

# Ridgefield wrestlers seventh in Class LL

By [Tim Murphy](#) on February 19, 2018 in [FCIAC](#), [High School Sports](#), [Sports](#) ·

---

Led by three top-three individual finishes, the Ridgefield High wrestling team placed seventh at the Class LL state championship on Saturday at Trumbull High School.

The Tigers had 93.5 points to edge eighth-place Newtown (91 points).

FCIAC champion Danbury finished first with 274 points, followed by Fairfield Warde (200 points). Trumbull and Southington tied for third place with 175 points each.

Two Ridgefield wrestlers, senior Simon Preston and junior Lazar Agoev, finished second in their respective weight classes.

Seeded second at 160 pounds, Preston received a first-round bye and then pinned Norwalk's Simon Galeano in one minute and 36 seconds and Staples' Jacob Qiu in only 24 seconds. Those victories sent Preston into the semifinals, where he pinned third-seed Eric Rodonis of Conard in 1:22.

With a state title on the line, Preston faced a familiar opponent, top-seed Izaake Zukerman of Fairfield Warde, in the finals. Zukerman had handed Preston his only two regular-season losses before Preston pinned the previously unbeaten Zukerman to win the FCIAC championship last Saturday.

But it was Zukerman who got revenge in this meeting, pinning Preston in three minutes and five seconds to win the division.

Also reaching the finals for Ridgefield was Agoev at 152 pounds. Seeded fifth, Agoev received a first-round bye and then got an 18-8 technical-fall victory over Danbury's Christopher Palacio.

Agoev pinned fourth-seed Owen Walsh of Newtown in 6:42 to reach the semifinals, where he won an 8-6 decision over top-seed Tagan Welch of Southington.

Agoev's bid for a surprise state title ended in the finals, as he dropped a 6-2 decision to seventh-seed Kris Gjinaj of Fairfield Warde. Gjinaj had advanced by beating second-seed Theran Vanase of NFA in the quarterfinals and third-seed Jasen Gonzalez of Manchester in the semifinals.

Also placing (top six) for Ridgefield was junior Ben Smart, who finished third at 120 pounds. Smart, the third seed, advanced to the quarterfinals with a bye and a 19-0 technical fall over Southington's Darius Mangiafico. Smart then won an 11-5 decision over East Hartford's Daijhan Hudson before losing a 15-7 major decision to second-seed Chase Parrott in the semifinals.

Dropping to the consolation bracket, Smart won a 9-2 decision over fourth-seed Dominic Renfree of NFA and then pinned fifth-seed Cole Shaughnessy of Fairfield Warde in only 21 seconds in the match for third place.

**Notes:** By finishing in the top six, Preston, Agoev and Smart qualified for this weekend's State Open at the Floyd Little Athletic Center in New Haven.