

## Boys win Napoleon Invitational with team effort

**By Kevin Gordon**

NAPOLEON — A team effort brought Eastwood High School's boys track and field team the championship of the Napoleon Invitational Saturday.

The Eagles won only two of the 17 events, but still totaled 130½ in the eight-team meet. They scored in 15 events, and had at least two scorers in eight events.

Eastwood edged runner-up Celina by 5½ points, and Wauseon was third with 101.

"They deserved this," Eastwood head coach Brian Sabo said. "I wanted this so badly for them because of how much we've grown as a team, how much our performance has improved. We're still very young in some areas. We've had great leadership.

"The guys said the energy of the team was good today, and that it was fun," Sabo added. "That means a lot, too."

The Eagles trailed Celina by 15 points late in the meet. But Eastwood's 4x400 relay team finished third for six points, and its three pole vaulters all placed to total 21 points to give the Eagles the championship.

Senior Dalton Hesselbart cleared 13-6 to win the pole vault, while sophomore Hayden Hoelter was fifth at 11-6, and freshman Cullen Shank was seventh at 10-0.

The 4x400 team of sophomores Kevin Lewis, Andre Lewis, freshman Zach Mullholand and sophomore Jesse Poiry was third in 3:43.56.

Eastwood's other victory belonged to senior Bryce DeFalco, who won the long jump with a distance of 20-10½.

"We had so many good things happen early in the meet, and we finished it out all of the way to the end," Sabo said. "We fought in so many events. We finished strong."

"We performed with a lot of heart today," said Eastwood sophomore Dayquan Oliver, who placed in three individual events and one relay. "The running events and the field events both scored a lot of points. It was a very good day for the team. I'm very happy."

Schools were allowed to enter up to three athletes in the 13 individual events, and one team in the four relays. The top eight finishers in each event scored team points.

Eastwood scored 71 points in the 13 running events, and 59.5 points in the four field events.

“We had a ton of PRs or if we weren’t having PRs, we were attempting big PRs,” Sabo said. “I’m so happy for these guys because they deserve this because they’re just good people.”

In addition to winning the pole vault and the long jump, the Eagles had four second-place finishes, four third-place finishes, six fourth-place finishes, and four fifth-place finishes. They also had a total of four finishes in sixth, seventh and eighth place.

“Every point was huge,” Sabo said. “When you have 17 events and the meet comes down to this few points, every point, every finish matters. I’m super proud of this group.”

Andre Lewis, Kevin Lewis, Mullholand and Poiry all ran PR splits during the 4x400 relay. Mullholand was added to the team late in the meet.

The 4x400 relay is the signature event for Eastwood’s boys and girls programs.

“The 4x400 went out and ran their hardest. They wanted to win,” Sabo said. “The energy around the track from their teammates was good, and we needed that.”

“The 4x400 always has been our thing because it’s the last race,” Sabo added “It’s the last feeling you have when you leave a meet.”

In addition to Oliver, Andre Lewis, Kevin Lewis, and junior Kaiden Sanchez also had big days for the Eagles.

Oliver finished tied for second in the high jump (5-8), fourth in the long jump (19-11), and fifth in the 100 (11.62). The 4x100 relay team of senior Anthony Molina, Sanchez, Kevin Lewis and Oliver was second in 45.42.

Andre Lewis finished second in the 300 hurdles (43.02), and fourth in the 110 hurdles (16.28) and the high jump.

Kevin Lewis was third in the long jump (20-0).

Sanchez was third in the 100 (11.43) and fourth in the 200 (23.60).

Senior Noah Smith was second in the 400 in 53.29, while Poiry was third in the 100 hurdles in 16.09.

### **So far this season**

With the Northern Buckeye Conference Championships less than a month away, the Eagles are setting their sights on even more improvement during the next three weeks.

The Eagles are receiving contributions from every event, and many different individuals.

“I like where we’re at,” Oliver said. “A lot of guys who were hurt early on are coming back. Those are big guys for us because they can improve us and

help us win. The young guys are really stepping up, and the older guys are performing well. We've had a bunch of PRs over the last couple of meets." The NBC meet is May 13 at Otsego, followed by the district meet the next week.

### **NAPOLEON INVITATIONAL RESULTS**

<https://www.baumspage.com/track/trevent.php?peventid=69&table=C>

### **EASTWOOD-ROSSFORD INFORMATION**

<https://www.baumspage.com/track/trevent.php?peventid=142&table=C>

### **EASTWOOD RELAYS INFORMATION**

<https://www.baumspage.com/track/trevent.php?peventid=830&table=C>