

## Boys perform well, finish second in Eastwood Relays



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### By Kevin Gordon

Eastwood High School's boys track and field team performed well again Friday night. The Eagles scored in all six field events and 10 of the 11 running events Friday night to finish second in the Eastwood Relays.

Eastwood scored 106 points to finish behind Findlay in the 13-team meet. The Trojans won with 119 points, while Whitmer was third with 92 and Sylvania Southview was fourth with 77.

The Eagles shared the meet's combined championship with their girls team. The combined championship is determined by adding together each school's points scored in the boys and girls meet.

Eastwood's girls won their competition with 110 points, giving the Eagles a total of 216 points. Findlay was second with 202½.

"Everyone competed. This was the best effort from our team as a whole this season," said Eastwood junior Noah Smith, who was second in three events and fourth in another event. Athletes are allowed to compete in a maximum of four events.

"Everyone was warmed up properly. Everyone was cheering for each other," Smith added.

Smith and senior Jake Limes enjoyed huge nights. They helped the Eagles finish second in the 4x200 and 4x400 relays, and fourth in the 4x100 relay. Smith also was second in the 4x110 shuttle hurdles relay, and Limes was second in the 100.

The 4x100, 4x200 and 4x400 teams also ran season-best times, while the shuttle hurdles relay team ran a season-best and Limes posted a season-best in the 100.

"We were right there, just fighting and competing in every event," Eastwood head coach Brian Sabo said. "What a great night. I enjoyed watching the races and watching us compete, going after it. We had tons of PRs and season-bests."

The meet featured outstanding competition. Many of the schools competing were Division I, and from the Northern Lakes League and Three Rivers Athletic Conference. Division II member Liberty-Benton is the defending Blanchard Valley Conference champion.

The Eagles have won three of the four of their invitationals this season. The other two championships came at Liberty-Benton April 1 and Napoleon April 16.

"We got to another level as a team tonight by how we competed and went after it as a team," Sabo added. "This is why you have great competition at your meet. Those schools will probably win their league, win their district. We just fought."

Even though Smith and Limes had big nights, the Eagles had a lengthy list of contributors. Eastwood won the discus, high jump and hammer throw, and added five second-place finishes, two third-place finishes and three fourth-place finishes.

The top eight finishers in each event scored team points, with the top five finishers earning medals.

"Our success this season has been so much fun because everyone is contributing," Smith said. "It's not just one or one two people, or one area or a couple of events. It brings everyone together and makes you want to compete that much harder. Everyone is cheering for you, and you don't want to disappoint them. It gives you extra energy."



*Nate Heskett*

### **Field events**

The Eagles scored 49 points in the field events, including the first-place finishes in the discus, high jump and hammer throw.

The discus, shot put, high jump, long jump and pole vault were scored as relays. Each school entered three athletes in the field events with the combined height or distance being used to determine the team points.

The hammer throw was scored individually with eight competitors. The hammer isn't sanctioned by the Ohio High School Athletic Association, although it is held during some meets during the season.

Senior Emmet Getz, and sophomores Braden Bowdle and Elden Slack won the

discus with a distance of 322-4. Getz was second individually at 139-4, while Bowdle was fourth at 124-8 and Slack threw 108-4.

Senior Nate Heskett threw 122-8 to win the hammer.

The high jump team of senior Jacob Meyer, and freshmen Andre Lewis and Dayquan Oliver won with a height of 17-0. Meyer was first individually at 6-0, while Lewis and Oliver were in a four-way tie for seventh at 5-6.

The pole vault team of junior Dalton Hesselbart, freshman Hayden Hoelter and sophomore Eli Good was second, clearing 34-0. Hesselbart was second at 13-6, while Hoelter tied for seventh at 11-0, and Good cleared 9-6.

The shot team of Heskett, Getz and senior Gavin DeWese was third with a distance of 122-8½. Heskett was sixth at 42-6, while Getz was seventh at 42-2½ and DeWese threw 38-0.

The long jump team of junior Bryce Koprowski-Kistner, freshman Kevin Lewis and Oliver was fourth at 55-3¼. Koprowski-Kistner jumped 18-7¾, while Lewis jumped 18-6½ and Oliver jumped 18-1½.



Ethan Kwiatkowski

### Running events

The Eagles had four second-place finishes:

- 4x110 shuttle hurdles — Smith, Andre Lewis, freshman Jesse Poiry and senior Andon Mason, 1:04.41.
- 4x800 — second, team of seniors Xander Ramsey and Cory Jay, Hoelter and senior Devin Good, 8:44.55.
- 4x200 — Smith, sophomores Kaiden Sanchez and Noah Haar, and Limes, 1:33.16.
- 4x400 — Haar, Good, Limes and Smith, 3:34.42.

### More contributors

Also scoring for the Eagles in the running events were, by event:

- 4x100 — fourth, team of Smith, Limes, Sanchez and Getz, 44.82.
- 1,600 sprint medley (200-200-400-800) — fourth, team of Haar, Souder, senior Calvin Price and Good, 3:52.52.
- 800 sprint medley (100-100-200-400) — fifth, team of Koprowski-Kistner, Kevin Lewis, Souder and Oliver, 1:43.30.
- 300 hurdles — Seventh, Poiry, 44.88.
- 1,600 — Sixth, Jay, 4:55.38.

### Energy and atmosphere

The Eagle coaches and athletes were thrilled with the environment and energy at the meet. The meet has one become of the best in Northwest Ohio, thanks to the amenities and environment offered at the meet.

In addition to the individual medals to the top five finishers, medals were awarded to every member winning team. Among the other extras were performance boards at the field events, jumbo lane markers, baskets for the athletes clothes at the start of each event and a timing board near the finish line.

The medals are awarded shortly after each event, and many of the athletes wear those medals around their neck immediately after receiving them.

“I love hearing the medals clanking,” Smith said.

Sabo tweaked the order of events to end the meet sooner and to improve the flow of events. The meet had a football-sized crowd, with fans also lining the fence from the finish line area all the way around the track to the start of the visiting bleachers.

“The atmosphere was great,” Sabo said. “The energy of the kids and the atmosphere made the meet. We try to give the meet some nice little touches. The flow of the meet was good. We were more organized, and it went better than last year. The meet flowed well.”

The atmosphere was enhanced by public address announcer Mike Godfrey, who keeps the fans and teams well informed with information. The information includes tidbits about the top performers at the start of each event.

Josh Schulte and Craig Rutherford handled the timing and scoring in the press box, and Jesse Squire interviewed the winners of each event immediately after those events. The interviews were streamed live on social media. Squire is a former Bowling Green State University track teammate of Brian Sabo and Eagle girls head coach Nikki Sabo.

MileSplit Ohio live streamed the meet.

Nikki Sabo said it takes approximately 40-50 workers to run a successful meet, adding half of those workers were Eagle athletes who don't compete in the meet.

"That's what it takes to run a high-quality meet like this. You'll never run another meet like this," said Eagle senior Aubrey Haas, a hurdler and sprinter on the girls team. "It's so special, and none of it could be done without the workers from our team. For them to say I'm not competing, but I'm still going to contribute to help this run smoothly is awesome." "Sometimes, people don't realize how important that is," Nikki Sabo said. "They're so important to running this event."

The athletes helped with the individual events, timing at the finish line, awards, the clothes baskets, starting blocks, the hurdles and video of the meet.

"Our teammates who weren't competing made sure the meet ran smoothly," Smith said.

"This is a big meet, and there were no complications at all."

"Our kids take a lot of pride in the meet, and it shows in how well the meet is run," Brian Sabo said. "I appreciate them doing that."

Brian Sabo introduced the Gauntlet 1,600 to the meet, borrowing the idea from Plainfield North High School (Ill.). During the race, Sabo had the Eagles' boys and girls athletes, who weren't competing in the race, line up in the outside lanes to cheer on the runners from every school during the race. The athletes lined up on the front stretch.

The cheering line originally started with only Eastwood athletes, who then were quickly joined by athletes from other schools. The athletes then did the same during the 4x400 relay to finish the meet.

"The 1,600, the 4x400 ... you could hear everyone cheering," said Smith, who ran the 4x400. "That gives you even more energy. That was a lot of fun."

"I wasn't even running then, but the energy from track is different than any other sport," Haas said. "You don't believe it until you're involved. The environment doesn't compare to anything else. It's so positive. The atmosphere tonight was awesome."

### **Gauntlet 1,600 video**

<https://twitter.com/EastwoodTF/status/1517966912147398658>

### **On the horizon**

The Eagles have one meet in the coming week, a Northern Buckeye Conference tri-meet Tuesday at Woodmore against the host Wildcats and Otsego.

### **Eastwood Relays results**

<https://www.baumspage.com/track/trevent.php?peventid=1145&table=C>