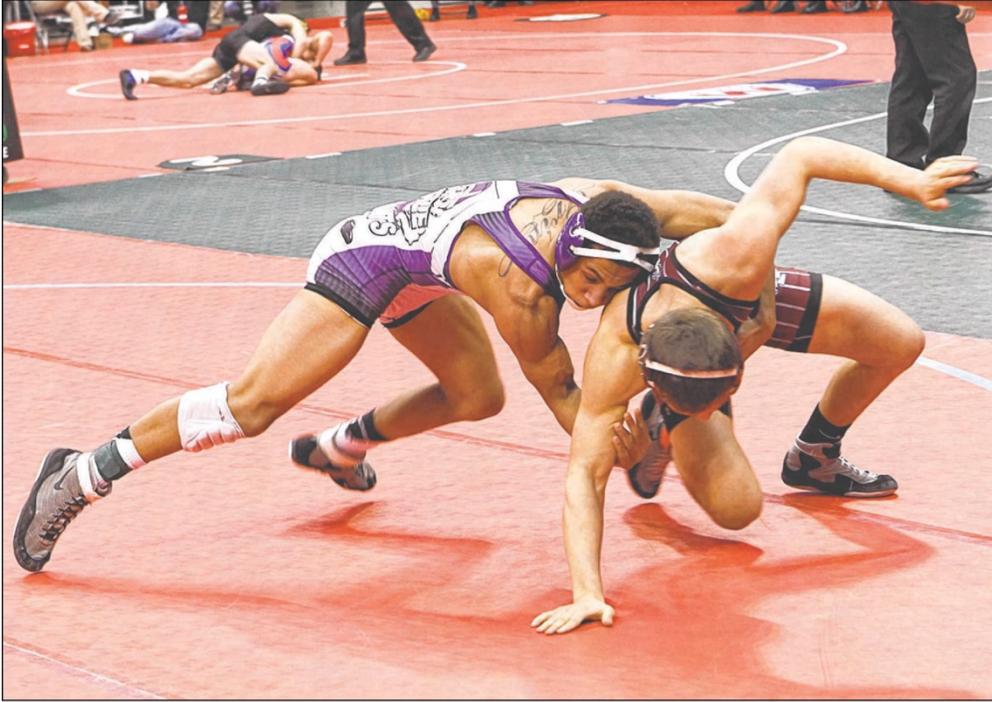
"I couldn't have asked for anything more. We just got beat by tougher kids that day."

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STATE WRESTLING



Fremont Ross' Trey Grine grapples during Thursday's Division I state wrestling tournament inside Ohio State's Value City Arena. LEE WELCH/NEWS-MESSENGER CORRESPONDENT

Local grapplers off to good start at state

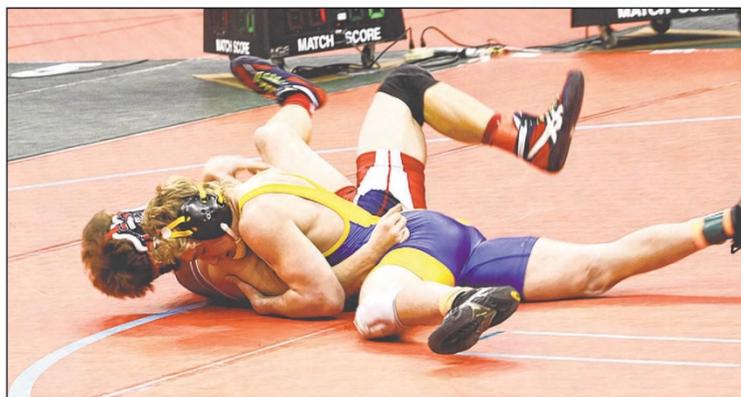
Fremont's Grine takes first step

By Dan Gilles
News-Messenger correspondent

COLUMBUS — Fremont Ross senior 145-pounder Trey Grine is coming into the 77th Annual Ohio State Wrestling Tournament with the hopes of becoming his school's second state champion and first since 1960. Grine, who placed fourth at 145 at last year in Division I, passed his first test on Thursday at Ohio State's Value City Arena, but just barely.

Grine, who was nearly turned twice during the wild final seconds of his first-round bout with Boardman's Mario Graziani, was awarded two back points just before the final buzzer, giving him an 8-6 victory and a berth in today's quarterfinal round.

"I wanted to try and turn him there," Grine said. "I tried to turn him a couple of times and it backfired on me. But going into the last 10 seconds, I knew I had to get that turn. I



Clyde's Blake Miller wrestles Newark's Ethan Fout during Thursday's Division II state wrestling tournament at Ohio State's Value City Arena. LEE WELCH/NEWS-MESSENGER CORRESPONDENT

had to take him down or get a tilt or something to get those two points. Fortunately, I used my foot to stop him from rolling through so I could get that two."

Other area first round winners included St. Joseph Central Catholic's Corey Durbin

(285), Woodmore's Evan Ulin-ski (113) and Margaretta's Deven Taylor (145) at Division III, and Clyde seniors Beau Minnick (145) and Blake Miller (152) at Division II.

Grine (38-1) battled through a scoreless first quarter before taking a 3-2 lead on Gra-

ziani after two periods. He increased that lead to 4-2 with an escape, but gave up a take-down to tie the score before back-to-back reversals knotted the score up at 6-6.

"I'm shooting for the top of

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the podium,” Grine said. “It’s been my dream since I was a little kid to win state, and I’m going to make it happen this year.”

Grine, who won the Cleveland State District championship last weekend, will meet Lancaster junior Tanner Miller (48-6) in the quarterfinal round.

STATE WRESTLING TOURNAMENT



Fremont Ross' Trey Grine battles with Lancaster's Tanner Miller during the state wrestling tournament on Friday, Feb 28, 2014. LEE WELCH / NEWS-MESSENGER

Big night for Fremont on big stage

Ross' Grine, SJCC's Durbin make finals

By Dan Gilles
News-Messenger correspondent

COLUMBUS — Fremont Ross coach Mike Mezinger had never coached a wrestler in a state championship match.

Trey Grine, in Mezinger's final season as the head wrestling coach at Ross, earned two dominant victories Friday.

St. Joseph Central Catholic senior heavyweight Corey Durbin (39-1) pinned defending state champion Patrik Garren of Columbus Bishop Ready in 3:49 to punch his ticket into the final match.

"To make it on my own is great," Durbin said. "But with Trey making it as well, that's two Fremont people in the finals, and that's just awesome."

Grine was the projected state runner-up.

"I've always wanted to wrestle on that stage," Grine said. "It's going to be the greatest feeling in the world after I win, or if I win, hopeful-



Clyde's Beau Minnick squares off against Claymont's Caden Herron during the state wrestling tournament on Friday, Feb 28, 2014. LEE WELCH/NEWS-MESSENGER

ly. I'm going to wrestle hard, just like every other match I've wrestled this year."

Grine will meet projected state champion Kyle Kowalski (51-2) of Dresden Tri-Valley in tonight's Division I 145-pound championship match.

"It feels good knowing that I placed, but I didn't come here to get fifth or sixth," Grine said. "I came here to get

first."
Mezinger was emotional when discussing Grine and revealing his intention to retire after the state finals. Grine said he wouldn't be in the finals without Mezinger.

"I'm speechless," he said. "It's been a dream of ours, and now it's becoming a reality. It's right in front of him. It's just awesome to see his pro-

gression from five years old to 18."

Durbin began his day with a pinfall in 3:18 over Independence's Paul Deely in the quarterfinals. However, Garren, a two-time state placer, jumped out to a 5-1 lead in the semifinal before Durbin stuck him.

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(39-2) weren't able to make those droughts end.

Grine came up just short in his quest for history, as Dresden Tri-Valley junior Kade Kowalski (52-2) handed him a 6-2 defeat in the finals. Meanwhile, Durbin, who pinned defending state champion Patrik Garren in the semifinals, was defeated by Akron Manchester senior Jacob Hanzel (36-3), 6-0.

"I don't really know Corey Durbin that good, but I know he got to the finals as well, and he wrestles for St. Joe," Grine said. "I'll be pulling for him. Hopefully, we're putting Fremont on the wrestling map with how we did."

Added Durbin: "I definitely think wrestling in Fremont is on the rise, that's for sure. Both St. Joe and Ross are about winning. Getting to the state finals isn't a joke, that's for sure. Hopefully, this gets more kids involved, and it could be great."

Grine was the highest

state finisher for Ross since 1991. Kowalski became Dresden Tri-Valley's first state champion.

Both of Grine's points came on penalty points late in the match. By then, Kowalski had opened up a 6-0 lead on two takedowns and two escapes.

"He ankle-picked me, and I wasn't ready for the ankle pick," Grine said. "He caught me off guard with a re-shot ... I don't know what happened. I wrestled bad out there."

"I'm happy I reached this stage. I accomplished my dream, kind of. I wanted to get into the finals, and I got there. I didn't make it to the championship, but that's alright, I guess. Second place is alright, but it's not first."

Ross wrestling's Mike Mezinger couldn't say enough nice things about his two-time state placer, who took fourth at 145 at last year's state tournament.

"It's been a great career and a great season," said Mezinger, who is retiring after a 10-year stint as the Little Giants' wrestling coach. "He has noth-

ing to be ashamed of. If you can place in the state tournament twice and finish as a runner-up, that's not too bad. He's got to keep his head up.

"He has the career wins record for Fremont Ross. He's just had one great career. He's got to keep his chin up."

Grine said he wants to wrestle in college, but he's undecided on where he wants to go.

"It's been fun wrestling at Ross these last four years," Grine said. "I'm gonna miss it. It sucks that I end my career here with a loss, but it happens, I guess."

Durbin was taken down once in all three periods by Hanzel and wasn't able to get free to score any points.

"It was definitely an experience, one that I won't forget, that's for sure," he said. "Running out of the tunnel, being the first heavyweight to be called and looking up and hearing the cheers is definitely exciting. I wish the outcome could have been different, but things happen."

"I'm definitely not

down on it. I reached my specific goal, which was to defeat the defending state champ, whether it was in the semis or the finals, and then to reach the finals was cool, too."

Durbin had two pins during his 3-1 state tournament run.

"I'm very happy with my season," Durbin said. "My coaches were great this year. I wish the final result could have been different, but I'm happy with how I did. It was an exciting weekend and it was fun. That's all that matters."

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Grapplers Grine, Durbin make Fremont proud

Ross, SJCC wrestlers state runners-up

By Dan Gilles
News-Messenger correspondent

COLUMBUS — Trey Grine and Corey Durbin compete for different schools in different divisions and in different weight classes.

But, on Saturday night, the two seniors had two things in common — they both competed for individual state wrestling championships, and they both represented the city of Fremont at Ohio State's Value City Arena.

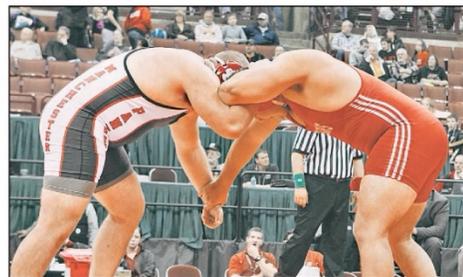
Unfortunately, they also had a third thing in common — their respective results in those championship bouts.

Both Grine, a Fremont Ross



Fremont Ross' Trey Grine (bottom) wrestles Dresden Tri Valley's Kade Kowalski in the Division I 145-pound title match Saturday at Ohio State's Value City Arena. LEE WELCH/NEWS-MESSANGER CORRESPONDENT PHOTOS

145-pounder going for a championship in Division I, and Durbin, a St. Joseph Central Catholic 285-pounder trying for a Di-



St. Joseph Central Catholic's Corey Durbin, right, wrestles Jacob Hanzel of Akron Manchester during their 285-pound Division III title match Saturday at Ohio State's Value City Arena.

Ross' first state champion since 1960 and second overall. Durbin was trying to become SJCC's first state champion since 1983

and third overall. However, both Grine (40-2) and Durbin

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ON TO THE NEXT ONE



Ross' Trey Grine wrestles Vito DiBenedetto of Upper Arlington during the first day of the Ohio High School State Wrestling Tournament in Columbus, Feb. 28, 2013. Lee Welch/News-Messenger

GRINE'S NEW MARK

Ross grappler's 152 career wins is a new school record

By Kevin Shields
Sports writer

FREMONT — Ross' Trey Grine is shy, like most, when it comes to public speaking. He'll be the first to admit he's deferred to other senior

teammates when it comes to being the vocal leader in his team's wrestling room. Get Grine on a mat, though, and his opponents only wish he had a reserved demeanor. The 145-pound Little Giant wrestler, known for his

aggressive attack style, became Ross' all-time wins leader this past Saturday with his 152nd career victory in the semifinals—overtaking Tylor Trautwein's mark of 151 wins set back in 2011 — at Clyde's Dale Carroll Invitational. "I didn't know I was that close to it. I thought I was way behind it still," said Grine when asked what it felt like to

"It's made me motivate myself even more than before and allowed me not to be all cautious about my record."

TREY GRINE, FREMONT ROSS WRESTLER

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Grine

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become his school's winningest all-time grappler. "My goal is raise that mark higher and higher."

But Grine was not truly happy with the accomplishment. He wanted 153 instead.

His 5-1 finals loss to Clyde's Beau Minnick was his first after 20 wins to start the year.

Grine, 152-18 in his four-year high school career, is currently ranked first in the state in his weight class in Division I, according to InterMat Wrestling.com.

"I'm actually happy he beat me, looking back at it now," said Grine of Minnick, a fellow senior he's been friends with their Biddy days. "It's made me motivate myself even more than before and allowed me not to be all cautious about my record. Now, I can open myself up and just wrestle."

"Plus, I'd rather lose now than lose later when it really counts."

Others helped in the motivation, too. According to Grine, he received many phone calls and was stopped constantly in the hallways on Monday by fellow students. Everyone had the same question: what happened?

"Even the best wrestlers lose," Grine said. "I'm not Superman."

First came the anger, then came humility. The competitor inside Grine hated the loss and what it did to his win-loss column, yet at the same time, the student of the game inside of him was eating it up. Grine isn't one for scouting opponents, but he loves to scout himself.

"After I let him cool down and let him get the anger out of him, I told him, 'hey it happened. Now it's time to take the mistakes you made and learn from them, but let's get refocused and concentrate on our second part of the season,'" Ross coach Mike Mezinger said. "He was totally on board with that. Losing was probably the best thing that could have happened to him."

Instead of pouting about it for the rest of the weekend, Grine went back to Clyde on Sunday to try and settle the score with his long-time friend. If they were to wrestle 10 times, Grine might beat Minnick in nine of them. Actually, he did.

"I've beaten him every time we've wrestled since we were little kids, so that was his first time beating me," Grine said. "But he's no slouch. He's a great wrestler, and he beat a state champion earlier this year, which proves that."

As for the Sunday rematch?

"I took it to him and beat him in practice after I finally opened on him," Grine said. "If I had just

done that Saturday it would have been a way better match. But that's wrestling."

"I guarantee I'm about to lose no more, though. I want to be at the top of that state podium."

Is that Grine being arrogant? No.

Confident? Yes.

Grine was 48-4 a year ago. His fourth-place effort at state, at 145 pounds, snapped an eight-year placement skid for the Little Giants' program. He was 41-7 as a freshman and 43-6 as a sophomore.

"He lost his go-to state match as a sophomore in overtime to a kid from Perrysburg, and that haunted him all summer long," Mezinger said. "So that summer he got into the Freestyle/Greco Roman wrestling, and he said, 'that will not happen again.' So he worked his butt off all off-season and it didn't happen again."

"When he wrestled the same kid last year for the go-to state match, he just dominated the kid. And again this year, he worked hard over the summer. Once he puts his mind to something, it's hard to get him off-course."

Grine was the Three Rivers Athletic Conference wrestler of the year as a junior, and over the summer, earned MVP honors at the prestigious Disney Duals in Orlando, Fla.

"He's probably got another 20 matches to go this year if he makes it

down to state again," Mezinger said. "Him breaking our career record this early is no surprise. It just says a lot about the type of wrestler he is. One good thing that has helped him is he's stayed healthy. He hasn't been hurt in his four years, and he's been so consistent in his performances."

The top 30 career victories list in Ohio starts at 180 wins.

Ross senior Peyton Geary, Grine's wrestling partner in the practice room, earned his 100th career earlier this season, while Bailey Mezinger reached 100 with his first-place finish at Clyde.

"Me and Peyton (a 160-pounder) still work with each other and keep pushing ourselves to be the best we can be," Grine said. "We both want to go back to state again. Hopefully we'll have a few more along for the ride this time."

Either way, coach Mezinger's program has come a long way in his 10-year stint.

"All these accomplishments just speak volumes for much this program has grown," he said. "Not only do we have a great high school program, but our middle school program has yet to lose a tournament they've entered."

"It's a great time to be a Ross wrestler."

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