2020 Maryland Public School State Reflections
by Robert YI

2020 may have been the year of MoCo. Steve Runkle mentioned it earlier when he mentioned the prospects for the county with the number of wrestlers ranked 1 or 2 earlier in the season. With Springbrook and Damascus repeating as dual champs and B-CC having beaten both of them, the number of semifinalists, finalists, state placers, and champions, yes....this might have been THE season.

2003 saw 6 champions, 11 finalists.

2020 had 10 finalists, but 8 champs.

You tell your wrestlers that when you get to states, the seeds don't matter. Too many variables for that to always hold true.

Along with MoCo dominance, came the other historic occurrence, girls wrestling, side by side. Two things I realized about. How great it must have been to have a whole tournament to execute their skill sets versus other female wrestlers. The other thing was how much the girls went after it. Not too many stall calls out there. A lot of offense and offensive attempts. Very fan friendly.

Some pretty big time results in Day 1 came early in Round 1 at 113.

Due to returning state champ Eric Liau of Wootton not wrestling his 3rd/4th match at regionals, he drew region champion Nolan Lunsford of South River first. But a couple go behinds and 3 takedowns overall were enough to advance to the quarterfinals, 6-4.

Tuscarora's Jhondy Fuller, who beat Liau in the semis last week, would have a 6-0 lead over Leonardtown's Mathew Oh, before giving up a takedown and 3 near fall in the final 6 seconds to see his finals hopes dashed.

Other MoCo observations in the first round included:

Springbrook's Armon Nettey extended a 3-2 lead with second takedown until the

last :10 seconds of the first 2 periods to pull away at 6-2 and eventually for a 6-3 win.

At 160, Churchill's Vincent Barnaba got a takedown with 1:12 to tie it up vs. regional champ Anthony Sekelow of Parkville, but gave up an escape 10 seconds later and lost by one point, 9-8. Sekulow would win his quarterfinal in OT and end up facing RM's Nicholas McCarthy in the semis.

170- Gaithersburg's Jaedyn Harris had a scare when he was leading 4-1 in the 2nd period, when he gave up an escape, takedown, and 3 back points all in the last :18 seconds of the 2nd period, to go down 7-4. Harris would be down 10-8 with :07 seconds left when he locked a cradle for 3 near fall, to win it 11-10 over Chesapeake's DJ Hoover.

Blair's Nelson Manzoeto and Shalom Aviyi were both leading in the 3rd periods of their first round matchups before giving up takedowns and eventual pins.

At 182, always making it interesting is Rockville's Connor Pace. Pace landed several lat drops for backs that lead to an eventual 16-8 win over regional champ John Ross of Mount Hebron.

Quarterfinals

Some say that this round produces some of the most drama, as podium spots are determined in this round.

106- BCC's Christian Simpson dominated this one through out and was highlighted early with a swing single and a cradle to a 5-0 lead. Simpson would advance to the semis, with the 15-5 win over Jabari Pinkney of Hammond.

In contrast, his eventual semifinal opponent Brian McCaw of Blair, scored a takedown early and cross body rode out Northern Calvert's Dylan Montgomery the rest of the way for a 2-0 win.

The third MoCo resident in the weight class would join them in the semis when Wootton's Jason Liau crushed Man Valley's Travis Green, 13-1.

113

Ike Guttentag vs. Trevor Lorin
This match was most impacted by Guttentag's arm bars from top, as he scored near fall points twice and which eventually resulted in a pin.

Eric Liau vs. Caleb Kearney was a clinic by Liau, as he scored 5 takedowns and two sets of backs from rebar tilts. This would set up the rematch with Ike Guttentag for what some thought of as the finals.

120- Clarksburg's Alex Gonzalez vs. Jake Boog
Gonzalez got the takedown early and locked cradle for 2 backs to a 4-0 lead after one period. Alex would choose top at the beginning of the 2nd and ride Boog out. Boog would choose too in the 3rd but could not turn Gonzales and lost 5-0.

Sean Vosburgh (Leonardtown) vs. Constantinople Gourgoulianis (C. Milton Wright)

This one proved to be quite significant as former state champ Vosburgh held a 5-0 lead in the 2nd period when Vosburgh ended up in a bad position on top and found himself being sat on by Gourgoulianis for the reversal, who then parlayed that into a cradle at :19 seconds and a pin 5 seconds later.

126
James Rivera (C. Milton Wright) vs. Colton DeValle (Damascus)
The 2 time state champ caught DeValle in a spladle in the first 8 seconds of the match, but Colton survived only to be cradled about a minute later for the pin.

Pierre Jean (Springbrook) vs. Rodrigo Cornejo (QO)

This counties rematch started well for Cornejo, as he scored on a low ankle out the back for 2. The match was tied at 3-3 in the 2nd period when Jean escaped from bottom then whipped an underhook that buckled Cornejo off balance and lead to a go behind for Jean making it 6-3. Jean would add another takedown for the 8-3 decision.

Siavash Sarvastani (Northwest) vs. Caleb Chavez (Arundel)

Pivotal showdown here between these top ranked guys. After a scoreless first period, Siavash broke the tie with an escape and held the 1-0 lead heading into the 3rd period. Chavez would get the reversal 14 seconds in and rode Sarvastani out for

the 2-1 win.

138- Grayson Wendel (Springbrook) vs. Austin Rohn (Urbana)

Wendel scored all 5 of his points in the 3rd period, as he got an escape to tie it at 1-1, and hit a fireman dump with about :30 seconds for the go ahead score, 3-1. Grayson would roll thru Rohn's late head and arm attempt for the 5-2 win.

Michael Emerick (Damascus) vs. Kaleb Wellford (North County)

Emerick used a quarter nelson to go behind 2-0, but got reversed and almost gave up backs 2-2. Michael would escape and get a late takedown 5-2, to close out the first period. Sorry, missed how Emerick got the pin here.

Armon Nettey (Springbrook) vs. Caron Tull (Old Mill)

I believe Tull was ranked 1 or 2 for the last couple weeks heading into states. After some concussion protocol for Nettey in the 1st period, Armon would use a tilt (not the last time vs. Tull, see later) in the 2nd period to go up 2-0. Armon would hold on for 3-1 win after 2 stall calls late.

Kevin Fultz (Poolesville) vs. Luke Hoenig (Sparrows Point)

Fultz would make it 4 MoCo wrestlers in the semis (2A/1A all together), when he absolutely dominated Hoenig, being up 7-2 after two periods, only to close out the 3rd period with another 5 points that included 2 nearfall with :15 seconds left in the match.

145- Kaeleb Jones (Magruder) vs. Finn Eskeland (Leonardtown)

Jones was up 4-2 after a couple takedowns, when he lifted Eskeland on a hi-C in the air and put him to his back where he would convert it to a pin.

Jeo Martinez (BCC) vs. Jackson Cohenour (Old Mill)

This one was close at 5-4, early in the 2nd period when Jeo hit a lat drop for 5, to make it 11-4. Martinez would hold on for the 15-10 win to create a counties rematch with Safore Sieh.

Speaking of which, dispatched Chesapeake's Dean Laumann with a :09 second takedown and a pin about a minute later. That made it 3 MoCo's in the semis.

152- Drew Guttentag (BCC) vs. Deolonte Leggett (Roosevelt)

Drew won a takedown contest with 5 of them to a 12-4 major decision.

Jaden Selby (Churchill) vs. Alex Cohen (Sherwood)

After knocking off 4th ranked Thomas Chenoweth of Manchester Valley in the first round, Churchill's Selby would cradle up to pin Sherwood's region champ in the first period.

Jackson Barney (Poolesville) vs. Gavin Lloyd (Havre De Grace)

Barney's quarterfinal was almost the opposite of his teammates's Kevin Fultz's. Although he scored the first takedown, Lloyd would go on to score the next 12.

160- Nicholas McCarthy (RM) vs. Kimon O'Sullivan (Oxon Hill)

McCarthy controlled the flow of this one, especially landing a double leg for a 2-1 lead in the first. Another double in the 3rd, plus 2 backs, put this one out of reach to a 9-3 decision for McCarthy.

160- Colin Savage (Poolesville) vs. Kaleb Neal (Southern-AA)

Savage lead 5-3 in the 3rd period while riding legs when Neal went head hunting and caught Savage's head over the top and stacked him for backs. Savage had to use just about all of his injury time, but managed to finish the match, losing 12-5.

170- Savage's teammate Xavier Kresslein would fare better with a big 3rd period,

scoring all 5 of his points in the final stanza for the 5-2 win.

170-Jaedyn Harris (Gaithersburg) vs. Owens-Pabon (South River)

The first of two really unfortunate season ending injuries. As Harris was in the process of a chin whip, his leg was in a place where Owens-Pabon landed on it. Couldn't tell a specific diagnosis, but Harris did not leave the mat under his own power.

182- Connor Pace (Rockville) vs. Trevon Jordan (Great Mills)

Pace got the first 2 when Jordan stopped wrestling on the edge. But Jordan would get the reversal and lock up a cradle and get 2 backs with :03 left in the first period, making it 4-2. Pace would tie it at 5-5 from a double leg, but would give up the go ahead escape with :29 seconds left. Jordan would win by an 8-5 decision and deny Pace a rematch with Damascus's Aiden Beall.

Aiden Beall (Damascus) vs. Ty Fleming (Northern Calvert)

Although the match started off close at 2-0 after the first period, Beall poured it on scoring 4 more takedowns while picking up stall points along the way to a 13-2 major decision.

Yoann Olympio (Northwest) vs. Anthony Gomez (Springbrook)

A #3 vs #5 matchup according to BillyB, this match never materialized at counties or regions.

Olympio would get the first takedown, but Gomez would make it 2-1, before the close of the first period. Gomez would tie it in the 2nd period 2-2, and hoped to leg ride Olympio out in the 3rd period, but Yoann would escape at the 1:11 mark for the go ahead escape and hold on with a 5-2 win.

195- Damascus's Timothy Furgeson and Sherwood's Adam Pfeiffer would set up their 3rd meeting in the semifinals, with convincing wins in the quarterfinals. Furgeson would pin Troy Gibson in :22 seconds, while Pfeiffer tech falled Chandler

Booker of Chesapeake-AA, 16-0.

220- Mervin Mancia (Blair) vs. Nate Fleming (Old Mill)

Mervin put this match out of reach early with a takedown to 3 nearfall with :19 seconds left in the first period. Mancia would hold on for a 6-2 decision.

Sam O'Brian (Damascus) vs. Jalen King (Bowie)

Sam got the Merkle 2 early and then scored his 2nd takedown :31 seconds into the 2nd period which he converted into a pin, 14 seconds later.

285- Isaac Righter (Magruder) vs. Joe Stanalonis (Leonardtown)

Righter added this :21 second pin to the :19 second pin from the first round.

The Best of the Rest Weight Summary

106- The top 3 wrestlers in the 4A/3A state and 3 MoCo guys going at it for all the marbles. In the semis, Jason Liau came out with a vengeance with a 19-3 throttling of Northeast's region champion Colin Cook. On the other side, BCC's Christian Simpson gave up a scramble for 2 early but was controlling his match with Blair's Brain McCaw from neutral with 4 takedowns in the first 2 periods and a 9-5 lead heading into the 3rd period. McCaw would get as close as 11-9 with a takedown but finished 13-11, in favor of Simpson. This gave us our first all MoCo final of the tournament and a rematch of the regional final. McCaw would wrestle back for 3rd with a 4-2 win over Northeast's Colin Cook.

In the Finals- Looked like a replay of the region finals, as Liau scored the next 14 points after an early takedown by Simpson. Congratulations to Jason Liau for adding a second state title to the Liau house hold. The second Wootton state title of the night, after

113- The big rematch from counties between Guttentag and Liau, ended with a resounding thud, as Ike hipped over Liau from the seatbelt to a 2nd period pin. And unfortunately for Liau, he would meet Jhondy Fuller of Tuscarora for 3rd/4th, ending with a similar result. Down 1-0 in the 3rd, Liau found himself giving up back to back sets of nearfalls and down 6-0,

eventually losing 7-2.

In the finals- Guttentag vs. Huff (North Point)

Ike was shooting fast and furious, finally landing a swing single 2-0. But an escape and takedown at the end of the first period put Huff up 3-2. The two would trade ride outs on top for most of the next 2 periods until Guttentag would get the escape with :03 seconds in regulation. In OT, Ike would hit a dump near the edge and step over Huff for the win. Congratulations on your long road back from last year's season ending injury and being the first state champ since Charlie Banaszak (2013).

120- Clarksburg's Alex Gonzalez was the county's lone representative on the podium here with a 4th place showing. His 2 losses came to former state champ Sean Vosburgh in the 3rd/4th place match and the eventual state champ in Constantin Gourgoulianis from C. Milton Wright. Getting up on the podium junior year just like big bro (I liked the All-Gonzalez contingent repping Clarksburg in the corner).

126- Like Alex Gonzalez, Springbrook's Pierre Jean was MoCo's highest placing wrestler as he took 4th. But this trip made him a 2 time placer (3rd last year). After falling behind 17-6 to Atholton's David Panda in the semis, Jean wrestled back to the conso finals to face Jonah Richardson of River Hill.

Jean stopped a funk roll for 2 and then whizzer countered for 2 more, to go up 4-1. Richardson would get a Merk 2 and cut Jean's lead to 5-4 before the end of the 3rd period. Pierre had a 8-7 lead took a shot late, but Richardson would funk roll again but this time gain control with :06 seconds left for the win.

132- The last 2 weekends saw Springbrook sophomore Grayson Wendel ascend to a county and regional champion. He saw his run end in the semis, when Arundel's Caleb Chavez beat his second MoCo wrestler in a row (Siavash the round before), 4-1. Chavez closed out periods 1 and 2 with takedowns. Wendel hoped to make magic work on top in the 3rd, but Chaves held on to win 4-1. Grayson would end up losing the next 2 to Bowie's Diamond Kappes and South River's Isaac Barber for 6th place.

Northwest's Siavash Sarvastani would pin Isaac Barber in the conso semis and then beat Bowie's Kappes for 3rd place. Congratulations to you Siavash on your third podium appearance (6th, 2nd, 3rd).

138- You knew MoCo would get someone through to the finals as Damascus's Michael Emerick faced Springbrook's Armon Nettey. Armon would hang in there better than their county semis meeting (6-0) but still couldn't notch a point vs. Emerick, as he would lose by decision 3-0. Armon would face his quarterfinal opponent Caron Tull of Old Mill for 3rd/4th. This match would end with the same score 3-1, but this time in a much more dramatic way. In the ultimate tiebreaker (aka rideout), Tull took bottom, came to his feet, but when Nettey returned him to the mat, he somehow got a tilt to work for 2 nearfall and the win.

In the finals- It was a rematch of last week's regional finals with Emerick squaring off vs. South Hagerstown's Caleb Everhart. Emerick scored first with his patented inside leg to a merk 2. Up 3-2 in the 3rd period, Emerick would lift a single leg and trip for 2 backs, to seal it at 7-2, and eventually 7-3.

Poolesville's Kevin Fultz would improve upon his 5th place finish from last year, when he exacted some revenge against last week's regional final opponent Malakai Cunningham of Williamsport in the conso semis with a 10-8 decision. He would place 4th after losing to Overlea's Jerome Vonziah, 6-2.

145- After Magruder's Kaeleb Jones got the first takedown vs. Huntingtown's Jackson Cramer, I so thought we would have another MoCo final. But that thought disappeared quickly when Cramer spladled Jones for the pin. So instead of an All-MoCo final, we would have an All-MoCo conso final vs. Jeo Martinez of BCC.

Jeo would end up in the conso final despite the strongest effort put forth against the eventual state champion Safore Sieh. Sieh got the first takedown vs. Martinez, but Martinez would ride Sieh out in the 2nd period even causing a stall call vs. Safore for being flat on his stomach for most of the 2nd period. Jeo would escape in the 3rd, to cut it to 2-1, but gave up a takedown with :21 seconds left to sew it up for Sieh.

In the 3rd/4th place match, Jones scored a takedown to go up 3–1, but then got called for fleeing the mat which resulted in a penalty point and then gave up an escape to tie it up. But Jeo would hit an inside trip from a pummel resulting in 2 and 2, and the eventual 7-4 win for Martinez.
Congratulations to Jeo for becoming a 2 time state placer. I think I've underrated Kaeleb for 2 years but there is no mistake that he has been the lynchpin of the program during this time.

In the finals- Sieh vs Cramer

Safore would get a quick takedown but the match would be delayed by a lengthy injury time out (don't know who). When wrestling resumed, Cramer would get a reversal to tie it at 2-2.
But Sieh would return the favor with a reversal 4-2, to close out the first period. After a late 2nd period escape, Safore would pretty much put it out of reach with a dump making it 7-2. Sieh would close it out at 7-3, giving Coach Whittles his first state champ since coming to Springbrook.

152- The second really unfortunate season ending injury came when Marriotts Ridge's 1 ranked Ethan Bohan met #2 Drew Guttentag in the semifinals. Many thought this should have been the finals. The match definitely lived up to its billing early on when both guys went on the offensive and scrambled for about half the period, but for no score. But when Guttentag and Bohan knocked heads, a strange sequence of events occurred. The first being Bohan pinning a semi-conscious Guttentag. After conferring with each other, the refs determined that it was 2 takedown plus 4 for injury related stoppage. Unfortunately, it Drew couldn't answer the bell after injury time had elapsed and Bohan would advance to the finals by injury default.

On the side of the bracket Churchill's Jaden Selby fell behind 7-2 to Arundel's Trevor Gagnon by a power half from legs. But after a reversal in the 2nd period made it 7-4, Selby cranked an arm bar almost to a turn until the ref conspicuously stopped the hold for injury time. That bar was Selby's last good opportunity as he would go for broke late in the 3rd and lose by major decision 13-4. Selby would go to take 5th.

160- Was curious to see how RM's McCarthy vs. Parkville's Sekulow semifinals would play out considering Sekulow seemed to be doing most of his scoring from shot counters. Sekulow would score first, on a takedown with :04 seconds left in the first period. But McCarthy would nab 2 takedowns in the 2nd period to go up 5-4 heading into the 3rd. With Sekulow now having to chase, McCarthy closed out with 3 more points for an 8-4 win and a trip to the finals.

In the finals- Marriotts Ridge's Will Vazmonsky got his escape in the 2nd period, while McCarthy chose neutral in the 3rd and couldn't get that double off for a 1-0 loss. Congratulations to Nicholas on an incredible run and becoming RM's most successful wrestler (and last finalist) since state champion Scott Church in 2003.

After losing in the quarters and taking almost all of his injury time, I wondered if Savage was going to be healthy enough to win the next 4 to come back and grab 3rd. After a pin over Turney of Harford Tech, a 10-2 major over Joe Colony of Kent Island,

Colin would take out 2 regional champs in a row. A 4-2 decision over 2A/1A East champ Jason Mohler and a 4-0 win over 2A/1A North champ Jarius Cannon of Overlea for 3rd place. Congratulations on becoming a 3 time state placer (6th, 3rd, 3rd) for the Falcons.

170- You have to appreciate Poolesville's Xavier Kresslein for coming back after a last second loss in the county finals to Gaithersburg's Jaedyn Harris, and a 14-7 loss to state finals opponent Dustin Macdonald, last week at the 2A/1A West Region finals.

Xavier would sneak out a 3-2 win over Sparrows Point's Jake Rallo when Rallo let Kresslein up at the beginning of the 3rd for the go ahead point 3-2. Xavier would hold on to that 3-2 lead for the win.

In the finals- Kresslein vs. MacDonald

Xavier would try and exact some revenge of last week's regional final result, but fell gave up a scramble takedown for 2. Xavier would score a takedown in the 2nd period to tie it at 3-3, but would give up the escape with :19 seconds left in the 2nd period, to go down 4-3. Kresslein would get the escape in the 3rd period and send it to OT. This time Macdonald went for the shot and Xavier spun behind for the 6-4 sudden victory win. Back to back seasons with Falcon state champions for Coach Tao and Poolesville Nation.

182- Damascus's Aiden Beall and Northwest's Yoann Olympio were on a collision course for meeting 3, but J. M. Bennett's Micah Reddish was trying to spoil that rendezvous in the semis vs. Olympio. After a 0-0 first period, Reddish took the 1-0 lead after an escape in the 2nd period. Olympio chose neutral and bet on himself to get the takedown and did so on a double leg takedown with :14 seconds left.

In the finals- Beall went back to being the takedown machine as he was the aggressor/shooter throughout. Although his first takedown came from underhook ducking an Olympio attempt. Beall would put it out of reach in the 2nd period, with an escape and another takedown to go up 5-1. Aiden would hold on for the 5-3 win. Congratulations to Aiden for his second podium appearance and first one at the top.

195- The finals happened one round earlier in the semis when Damascus's Timothy Furgeson met Sherwood's Adam Pfeiffer for the third time this season. This one played out a bit differently albeit the same result. The match went scoreless in the first and much like last year's final for Furgeson, his only points came on 2 near fall

from top (I know hindsight is 20/20, but why go in the down position to Furgeson?). And also similar to last year's final, Furgeson could not get out from bottom with 2 stall calls going against Timothy amounting to Pfeiffer's 1 point. Adam would take 3rd with a decisive 16-6 win over Urbana's Michael Schifano.

In the finals- Furgeson would use a front head lock and drop to an ankle for a 2-0 lead, Timothy would then reshoot on a low ankle for the second takedown before Furgeson loaded up the pin at 2:41 in the match. The talk continues on who is Damascus Wrestling's G.O.A.T. I've heard a lot of Ryan Lawrence, Scotty Obendorfer, Mikey Macklin and even some Paul Purkey. But with Timothy Furgeson's 2nd state title, 3rd finals and 4 county titles, his name is right there in that discussion.

220- The battle for top MoCo 220 was decided in the consolation finals between Damascus's Sam O'Brian and Blair's Mervin Mancia. This is a rematch from counties where Mancia came out on top. But I will admit, this is where I went to the bathroom before the finals. So Trackwrestling says fall:56, but anyone want to fill in the blank? Shout out to Springbrook's Matt Bauer for taking 5th.

Hwt- Ok, I'm running out of steam here. The only drama for Magruder's Isaac Righter was whether anyone could go the distance.

In the semis- Duval's Elijah Fontem kept it scoreless for 4:42 until getting pinned in the 3rd. Congratulations to Coaches Tao and Hill for having Magruder's first state champ since John Holloway.