

February 25, 2025

By Dennis Garcia
SportsTone.net

GREENSBORO - The county of wrestling champions.

Randolph County has enjoyed quite a bit of success in the NCHSAA state wrestling championships, winning multiple state titles in all but two of the past 14 seasons. The class of 2025 surpassed that and set the bar quite high for future success.



Randolph County wrestlers captured nine state championships Monday at the First Horizon Coliseum, believed to be the most in any one year in county history. Trinity and Wheatmore each had two individual titles in the state 2-A meet with Randleman capturing the other, while in the 1-A meet, Eastern Randolph and Uwharrie Charter Academy each had two state winners.

Among those to win from UCA was junior Lorenzo Alston, who captured his third straight state title, winning the 157-pound weight class to finish 39-0 on the season, according to Trackwrestling.com. Alston will attempt to join a very elite group of wrestlers next year by winning a fourth high school state championship.



State Champion Michael Shropshire.

UCA's Michael Shropshire won the 215-pound title Monday night, while ER's David Lambright (126) and Maddox Carson (285) also captured championships.

In the 2-A meet, Wheatmore's Dominic Hittepole at 175 and Ayden Sumners at 126 captured state titles, while Trinity's Aiden Burkholder won the 106-pound title and Lawson Coltrane the 165-pound division. Trinity, which sent 12 to the state meet, had 10 place in finishing second in the team competition.

In all, 25 wrestlers from the county were medalists. The 1-A division honored four places, while the remaining three divisions honored six in each weight class.

Randolph County had three runner-up finishers, including Trinity's Bliss Joyce at 132 and teammate Briana Joyce (235) in the girls tournament and THS' Jaden Allred at 138. All three wrestlers won three matches to reach the finals.

A total of 44 wrestlers from the county had qualified and competed in the state meets..

Alston continued his stellar career with a technical fall win in the first round, a fall in the second and a 12-2 major decision over Michael Mauro of Bradford Prep in the finals. Alston's win came in the final weight class of the night, nearly four hours after the start.

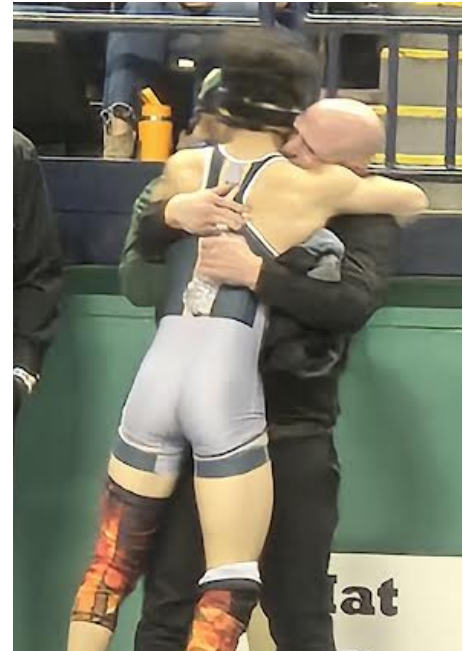
"It's a little boring, the body stiffens up a little, but it also gives you time to think about a game plan for my match," said Alston, who has been under the weather lately. "I wanted to get out here and wrestle to the best of my abilities. When I saw I was up 6-1, I kinda just coasted."

Shropshire, who finished 46-4, recorded a 17-7 major decision win over Aaron Ruiz of Mount Airy in the finals, even though he fell behind early.

"All my hard work paid off and I'm not quitting," the junior said. "I'm going to go get another one. I got taken down, but I wasn't losing. I knew I would win. It was just a hiccup."

There were no hiccups for ER's Lambright (46-2), who earned a 20-2 technical fall win over Swain County's Kale Stephenson.

"My mindset going in was I'd rather die than lose," said Lambright, a junior. "I put in a lot of work. Once I knew I had it, I was excited, ready to scream."



State Champion David Lambright.



State Champion Maddox Carson (right).

Carson, a sophomore, captured the title when he recorded a takedown right at the edge of the mat in sudden-death overtime to beat Alleghany's Jason Vielandi.

"I was nervous in overtime, really nervous, but I wanted it bad," he said. "I was in good shape, prepared very well for this. It feels great."

Burkholder (55-3) won by fall, as he pinned Washington's Sam Boltes in 5:04.

"It's surreal, surreal," he said after leaping into the stands to celebrate with family and friends immediately after winning. "My family being here, all my friends help me so much. Just knowing I got people backing me in the stands."

Coltrane, who finished third last year, finished the season 44-1, including a major decision, a pin and a 5-3 win before his 7-2 win over Bandys' Connor Byrd in the title match.

It hasn't sunk in yet, but I can tell you I don't know how or why, whenever we were in the national anthem I was tearing up a little," he said. "But it was good tears. I just told myself if you want to out-condition these guys, if you want to hang with the good guys, hang with the state finalists, hang with the top in the state, hang in for your team in the dual meets, you have to push yourself and that's what I did."

The state meet was nothing new for WHS' Hittepole, who finished fourth as a freshman, second as a sophomore and now first as a junior.

"Experience matters, but it really doesn't because every year is different and records don't matter and seedings don't matter," said Hittepole, who finished 47-5 after his 7-0 win over Mt. Pleasant's Jacob Reigel. "It was like a pyramid climbing up and now I have to maintain that my senior year. This wasn't my favorite match, but in the end I got my hand raised and that's all that matters."

Sumners had his hand raised after a thrilling 6-5 win over Washington's Bryce Perry. Sumners, a sophomore who finished 35-4, led by one point with 11 seconds remaining and rode out the final seconds for the win.

"I don't even know what to think, I'm so excited," Sumners said. "Best feeling I ever felt. We're trying to become a school known for wrestling and this just gets us one step closer to what we want."



State Champion Aiden Burkholder.



State Champion Braxton Walker.

Randleman's Walker (45-4) earned three technical fall wins to get to the finals, where he captured a 14-2 major decision over Seaforth's Ethan Kuball.

"It's been a long ride, six years, seven years of my life," Walker said. "I wouldn't trade anything for it. There were highs and lows and I got through it. I want to thank my coaches and all those who supported me."

Finishing third in the 1-A meet were UCA's Andrew White (120), Aiden Foster (165) and Caden Bond, while UC's Ayven Virasone Chitavong (106), Rick Riccardella (138) and Brandon Jordan (144) placed fourth.

Southwestern Randolph's Jose Flores, who finished first and fourth the previous two years, placed third in the 2-A 285-pound category. Trinity's Stephen Cross (113), Omega Edge (120) and Joseph Trahan (285) placed fifth and THS' Edgar Vasquez (126) and Jayden Henry (150) placed sixth. WHS' Noah Browning (190) also placed sixth.