

# **Falcons Soar Away With Third Straight 1A/2A State Tournament Title**

*By Billy Buckheit © all rights reserved*

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## ***Winters Mill Crowns Three Champions, and One Runner-Up in Title Flight***

Winters Mill found themselves in a familiar position at the end of the 1A/2A State Wrestling Tournament at Cole Field House on Saturday night. The Falcons (#3 in the latest rankings by the Maryland State Wrestling Association) were perched atop the standings for the third consecutive season, outpointing runner-up Owings Mills by 33.5 points (121-87.5).

"(I feel) tired, tired, getting all these guys where they need to go," Falcons Head Coach John Lowe said. "It's exhausting, but very gratifying. I'm glad to see all these guys finish up the way they should. I'm very pleased."

"(It was a) great last round, watching some of these seniors make it all the way and finally do the job. And for Wes to get redemption, because he lost to Johnson two years ago, it couldn't end on a better note."

Winters Mill advanced four grapplers to the championship finals. Three came away as state champions.

145lber Wes Cook (#5 by the MSWA) won his second consecutive state title. This one was a little sweeter than the previous one though, as he defeated Owings Mills' #8 Demetrius Johnson in the finals. Johnson beat Cook in the state finals when both were sophomores.

It was a 1-0 match until late in the third period, when Cook escaped. He earned a takedown shortly after to go up 3-1. Johnson was able to escape, but could not secure a takedown. Cook won the match 3-2.

"It feels better than the first one, no better way to end my wrestling career," said Cook. "The build up all year was there. We didn't see each other at the duals, but we both knew we were seeing each other here (the state tournament)."

"I kept saying in my mind, weather the storm, weather the storm eventually I'm going to have more gas than him, and I did. It's what I worked for all year, going extra hard in practice pays off right there."

#5 Cody Sharkey (152) and #9 Chase Cullison (170) won their first state titles. Both put on impressive displays in the finals.

Sharkey beat South Carroll's Same Willingham (#17) by major decision 15-3. Cullison pinned North Carroll's Andrew Merrill (#10) at the 4:29 mark of the third period. In the semi-finals Cullison beat defending state champion #3 Matt Gancayco (Patuxent) 4-3.



Chase Cullison (Winters Mill) executing the fall vs. North Carroll's Eddie Merrill in the 170lb final

Finishing in second for Winters Mill was heavyweight Jake Utz (#11). Utz is a junior and will be one of the go to guys for the Falcons next year.

Arizona Oxendine (#25) was Winters Mills other state placer. He came in 5<sup>th</sup> at 160.

Runner-up Owings Mills had four wrestlers reach the podium. #11 Jake Rendelman (106) and Johnson reached the finals, but came up short in their title quests. Rendelman beat #5 Owen Rill (North Carroll) 8-6 in the quarter finals.

Johnson won by technical fall in the quarter finals and pinned his semi-final opponent, #14 Josh Loveless (Oakdale). The win put him in the state finals for the second time in his career. Johnson finishes his career as a four time state placer, and one time state champion.

"It feels good. It feels like I'm just getting revenge for last year when I had a fractured ankle wrestling here," said Johnson. "I'm coming back this year hard, trying to do it for my team."

The Eagles had two grapplers place third, #6 Antwan Reddick (152) and #19 Komil Juraev (182).

Rounding out the top five were Glenelg (87 points), Catoctin (85 points), and Oakdale (66 points).

Glenelg's Sean Twigg (#2, 285) became a two time state champion in his second consecutive finals appearance. Twigg beat Utz 1-0.

"(I feel) pretty good. I wanted to hold him down, then get out," Twigg said. "Most heavyweight matches are low scoring it comes down to a point or two."



Glenelg's Sean Twigg celebrates his 2<sup>nd</sup> state title.

The Gladiators had four other grapplers earn awards. #15 Ryan Carter was 4<sup>th</sup> at 138, #12 Anthony Pagnotta took 5<sup>th</sup> at 170, unranked Zach Shackelford placed 5<sup>th</sup> at 126, and #17 Tim Null came in 6<sup>th</sup> at 106.

Catoctin advanced three wrestlers to Saturday's finals and came away with two champions. #5 Charlie Perella (132) and #5 Tim Nordan (113) won crowns, Collin Schildt (160, #6) was a runner-up. Garrett Buckley (106, #13) came in 5<sup>th</sup> place for the Cougars.

Perella won his title by fall over Mountain Ridge's #6 Adam Martz at the 4:19 mark of the third period. It was Perella's third win this year over Martz in four meetings. Martz was a state champion last season.

Nordan survived a first period scare when Snow Hill's Naiheem Knight (#10) threw him to his back for five points. Nordan was close to being pinned, but recovered and went on to win the match 9-6.

Knight beat defending state champion Austin Shaffer (Southern Garrett, #6) 11-9 in the semi-finals on the strength of a similar first period throw that resulted in five points.

"I can't describe it in words. It feels awesome," Knight remarked. "It's everything I worked for, for four years. He's a pretty tough kid. And to come out there and get the first takedown feels pretty good. Once I got the first takedown, I knew that I had the match in my hand."

Schildt lost to Rising Sun's Anthony Cimososi (#3). It was Cimososi's second straight state championship. The senior was a state runner-up as a freshman and sophomore.

"(It's) amazing, like the first one all over again," Cimososi said. "Collin's a great wrestler, works his moves well, made it to the finals. I just outdid him in the first period."



Rising Sun's Anthony Cimososi controls Catoctin's Collin Schildt in the 160lb final.

Oakdale claimed the school's first ever state champion when #16 Ryan Simonica (220) beat #6 Ryder Cavey (Century) 6-5. The decision reversed the result from the West Region final, won by Cavey.

"I'm so pumped, so pumped right now," Simonica said. "It's great to win a state title. I knew I had to wrestle smart, wrestle hard, don't make the same mistakes I did last time."

The Bears didn't have to wait long to get their second state champion. #3 Anthony Savage (120) defeated the #1 wrestler in the state, Chris Brown (Perryville), 7-3 to claim his title.

Savage, who transferred to Oakdale this year, was a 3A/4A state runner-up last year at Tuscarora High School.

"It feels amazing," said Savage. "To come that short last year, then coming up and winning the state title it's the greatest feeling ever. I have never felt better."

If the 1A/2A division started with the lightweights Savage would have been the school's first state champion, but instead they started at 285 and worked backwards.

"I'm proud of Simonica," Savage added. "He really stepped it up. For him to go three years of wrestling and come up to the state championship, that's amazing. I'm proud of him, I would never have it a different way."



Anthony Savage works for the takedown vs. Chris Brown

Josh Loveless (145, #14) finished in third place for Oakdale.

Pikesville's Travon Wright (#13) pulled off an overtime upset at 138lbs of returning state runner-up #4 Matt Capobianco of Middletown. It was Wright's first state title.

#19 Jaiveon Turner (Cambridge-South Dorchester) had the biggest upset of the finals at 126. Tuner won in overtime against #2 Zach Smith (Kent Island). Smith had previously beaten Turner in the Bayside Conference finals and the East Region finals.



Jaiveon Turner (Cambridge-SD) tries to throw Kent Island's Zach Smith in the 126lb final

South Carroll's Steven Schmitz (#3) won his first state title 3-1 over Wicomico's #4 Alex Pullen.

At 195 Queen Anne's Matt Olauson (#3) defeated Fallston's Ridge Myers (#8) 8-3 in a battle of returning state placers. The win was Olauson's, first state championship.



Matt Olauson (Queen Anne's) works to keep Fallston's Ridge Myers in bounds.

The last match of the night in the 1A/2A division was at 106. #1 Nick Miller (Williamsport) completed his title run with a pin over Rendelman at the 1:46 mark of the first period.

The junior who was a state runner-up in West Virginia was the only grappler to win a title by pinning all four of his opponents.

“It was pretty good. It was actually a good feeling,” said Miller. “I definitely wasn’t expecting it (to pin all of his opponents).”

“It was definitely fun, different than where I’ve been at before. Coming in as new to Maryland and then taking it (the state title). It was fun, I liked it, I had a lot of fun.”

#### **Team Scores (top 20)**

- 1-Winters Mill 121
- 2-Owings Mills 87.5
- 3-Glenelg 87
- 4-Catoctin 85
- 5-Oakdale 66
- 6-Oakland Mills 62
- 7-South Carroll 59
- 8-Kent Island 50
- 9-Snow Hill 45
- 10-Manchester Valley 43.5
- 11-Century 41.5
- 12-Patuxent 39
- 13-Queen Anne’s 38.5
- 14-Southern Garrett 38
- 15-North Carroll 37.5
- 16-Southern-AA 37
- 17-Fallston 36
- Tie-Williamsport 36
- 19-Mountain Ridge 35.5
- 20-Wicomico 35

#### **Championship Finals**

- 106-Nick Miller (Williamsport) pinned Jake Rendelman (Owings Mills), 1:46
- 113-Tim Nordan (Catoctin) dec. Naiheem Knight (Snow Hill), 9-6
- 120-Anthoney Savage (Oakdale) dec. Chris Brown (Perryville), 7-3
- 126-Jaiveion Turner (Cambridge-South Dorchester) dec. Zach Smith (Kent Island), 3-2 UT
- 132-Charlie Perella (Catoctin) pinned Adam Martz (Mountain Ridge), 4:19
- 138-Travon Wright (Pikesville) dec. Matt Capobianco (Midletown), 6-5 OT
- 145-Wes Cook (Winters Mill) dec. Demetrius Johnson (Owings Mills), 3-2
- 152-Cody Sharkey (Winters Mill) maj. dec. Sam Willingham (South Carroll), 15-3
- 160-Anthony Cimatori (Rising Sun) dec. Colin Schildt (Catoctin), 8-6
- 170-Chase Cullison (Winters Mill) pinned Eddie Merrill (North Carroll), 4:29
- 182-Steven Schmitz (South Carroll) dec. Alex Pullen (Wicomico), 3-1
- 195-Matt Olason (Queen Anne’s) dec. Ridge Myers (Fallston), 8-3
- 220-Ryan Simonica (Oakdale) dec. Ryder Cavey (Century), 6-5
- 285-Sean Twigg (Glenelg) dec. Jake Utz (Winters Mill), 1-0

#### **Consolation Finals**

- 106-Camden Fischer (Snow Hill) dec. Cody Matthews (Mountain Ridge), 5-0
- 113-Austin Shaffer (Southern Garrett) dec. Stevan Smith (Kent Island), 6-2
- 120-Zach Hensley (Oakland Mills) dec. Lamont Brickous (Parkdale), 6-2
- 126-Colby Janowitz (Manchester Valley) dec. Joe Kuegler (Liberty), 1-0
- 132-Casey Shea (Liberty) maj. dec. Colton Smith (Kent Island), 10-0
- 138-Jake Trybus (Bohemia Manor) dec. Ryan Carter (Glenelg), 3-0
- 145-Chase McKenzie (Southern-AA) dec. Jason Noss (Patterson Mill), 4-2
- 152-Antwan Reddick (Owings Mills) dec. Billy Fritz (North Carroll), 2-1
- 160-Jaron Smith (Oakland Mills) dec. Justin Peacock (Kent), 5-0
- 170-Matt Gancayco (Patuxent) dec. Jake Pooton (South Carroll), 5-0
- 182-Komil Juraev (Owings Mills) dec. Adam Fitzwater (Brunswick), 3-1
- 195-Scott Cooper (Southern Garrett) dec. Payton Beachum (Western Tech), 4-0
- 220-Mike Tremper (Southern-AA) dec. Wyatt Griffith (Easton), 3-0
- 285-Brion Blades (North Carolina) dec. Robb Donovan (Kent), 8-1

### **5<sup>th</sup> Place Matches**

106-Garrett Buckley (Catoclin) dec. Tim Null (Glenelg), 7-5  
113-Tyear Castle (Bohemia Manor) dec. Chris McAleer (Manchester Valley), 8-1  
120-Logan Garland (Manchester Valley) dec. Randy Watson (Sparrows Point), 3-0  
126-Zach Shackelford (Glenelg) dec. Alfred Martinez (Dundalk), 3-1  
132-Tejon Anthony (Western Tech) dec. Chris Gonzalez (Snow Hill), 5-2  
138-Connor Furst (Patuxent) won by forfeit over Chris Long (Sparrows Point)  
145-Josh Loveless (Oakdale) pinned Garrett Coburn (Fallston), :51  
152-Mareico Green (Surrattsville) dec. Wade Bishop (North Caroline), 14-9  
160-Arizona Oxendine (Winters Mill) pinned Brandon Buckingham (Century), 1:30  
170-Anthony Pagnotta (Glenelg) dec. David Doring (Perryville), 5-1  
182-Nathan Cook (Harford Tech) won by default over Kevin Snyder (Century)  
195-Robby Happy (Oakland Mills) dec. Deon Hector (W.E.B. Dubois), 9-5  
220-Eddie Gillin (Queen Anne's) dec. Marlon Jones (Wicomico), 7-6  
285-Roy Kadje (Oakland Mills) dec. Wayne Maddox (Dundalk), 3-2