

Lower northjersey.com **weights during 2025-26 season**



Sean Farrell

NorthJersey.com

Dec. 8, 2025, 4:42 a.m. ET

With the high school wrestling season starting this week, it's time to preview North Jersey's top wrestlers.

First up is a look at the lower weights.

Muhammad Abuhadba

Passaic Tech senior

Abuhadba went 29-13 last season and dominated the Passaic County tournament with three straight bonus-point wins at 113. He also picked up a victory in Atlantic City.

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JoJo Burke

St. Joseph sophomore

Burke authored a storybook debut, winning a state title at 106 and clinching the team's Non-Public A crown in the final bout. The Park Ridge native was 37-3 and went unbeaten against New Jersey opponents.

Michael Echeverri

Northern Highlands junior

Echeverri qualified for states for the first time last season while compiling a 33-7 record. He also placed fourth in the Bergen County tournament at 120.

he only began wrestling as a freshman.

Joseph Pellicci

Paramus Catholic sophomore

Pellicci made an immediate impact as a freshman, winning Bergen County gold and reaching the state quarterfinals. The Stamford, Conn. native tallied 31 victories for the Paladins.

Joseph Rizzuto

DePaul senior

Rizzuto is a three-time Passaic County finalist who struck gold last year at 120. He wound up with 33 wins and a state sixth-place medal at Boardwalk Hall.

Chace Severs

Lakeland junior

Severs has made the Passaic County final in back-to-back years and went 27-11 last season with 20 pins. He'll be the centerpiece for the Lancers under new coach AJ Puerto.

Jocelyn Danbe

River Dell junior

Danbe (25-3) repeated as county champion and returned to the state podium last year with a runner-up finish at 120. The Oradell native piled up 22 pins, including 18 in the first period.

Emes became the Panthers' second state qualifier in the last decade after falling one win short as a freshman. He finished at 33-10 after moving up the Bergen County podium from eighth to second.

Charles Esposito

St. Joseph senior

A Rutgers commit, Esposito is a two-time state medalist who was last year's runner-up at 113 pounds. He owns district and region titles and placed seventh at the Beast of the East last December.

Johnathon McGinty

St. Joseph senior

Ranked sixth in the country at 120 pounds, the Oklahoma commit is already a two-time state finalist and three-time placer. McGinty went 34-6 last year with 14 pins and eight technical falls.

Matthew Mulligan

Bergen Catholic sophomore

Mulligan (28-9) broke through at 106 pounds last winter, winning county and region titles before placing eighth at states. He was part of a deep freshman class that helped Bergen Catholic finish in the state's top-10 with six to eight rookie starters.

Alec Murado

Demarest senior

Gusfa became Ridgewood's first state champion in 60 years by winning the 100-pound gold last March. The Bergen County MOW went 24-1, added eight wins against boys, and is ranked seventh nationally after a Fargo All-American summer.

Ava Novello

Mahwah senior

Novello is coming off an excellent season at 107, where she went 20-8 with 16 falls. She placed third in both the Bergen County and region tournaments.

WRESTLING

North Jersey wrestlers to watch at middle weights during 2025-26 season



Sean Farrell

NorthJersey.com

Dec. 9, 2025, 8:48 a.m. ET

With the high school wrestling season starting this week, it's time to preview North Jersey's top wrestlers.

In Part 1, we covered the lower-weights. Next up is a look at the middle-weights.

Nicholas Barone

Paramus Catholic senior

Barone rebounded from an early season injury to finish 24-8 and reach the Bergen County finals last year at 138. He fell just one point short in the state blood round.

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Mikey Bautista

St. Joseph senior

Bautista cruised to district and region gold before falling in the state blood round at 126 pounds. The Army commit went 28-6 last season.

Joey Canova

Bergen Catholic senior

The Princeton commit won his second Bergen County title last winter while helping the Crusaders regain the team crown. His 30-4 season ended in the region finals with a torn ACL and meniscus.

Gideon Gonzalez

Bergen Catholic sophomore

Gonzalez (33-7) has quickly made a name for himself, getting seventh in Atlantic City as one of only two freshman state qualifiers at 138. Over the summer, he added a Fargo national title in the 16U Greco-

Roman division.

Seach Hibler

Paramus Catholic senior

Hibler (22-7) is a two-time state medalist, taking second in 2024 and eighth in 2025 while competing up at 144 pounds. The Edgewater native is committed to Northwestern.

Brian Little

St. Joseph junior

Little arrives as one of the biggest transfers of the offseason after going 16-5 a year ago at Don Bosco. He captured district and region titles despite missing time with a broken ankle.

Ryan Mitchell

St. Joseph junior

Mitchell (15-4) pinned his way through districts and placed third at regions to qualify for states. He proved to be an unsung hero for the No. 1 team in New Jersey by delivering a key decision in the Non-Public A final at Rutgers.

Nicholas Pallitto

Paramus Catholic senior

The Edinboro commit is part of a loaded Paladins lineup that returns 11 starters. Last year, he compiled a 32-9 record at 132 pounds while winning county, district and region titles.

Delvan Rotte

DePaul junior

Rotte has already won two Passaic County titles and owns a 65-22 career record. He reached the third round of wrestlebacks in Atlantic City last season after a 30-win season at 126 pounds.

Sowzrawca Tsay

Bergen Catholic senior

Tsay elevated his game after transferring from Wayne Hills, finishing 25-11 and placing eighth in the state at 150. He is now a three-time state qualifier.

Olivia Georges

DePaul senior

Ranked third nationally at 155, Georges tied a North Jersey girls record last March by locking up her second state title. The Bloomingdale native went 34-2, pinned her way through the postseason and added a junior national title in Fargo.

Maya Kitov

Ridgewood junior

Kitov (25-7) captured Bergen County gold at 138 by pinning top-seeded Samantha Goworek in the finals. She also won Garfield Holiday and Lady Cutter Classic titles before reaching the region blood round.

Lily Massenzio

St. Mary sophomore

Massenzio transferred from DePaul after placing second in the state at 132 as a rookie. The Ridgewood native and daughter of two-time state champ Mike Massenzio, she went 36-5 with a region title in her debut.

Mia Spadavecchia

Westwood junior

Spadavecchia became Westwood's first county champion since 2019 by collecting three pins in under six minutes. She won 16 matches and came within one victory of reaching the state tournament in Atlantic City.

WRESTLING

North Jersey wrestlers to watch at upper weights during 2025-26 season



Sean Farrell

NorthJersey.com

Dec. 10, 2025, 4:37 a.m. ET

With the high school wrestling season starting this week, it's time to preview North Jersey's top wrestlers.

The last in our three-part series is a look at the upper-weights.

Cristian Alvarez

St. Joseph senior

The Woodcliff Lake native (33-3) is one of North Jersey's best dual-sport athletes after leading the Green Knights to Non-Public A titles in both football and wrestling over the last 12 months. An All-State lineman bound to play football at Delaware, Alvarez ranks sixth in the country at heavyweight after placing second in the state last March.

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William Capizzi

Passaic Valley senior

The countdown is on for the Mercyhurst commit, who enters the year two wins shy of 100. A two-time state qualifier, Capizzi (34-8) will compete at 175 pounds for the Hornets.

Dante DeLuca

Don Bosco senior

DeLuca, a Columbia commit, went 30-1 at 215 pounds last season and stayed unbeaten until the state finals. A team captain in both wrestling and football, he churned out more than 1,800 career rushing yards on the gridiron.

Part 1: North Jersey wrestlers to watch at lower weights during 2025-26 season

Part 2: North Jersey wrestlers to watch at middle weights during 2025-26 season

AJ DiGiovanni

Bergen Catholic senior

DiGiovanni emerged late last season after limited action at St. Joseph, winning a region title as the sixth seed. The Lyndhurst native capped the year at 21-13 and advanced to the State Round of 12 in Boardwalk Hall.

Gabe Jang

Leonia/Palisades Park senior

The Lions heavyweight is a two-time county medalist who wound up fourth in 2024 before getting silver in 2025. A year ago, he reached the state championships and posted a 29-6 record.

Nevin Mattessich

Don Bosco senior

Mattessich returns at 190 pounds for new coach Alex Almeyda Sr. after taking seventh in the state last year and fifth as a sophomore. The Brown commit also won a Bergen County title last season en route to a 38-6 record.

Chad McConnell

Pompton Lakes junior

McConnell (36-6) is a returning state qualifier who racked up bonus points for the Cardinals last winter with 16 pins and 14 technical falls for the Cardinals. He has twice finished runner-up in the Passaic County tournament at 165.

Matthew Morrissey

Old Tappan sophomore

Few rookies stood out more than than Morrissey (20-5), who placed second in the county and district tournaments at 215 before having to withdraw from regions. His walk-off pin at Pascack Valley sent Old Tappan on the way to a league title.

Guy Oelsner

Paramus Catholic senior

After missing most of his sophomore year with a dislocated shoulder, Oelsner came over from Tenaflly last winter and made a huge impact. He was 33-11, captured bronze in the Bergen County tournament and reached the state blood round at 215 pounds.

Santino Rodriguez

Don Bosco senior

Rodriguez (37-6) is a three-time district champion and two-time state medalist who placed third last year at 165. The Cornell commit plans to bump up one weight class as a senior.

Jeffrey Papienuk

West Milford senior

It's already been a decorated season for Papienuk, who rushed for over 1,000 yards for the first-place Highlander football team. On the mat, he broke out last year by reaching the Passaic County finals at 215 and the third round of wrestlebacks in Atlantic City.

Andria Tatishvili

Fair Lawn senior

Tatishvili won 18 matches as a first-year wrestler and punched his ticket to Atlantic City with back-to-back victories in region wrestlebacks. He returns at 190 pounds for a veteran Cutters squad coming off a run to the North 1, Group 4 semifinals.

Francesca Muia

Ramsey/Northern Highlands senior

Muia powered Ramsey to a share of the Bergen County team crown with her gold at 235. She finished 23-10 and helped the Rams place fourth at the coach-run state duals in Howell.

WRESTLING

Full list of medalists at 2026 Bergen County wrestling tournament



Sean Farrell

NorthJersey.com

Updated Jan. 18, 2026, 7:40 p.m. ET

Here are all the wrestlers who reached the podium at the 2026 Bergen County Tournament.

Finals coverage: Bergen Catholic wrestling repeats as county champ behind six winners

106 pounds

1. Ryan Halal (Bergen Catholic)
2. Alexander Dyki (Northern Highlands)
3. Luke Rivara (Ramapo)
4. Maxim Gaft (Pascack Hills)
5. Garrett Bunagan (Ramsey)
6. Gabe Reyes (North Bergen)
7. Cole Ranley (River Dell)
8. Vincent Petriello (Dumont)

113 pounds

1. Anthony Riotto (Bergen Catholic)

2. Johnny Emes (Glen Rock)
3. Alessandro Camargo (Paramus Catholic)
4. Evan Constante (Emerson/Park Ridge)
5. Alexandria Barskiy (Paramus)
6. Connor DePersis (Ramapo)
7. Jake Van Wettering (River Dell)
8. Hugo Tsurushima (Cresskill)

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120 pounds

1. Dave Vazquez (North Bergen)
2. Micah Loudermilk (Bergen Catholic)
3. Hassan Shawkat (Pascack Hills)
4. Alec Murado (Demarest)
5. Jacob Paulter (Paramus Catholic)
6. Camilo Sampedro (Dwight Morrow)
7. Linkin Dimaya (Paramus)
8. Jack Ranley (River Dell)

126 pounds

1. Matthew Mulligan (Bergen Catholic)
 2. Joseph Pellicci (Paramus Catholic)
 3. Michael Echeverri (Northern Highlands)
 4. Benicio Reboiro (Westwood)
 5. Rohi Hubert (Glen Rock)
 6. Mateo Toledo (Hasbrouck Heights)
 7. Ethan Dowling (Ridgewood)
-

8. Mike McCormack (North Bergen)

132 pounds

- 1. Andrew Bonita (Don Bosco)**
- 2. Lucas Reeves (Bergen Catholic)**
- 3. Matt Velez (Pascack Hills)**
- 4. Dmytro Bohdan (Paramus)**
- 5. River Hibler (Paramus Catholic)**
- 6. Nico Cassano (Rutherford)**
- 7. Adan Cedeno (Pascack Valley)**
- 8. Nico Nipitella (Hasbrouck Heights)**

138 pounds

- 1. Jacob Inserra (Pascack Valley)**
- 2. Sowzrawca Tsay (Bergen Catholic)**
- 3. Giovanni Giardina (Waldwick/Midland Park)**
- 4. Ryan McKenna (Dumont)**
- 5. Dylan Macaluso (Old Tappan)**
- 6. Hudson Pascual (North Bergen)**
- 7. Michael Archvadze (River Dell)**
- 8. Dylan Cerciello (Saddle Brook/Lodi)**

144 pounds

- 1. Gideon Gonzalez (Bergen Catholic)**
 - 2. Dylan Biegel (Pascack Valley)**
 - 3. CJ Anzaldo (Ramapo)**
 - 4. Nick Guastello (Paramus)**
-

5. Brandon Mayock (Indian Hills)
6. Joe Keeler (Rutherford)
7. Liam Hayes (Waldwick/Midland Park)
8. Luca Iachetti (Glen Rock)

150 pounds

1. Ethan Brantly (Ramapo)
2. William Clasen (Northern Highlands)
3. Robert Bianchi (New Milford)
4. Omer Atila (Tenafly)
5. Trevel Griffin (Cresskill)
6. Joey Rondinelli (Bergen Catholic)
7. Rodney Delgado (Ramsey)
8. Patrick Rotella (Pascack Hills)

157 pounds

1. Luke Stempkowski (Pascack Valley)
2. Harry Asatrian (Paramus Catholic)
3. Joe Aiello (Paramus)
4. Daniel Washburn (Bergen Catholic)
5. Austin Chimielowiecc-Falone (Garfield)
6. Damien Pierro (Don Bosco)
7. Muhammed Tafida (Bergenfield)
8. Benyamin Zafrir (Tenafly)

165 pounds

1. Manny Gusfa (Bergen Catholic)
-

- 2.** Giammaria Giordano (Paramus Catholic)
- 3.** Lucas Van Veen (Pascack Valley)
- 4.** Levi Schulmann (Northern Highlands)
- 5.** Louis DellaVolpe (Don Bosco)
- 6.** Branden Causillas (Ramapo)
- 7.** Sebastian Laterra (Elmwood Park)
- 8.** Noah Ross (Mahwah)

175 pounds

- 1.** Gino Gorga (Ramapo)
- 2.** Ryan Sklavounos (Westwood)
- 3.** AJ Digiovanni (Bergen Catholic)
- 4.** Nicholas Giella (Emerson/Park Ridge)
- 5.** Matteos Meschian (Ridgewood)
- 6.** Eoin Maloney (Hasbrouck Heights)
- 7.** Logan Rickard (Paramus)
- 8.** Carlos Rivera (Elmwood Park)

190 pounds

- 1.** Chad Sadaka (Bergen Catholic)
- 2.** Guy Oelsner (Paramus Catholic)
- 3.** Alex Bainbridge (Pascack Valley)
- 4.** Youssef Ibrahim (River Dell)
- 5.** Dean Silva (Lyndhurst/NA)
- 6.** Keith Vandunk (Mahwah)
- 7.** Desmond Graham (Fair Lawn)
- 8.** Derek Cabana (Ridgefield Park)

215 pounds

- 1.** Andria Tatishvili (Fair Lawn)
- 2.** Matthew Morrissey (Old Tappan)
- 3.** Grayson Abbruzzese (Paramus Catholic)
- 4.** Peter Stathis (Bergen Catholic)
- 5.** Oliver Dorin (Ridgewood)
- 6.** Ryan Morrison (Indian Hills)
- 7.** Delvin Oxmann (Pascack Valley)
- 8.** Chase Monahan (Emerson/Park Ridge)

285 pounds

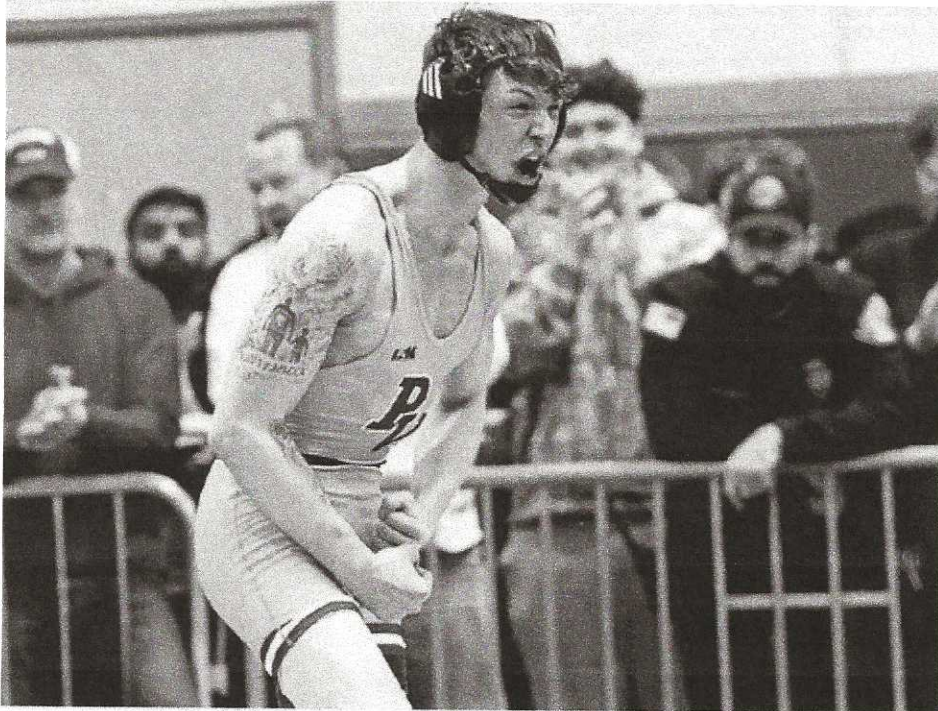
- 1.** Isiah Rodriguez (Paramus Catholic)
 - 2.** Gabe Jang (Leonias/Palisades Park)
 - 3.** Ralphie Barca (Bergen Catholic)
 - 4.** Jayson Fouche (Pascack Valley)
 - 5.** Noel Cruz (Hasbrouck Heights)
 - 6.** Filip Sadowski (Garfield)
 - 7.** Gabe Gomez (Bergenfield)
 - 8.** Vano Zardiashvili (Fair Lawn)
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Crusaders repeat as county champ

BERGEN COUNTY WRESTLING TOURNAMENT

Sean Farrell

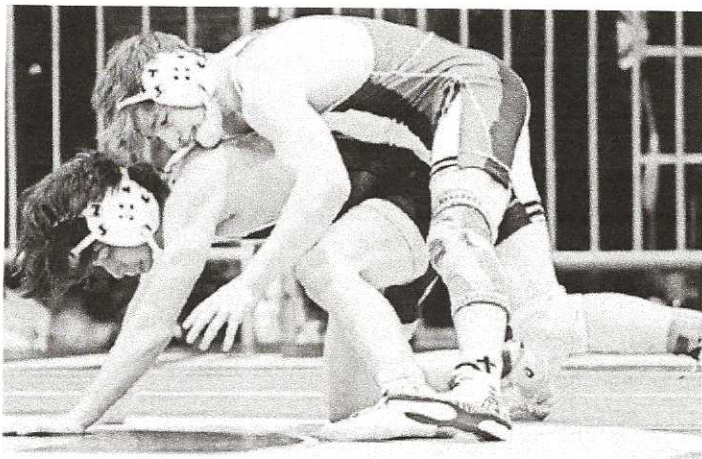
NorthJersey.com USA TODAY NETWORK – NEW JERSEY



Pascack Valley's Jacob Inserra celebrates as he is crowned the champion of the 138-pound weight class at the Bergen County wrestling tournament on Jan. 18 in Garfield. KEVIN R. WEXLER/NORTHJERSEY.COM

Every time Jacob Inserra steps on a mat, he carries his family with him.

The tattoo running down his right arm honors his father, who died in 2020, and the relatives and club coaches who have stood behind him.



Bergen Catholic's Matthew Mulligan wrestles Paramus Catholic's Joseph Pellicci on Jan. 18 in Garfield. Mulligan went on to win the 126-pound match. KEVIN R. WEXLER/NORTHJERSEY.COM

On Sunday, that arm helped deliver one of the most dominant county finals in recent memory – a 14-0 dismantling of Bergen Catholic state eighth Sowzrawca Tsay that gave Pascack Valley its first Bergen County champion since 2018.

The 138-pound sophomore walked off the mat with a bloody lip and plenty of hometown pride. While Bergen Catholic won the team title, the Panthers swept the MOW awards led by Inserra (top lower-weight) and Luke Stempkowski (top upper-weight). No other public school out-scored Pascack Valley in third.

“It means a lot,” said Inserra, now 20-0 on the season. “We all push each other just to get better. We want to be the best.”

Around this time last year, Inserra came to a crossroads while at Don Bosco. When his coach resigned midseason, he watched teammates scatter and wondered where he fit in the sport he loved. Inserra checked out other private schools, but didn’t see a match.

Then the staff at Pascack Valley told him they’d love to have him.

“Obviously, I want to go to a high school and be there for the next four years,” Inserra said. “But it happens. Once our coach left, kids got kicked out. I just didn’t feel good. You can tell how differently I wrestle. Absolutely. I feel so much more happy and confident in myself than last year.”

Bergen Catholic races to the top

The team race once again belonged to Bergen Catholic, which sent close to its full lineup and overwhelmed the field. The Crusaders crowned six champions – Ryan Halal (106), Anthony Riotto (113), Matthew Mulligan (126), Gideon Gonzalez (144), Manny Gusfa (165) and Chad Sadaka (190) – to secure their second straight county title with 364.5 points. Paramus Catholic finished second with 228.

This year’s tournament field was noticeably altered. No.1 St. Joseph did not enter, choosing instead to compete at Escape the Rock in Pennsylvania, and Don Bosco held out its three state medalists due to injuries and match-count limits.

But for Bergen Catholic coach Dom Santoli, the team title still carried tons of meaning. He grew up in Woodcliff Lake, won county gold as a wrestler at Bergen Catholic and sees the tournament as a barometer for Atlantic City.

“To me, this is a major part of what we do in North Jersey,” Santoli said. “I really love this tournament. I always have as a kid and it’s very important to do this.”

Two of his champions – Mulligan and Gonzalez – are sophomores who now sit halfway to becoming four-time county champs. The last wrestler to accomplish that was Bergen Catholic legend Nick Suriano in 2015.

Mulligan delivered one of the day’s marquee wins, knocking off Paramus Catholic’s Joseph Pellicci, 11-6, in the only final featuring two defending champions.

“Matt Mulligan to me in the last year has grown leaps and bounds,” Santoli said. “From a guy struggling with weight at 106, not taking losses very well. To now he is unstoppable. He just keeps relentlessly wrestling.”

At 190, senior captain Chad Sadaka pulled one of the big upsets. Three days after losing to Paramus Catholic’s Guy Oelsner, Sadaka flipped the script with a 4-1 win to clinch his first county title.

“I think that he had tweaked his mentality to kind of eradicate his inhibitions,” Santoli said. “I don’t think he was as worried to lose because he had already taken a loss. So he’s like, hey, let me go for it.”

Good to be green

Ramapo produced its own breakthrough, earning multiple county champions for the first time since 2004. Freshman Ethan Brantley (150) and senior Gino

Gorga (175) both won their brackets with dominant runs as the fourth seed.

Brantley was one of the biggest revelations, scoring bonus points in all five rounds with three pins, a major decision and a forfeit win. His draw opened when top seed Joey Rondinelli of Bergen Catholic missed weight, but Brantley made the most of every opportunity.

Brantley saved his toughest work for last. Early in the final against Northern Highlands' William Clasen, Brantley injured his shoulder while hitting a whizzer, forcing him to sit on the mat as a trainer evaluated him. Down 3-1, Brantley refused to quit.

"I knew I was going to keep wrestling," Brantley said. "I wanted to fight for that win."

Brantley stormed back in the second period before pinning Clasen in 3:42 – a performance made even more meaningful given his family history. Brantley is the youngest of four brothers to wrestle for Ramapo, and he reluctantly admitted that he might now be the best of the bunch.

Gorga, meanwhile, upset Bergen Catholic's AJ DiGiovanni in the semifinals before cruising by Westwood's Ryan Sklavounos, 18-2, in the final. It came a year after Gorga missed the tournament with a broken wrist.

The tournament also made history when Paramus freshman Alexandria Barskiy became the first girls wrestler to medal, placing fifth at 113 pounds.

The other titles went to North Bergen two-time champ Dave Vazquez (120), Don Bosco's Andrew Bonita (132), Stempkowski (157), Fair Lawn's Andria Tatishvili (215) and Paramus Catholic's Isiah Rodriguez (285).