After 17 years of watching as their male counterparts had all the fun, 2019 will witness a changing of the times as for the first time ever, the Eastern States Classic will feature a separate Women's Division!!!  
  
Loaded from top to bottom with the who's who of NYS Women's grappling royalty (and some special visitors from out-of-state), no matter where you look, you are sure to find a plethora of All-Americans, a handful of multiple-style national champions, the occasional age-group World or Pan-American team member, and whatnot!

Joining their brothers at the now famed Sullivan Community College, the sisterhood will kickoff the inaugural tournament when they hit the mats on Saturday afternoon at 1pm sharp!   
  
Below is a mere brief gander into some of the extraordinary young ladies that will be treating you to a show and making you demand more in the coming years...

102: Headlining the lightest weight class will be the standout resident from the Garden State, **Jasintai Mallqui** (Camden Catholic)...A 2019 U15 World Combat Games gold medalist, Mallqui is one of the hottest young prospects in the nation in multiple styles, as evident by her 14U Girls Folk National title last March and the 3rd place finish she posted this past October at the Super 32. In November, she went untested at the Finger Lakes Fall Classic, compiling a 6-0 record, including four technical falls and one pin...Expected to offer the biggest challenge to Mallqui will be the represent from Long Beach, NY, **Lina Diamond**...A 2019 NYWAY Girls State runner-up, as well as a medalist at both the 2018 (5th) and 2019 (3rd) Gotham/New York State Girls Invitational, the Marines' senior has been a member of the boys' varsity her entire scholastic career and will not be pushed around by anyone. In 2018, she was the New York State freestyle titlist on the Cadet level and picked up a victory under the FargoDome that same season.

109: Featuring one of, if not the most credentialed individual in the entire field (regardless of weight class), it will be a mighty tall order if anyone hopes to deny Wyoming Seminary senior, **Caitlyn Walker**, the top prize at 109 pounds...Ranked 6th in the nation as of December, the Blue Knight student-athlete possesses a resume second to none. Twice a member of the United States Women's Cadet Freestyle World team, Walker placed 7th in Georgia in 2016 and followed it up with a top-5 showing one year later in Greece. In 2017, she would also ascend to the top of the podium at the Pan-American Cadet Championships in Argentina...Domestically, she has been even more dominant, winning Cadet National titles in both Folk and Free in 2016, as well as racking up four additional All-American finishes in Fargo from 2017-2019 (2017-4th in Cadet/6th in Junior; 2018-Junior 2nd; 2019-Junior 5th). In case you need more testament to her brilliance, let it be known that she also happens to be a two-time Super 32 finalist, winning the brass ring in 2018 after settling for runner-up honors the prior year....Seeded 2nd in the bracket and entering with a lot of momentum currently on her side will be the fighting filly pride of Horace Greeley, **Izzy Garcia**...A product of the Empire Wrestling Academy program that has produced the likes of NCAA All-Americans like Brian Realbuto (Cornell), Steven Rodrigues (Illinois), Kevin Jack (NC State), and Youssif Hemida (Maryland) just to name a few, Garcia made history last month when she became the first female to win the title at the 2019 Pawling Round-Robin Tournament (all wins accompanied by bonus points). Per TrackWrestling, her '19-'20 record on the boys' varsity this season sits at an impressive 14-7. This past summer, Garcia made the journey to North Dakota and while she came away without a medal, she did herself proud, winning three of five bouts to fall one victory short of All-American status. Garcia's list of achievements also includes a silver medal performance at the 2019 Gotham/New York State Invitational.

116: The first of many brackets adorned by multiple nationally ranked competitors, if all goes well, those in attendance will be treated to an epic showdown between a pair of the Evil Empire's finest...In one corner, you should have the #14 ranked (@117 pounds) wrestler in the land, **Ally Fitzgerald** from Strong Island (Lynbrook). Opposing her will very likely be the 8th ranked 122-pounder in the country, **Riley Dalrymple**, of Copenhagen...A polished grappler in every sense of the word, the former [Fitzgerald] has thrived, both locally and nationally at all stages of her high school career. The 2018 USAW Cadet FS National Champion in Fargo, Fitzgerald added a 5th place finish in the same division last July. In addition, she was the 2018 Super 32 runner-up (defeated Dalrymple by the slimmest of margins, 4-3, in the semifinals), finished 3rd at the 2019 USMC Girls Folkstyle National Championships in March and claimed the crown at the 2019 NHSCA Nationals (again beating her rival by a 4-3 tally in the finals). Within the confines of NY, Fitzgerald was the 2019 Women's 16U State Freestyle Champion, won the 2018 Gotham/NYS Women's Invitational, and has been a bona fide bada$$ on the boys' varsity for years, including finishing top-3 on two separate occasions (David Ironman Invitational, Knights Classic) already in 2019-2020...Countering with a dynamic curriculum vitae of her own is the Section III superstar [Dalrymple]....Herself no stranger to perennial successes, the Golden Knight 12th grader has earned All-American honors in Fargo three times over the course of the past two summers, doubling up in 2018 (3rd Cadet, 4th Junior) and complementing it with a 4th place showing in Juniors last July. A lady for all styles (much like Fitzgerald), Dalrymple has earned back-to-back All-American distinction at Girls Folk Nats the past two seasons, seizing Cadet bronze in 2018 before taking 8th in March of 2019. An aforementioned semifinalist (ultimately finished 4th) at the 2018 Super 32 and the 2019 NHSCA national runner-up, just days ago, Dalrymple earned 5th place for the boys' squad at the Fallen Heroes Tournament. She is the two-time defending Gotham/NYS Women's Invitational champion!

123: Identical to the weight that precedes it, look for the 123-pound bracket to be another clash of Empire State titans, as Minisink Valley's "Cradle Queen", **Sofia Macaluso**, will be determined to defend her Section IX home soil when she squares off with Section V gem, **Esther Levendusky** (Avon-Geneseo)...Without question one of the creme de la creme from the class of 2022, not to mention well on her way to being the most celebrated girls wrestler in NYS history, as the song goes, all the #9 ranked wrestler [Macaluso] did in 2019 was win, win, win against her peers, sweeping USMC Folkstyle Nationals in March and then putting a cherry on top by blowing away the rest of the field in Fargo to claim the 16U stop sign (after finishing 7th in 2018). The third of Heath and Nikki's four amazing daughters, pretty much the only event Sofia did not win last season was the UWW Cadet Nationals/WTT where she still mustered a very strong top-5 effort. An absolute pioneer for the women of S9, Macaluso became the first female to place at the boys sectional tournament last season when she took 3rd; she has not looked back since, going 4-0 at the Wilson Duals, finishing as the silver medalist at the Linn Crawn Memorial Tournament in NJ, and most recently leading the Warriors to the Sectional Dual team title behind a 2-0 record on Wednesday...Levendusky, hailing from a quite prominent wrestling family (older sister, Joye, was a multiple-time scholastic AA, and finished 7th as a true freshman at the 2019 WCWA National tournament; currently ranked in the top-4 of the 2020 collegiate polls), has always been very solid, but seems to have turned a corner and taken her tools to the next level during the past few months. A 2019 USMC Folkstyle Nationals 8th place performer in March, Levendusky barely missed the podium in Fargo last July, going 2-2 in the 16U division...Last week, she truly put the rest of the state on full alert when she pinned her way to the ladies' crown at the 2020 Jack Fisher Wrestling Tournament. Previously, Levendusky was the 2019 Gotham/NYS Girls Invitational titlist and finished 2nd at the 2019 NYS Women's FS State Tournament.

129: Making it two weight classes in a row where a "Mac sister" sits at the head of the table is the 129-pound bracket which will be anchored by another of Minisink Valley's precious jewels, senior, **Mia Macaluso**...Taking a backseat to nobody (including her younger sister), the East Stroudsburg University bound student-athlete has been a marquee presence on the domestic, national, and global scenes for several years. To borrow from University of Iowa Head Coach, Tom Brands, if we find a way to hold a wrestling tournament on Mars, you best believe Mia Mac will show up and she will work her way onto the podium...Ranked 6th at 127 pounds in the December polls, the present day and/or future Warrior (ESU and MV share a nickname) is nothing if not a born winner. Whether it is the soccer pitch (2019 Section IX team champions), the lacrosse field, or especially the wrestling mat, the Otisville resident has a knack for rising to the occasion and being at her best when the stakes are highest...Joining her previously recognized sibling [Sofia] in the rare company of New York ladies who have won national crowns in two styles, Mia swept both the USMC Folkstyle National crown and the Cadet FS stop sign in 2018. In the year that has followed, she was the 2019 USMC Junior folk national runner-up, won NHSCA Girls Nationals, added her third career Fargo All-American credential (Junior 4th last summer) and was afforded the privilege of doing some extensive traveling, serving as the representative for the Red, White, and Blue at both the Cadet and Junior Pan-American Championships in Guatemala and Mexico respectively. One of, if not the youngest competitors at the Pan-Am Junior tournament, she clawed her way to a bronze medal. Four weeks later, she decimated the Cadet tournament, going 5-0 (4 pins, 1 TF) en route to winning not only the gold medal, but also the Golden Boot as the overall Outstanding Wrestler of her division. Rounding out a sampling of her never-ending collection of honors, Macaluso is a two-time defending champion at the Gotham/NYS Girls Invitational and recently pinned her way to 1st place (versus gentlemen) at the Woodlands Tournament...Presenting the most formidable challenge to Macaluso's supremacy will be the fab freshman from Staten Island, **Alessandra Elliott** (Tottenville)...A "natural" who found immediate success after transitioning from brazilian Jiu jitsu a few years ago, the Beat the Streets product was a 2019 Schoolgirl State Folkstyle Champion and a 2019 14U Freestyle State Champion (also won it in 2018). However, her best triumphs last season came on the national circuit, where she finished as the 14U runner-up at the USMC Folkstyle Nationals in March and then reaffirmed her elite status by securing a spot on the 15U National team behind a 3rd place showing in May at Women's Freestyle Nationals.

135: At 135 pounds, all signs are pointing at a potential head-on collision between a pair of former and/or returning Fargo All-Americans...Receiving the top seed in the bracket is another of BTS's most renowned proteges, Wingate Educational Campus 12th grader, **Naomi Henry**...The USAW Cadet FS National runner-up [lost to Mia Macaluso in the finals], Henry darn-near pulled of double AA honors in the summer of 2018, falling just two wins short of the podium in the junior division. This past year, even without the trophies to show it, she continued to demonstrate her tier-1 skill set, making it to the blood round of the 2019 Women's Nationals/Junior World Team trials. Henry has also claimed back-to-back NYS freestyle titles, winning the Cadet division in 2018 and then cementing her in-state legacy by pinning Sofia Macaluso in the 2019 Junior finals this past May. Rounding out her incredible body of work is a pair of 3rd place finishes the last two years at the Gotham/NYS Girls Invitational...Standing in the way of Henry's ascension to the top of the podium is expected to be our third Minisink Valley treasure, senior **Grace Pauls**...Seeded 2nd despite being the one to hold the national ranking (currently #6 @132), Pauls has achieved All-American distinction three consecutive years in Fargo, commencing with a Cadet 5th in 2017, highlighted by a Cadet bronze in 2018, and completed with a Junior 6th last summer. A "Jill of All Trades" like so many of the Empire State's premier ladies, Pauls' bag of tricks (known for her throws) has translated well into the realm of folkstyle, as she has twice earned USMC AA placement (Cadet 6th in 2018, Junior 7th last May) and was the 2019 NHSCA National runner-up...A state freestyle silver medalist in 2019 after finishing 3rd in 2018 (including a 10-0 TF loss to Henry in the round-robin format), the "cheerful Warrior" was the 2018 Gotham/NYS Girls Invitational runner-up (lost to Dalrymple in the finals). Having won five of her eight bouts this season for the MV Boys' varsity, Pauls does bring momentum with her into the weekend.

155: Shaping up to be another upstate vs. downstate war for bragging rights, 155 pounds may not include any nationally ranked entries, but still will have its fair share of undeniable hammers, lead by the likes of **Damiana Racciatti** (Liverpool) and **Jessica Kemgne** (Inwood Academy for Leadership)...Racciatti is a two-time defending NY Freestyle State Champion, a former (2018) Gotham/NYS Girls Invitational runner-up, and finished 3rd at the 2019 NYWAY State Championships. A mainstay on the Team New York National team the last two seasons, in two trips to Fargo in 2018 and 2019, she got her arm raised four separate times, including twice in last year's 16U division where she advanced to the blood round before coming up a little short of AA status. Her new year is already off to a fast start, as earlier this week, she pinned (all sub 1:00) her way to the prize at the Jack Fisher...Kemgne would also put herself on the cusp of 16U All-American status this past July, but like her foe, she too dropped a blood round bout to just miss the mark by a hair...A double State freestyle medalist last year, she finished as the runner-up in 16U and was 3rd in the junior division. At the 2019 Gotham/NYS Girls Invitational, she took home the silver medal.

173: Shining a spotlight on the five boroughs are the two nationally ranked leading ladies that respectively call the Bronx and Brooklyn home...Owning the top line of the bracket is the 9th ranked 164-pounder in the country, **McKenzie Samuels** (Truman). Exploding onto the national landscape following the ultimate breakout sophomore campaign, Samuels posted not one, not two, but three All-American finishes in 2019, taking 8th at Women's Nationals/Cadet WTT in May and then building off of this buzz in Fargo, where she was a double AA (5th in the Juniors, 8th in 16U)...A two-time NYS freestyle champion on the Cadet/16U levels in 2018 and 2019, Samuels was also the 2019 Gotham/NYS Girls Invitational runner-up, losing a tight contest (7-6 decision) to none other than her main opposition this weekend, Brooklyn Tech 12th grader, **Kai Poux**...Just three spots (12th) below Samuels in the current polls, the Lady Engineer is 100% a top-10 talent, but perhaps is slightly underrated after being on the cusp, but failing to earn top-8 at USMC Folk Nationals (blood round), Women's Nationals/Cadet WTT (blood round) or Fargo (two wins from AA) last season...If 2019 was the year where nothing broke in her favor, then 2018 was the season where she put herself on the map to stay, following matching 6th place outings at Women's Nationals and Fargo. Skipping the State freestyle tournament in 2019, Poux was a double runner-up the year before. In addition to her Gotham/Girls Invite title cited previously, she was the runner-up at the event in 2018.

195: Closing the show at 195 pounds will be two more of Gotham City's best and brightest in the persons of Wingate senior, **Joanna Jones**, and Truman sensational rookie, **Sujeydy Matos**...The former, who presently sits as the #6 ranked 180-pounder in the country, was already an established commodity heading into the summer of 2019 after earning double All-American accolades the previous year under the Dome (4th in Cadets, 8th in Juniors). But alas, her stock skyrocket this past July when she split a pair of bouts with the #2 ranked wrestler in the nation and outright bested #s 3 and 5 on her way to a top-5 showing...Untouchable the past two seasons at the State Freestyle Championships, Jones never had to go the distance in winning a NYS Cadet title in 2018 and the Junior hardware this past May...A two-time finalist at the Gotham/NYS Girls Invitational, Jones moved one step up the podium from one year to the next, winning it all in 2019 after being the bridesmaid to Nia Crosdale (2019 WCWA All-American as a freshman) in 2018...Matos, who has left little doubt that she is the present and future of the NYC upper-weight dynasty, turned a lot of heads in Fargo last July when she finished 4th at 16U Nationals in the 200-pound bracket as an 8th grader. Making an appearance in the national polls at #19, she is the only freshmen from 180 and above to earn this feat. Matos has twice been a NYS freestyle runner-up, taking 2nd in the junior division in 2018 and then repeating her silver medal effort as a 16U entry last season...This weekend will mark the second time in a matter of weeks that Jones and Matos squared off. On December 21st, they met at the Jay Alvarez Memorial Tournament, with Jones taking the "w" by fall.