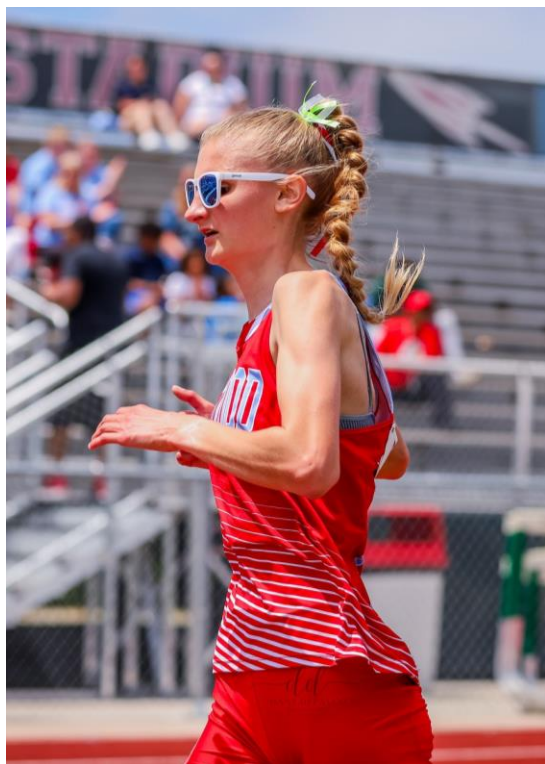


## Emch wins district 3,200; Foos in the 800 and 4x400 relay also advance



All photo credits: Danielle DeFalco Athlete: Leah Emch

### By Kevin Gordon

OAK HARBOR — Leah Emch enhanced her already impressive résumé Saturday afternoon. The Eastwood High School junior won a Division II district championship in the 3,200 during the final day of the district track and field meet at Oak Harbor.

The championship earned Emch a berth in the regional meet at Lexington High School, near Mansfield.

The top four finishers in each event at the district qualified for the regional.

Emch also helped the Eagles advance to the regional in the 4x400 relay with a fourth-place finish. Joining Emch on the relay were seniors Reilly Might and Amelia Ward, and freshman Camille Foos.

Foos was an individual regional qualifier, too, as she advanced in the 800 with a third-place finish.

The Eagles scored in 13 of the 17 events, and tied for fifth as a team with Clyde with 62 points,

Perkins won with 111 points, followed by Oak Harbor 85, Port Clinton 79 and Lake 71½. Team points were awarded to the top finishers in each event.

“It was a good day,” Eastwood head coach Nathan Howard said. “We’re very happy.” The regional meet is May 23 and May 25.

### Emch wins 3,200 by a comfortable margin

Emch pulled away during the final five laps of the eight-lap race to win by almost 24 seconds in 11:27.63, the best time of her career. Her previous best of 11:29.61 came during a tri-meet April 30 at Otsego with the Knights and Lake.

Emch was a state qualifier in the event last season, finishing 12<sup>th</sup> in 11:48.76. She’s also a seven-time qualifier to the state indoor meet.

“I did run a PR (personal record) and I won, so I can’t complain,” said Emch, who repeated as the district champion after winning in 11:32.76 last season. “Given the day and how hot it was, my time was a little better than I expected.”

“Her legs were fresh. She ran a strong race,” Howard said.

Emch held a one- to three-second lead on Port Clinton sophomore Morgan Wiechman during the first three laps, but gradually extended her lead after that. Wiechman finished a second in 11:50.10.

Eastwood senior Haley Sponaugle was fifth in 12:38.45.

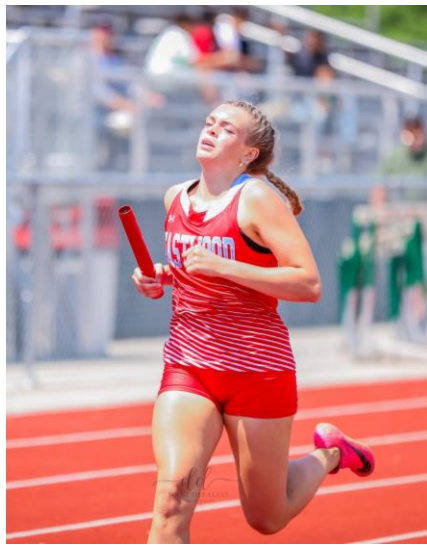
Wiechman was the No. 1 seed for the meet, based on regular-season times. Her best time of 11:27.62 was 1.99 seconds ahead of Emch.

“There were a couple times I thought she was going to pass me, so I knew I had to pick it up and shut her down,” Emch said. “I feel like I’m not as competitive as some people. Most people, if someone tries to pass them, they go. But I’m not like that. I just stay at the same pace. I knew had to get competitive.”

“I expected the race to be close, and I hoped to win,” Emch added. “I wanted to push myself a few times, and I did that.”

Emch, however, was disappointed she failed to break the school record of 11:25.98 set in 1998 by Sarah Lohrbach. Emch already entered the district meet ranked second on the school’s all-time list in the 3,200.

“I’m been super close a few times,” Emch said of the record. “I’m really consistent and as long as I’m consistent, that’s good. Next week, the competition at the regional will help push me along. Maybe that extra push from the competition is what I need to set the record.”



Reilly Might

### **4x400 relay finishes fourth**

Approximately 20 minutes after finishing the 3,200, Emch ran the final leg of the 4x400 and helped the Eagles to a season-best time. Eastwood finished fourth in 4:12.24 to earn fourth place and a trip to the regional. Oak Harbor won in a district-record time of 4:00.73, followed by Perkins 4:01.22 and Genoa 4:11.18. The Eagles finished .97 ahead of fifth-place Lake. Perkins’ time also was ahead of the previous district record of 4:02.10 set in 2003.

“The 4x4 ran their best time of the year, and I still think they can go lower,” Howard said.

Eastwood’s previous best in the 4x400 this season was 4:17.42. Saturday’s time was a season best by 5.18 seconds. The Eagles ran 4:18.26 in Thursday’s district semifinals.

The team of Might, Ward, Foos and Emch is within striking distance of the school’s Top 10 list. A time of 4:09.58 is needed to make the list.

“I was really proud of our 4x4 team,” Foos said. “We’re really coming together as a team. I’m excited we’re getting a chance to run at the next level. Everyone ran well.”

Emch ran her 400 in 62.3 seconds.

“That was absolutely insane,” Foos said of Emch’s final leg. “She is so impressive. She has it down to a science. She’s a phenomenal runner.”

“It didn’t feel that great,” Emch said. “I felt terrible, but I just wanted to get to the finish line for the rest of the team and give us a chance to run next week. I wasn’t sure I was going to be able to do that.”

After finishing the 3,200, Emch said she had a quick two-minute run outside the stadium and then did some additional warmups and stretching.

“I don’t even know how I do that,” said Emch, whose has run the 3,200 and the 4x400 on more than one occasion this season. “My second race is usually better, so I just try to keep my heart racing. I warmed up again and kept everything the same, and you try to forget that you’ve already run.”

“For her to come back and run a great split in the 4x4 shows the kind of ability she’s got,” Howard said.

Emch and Foos both are three-event regional qualifiers. They helped Eastwood advance in the 4x800 relay Thursday with a second-place finish. The other members of the 4x800 relay were Ward and Sponaugle.



Camille Foos

### **Foos’ late charge earns third place in 800**

Foos came from behind during the final lap of the 800 to finish third and advance to the regional. Her time was a career-best 2:26.59, lowering her previous best of 2:28.96 during the tri-meet at Otsego. Foos moved into third place coming out of the final curve and held off the fourth- and fifth-place runners by less than three seconds.

“I went after it,” Foos said. “I gave it my all to get to the next level. I tried to track down everyone I could.”

Foos and Ward were fourth and fifth, respectively, earlier in the race.

“The start of the race was a struggle, but

I kept believing in myself, and I knew my training would get me through it,” Foos said. “I was trying to PR and run the best I could, and prove to myself that I can do something when I put my mind to it. I knew if I went out strong and ran my race, I could make it to regionals.”

Howard said Foos was sick earlier in the week, but was feeling much better Saturday.

“You could see her legs were back today because that finish in the 800 was super strong,” Howard said.

Eagle senior Amelia Ward was sixth in 2:31.40.

“The 800 kids really competed hard,” Howard said.

## **SATURDAY’S RESULTS**

### **FINALS**

**Top four in each event qualified for the regional**

**Long jump:** 8) junior Bella Provo, 14-9; 10) junior Addie Hartman, 13-10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>.

**Shot put:** 7) freshman Harper Rollins-Morlock, 33-0<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> (pr); 14) junior Emma Kiefer, 29-2.

**Pole vault:** 9) sophomore Piper Sutton, 7-0.

**100 hurdles:** 5) junior Mallory Sandberg, 17.08.

**4x200 relay:** 5) team of senior Saylor King, freshman Mallie Bradley, Sandberg and Provo, 1:53.25.

**1,600:** 5) senior Z Ramsey, 5:44.85; 8) freshman Keira Dawson, 6:02.34 (pr).

**4x100 relay:** 8) team of King, Bradley, Sandberg and Might, 52.66.

**300 hurdles:** 6) senior Kayla Buehler, 51.11 (pr); 7) sophomore Makenna Nelson, 53.52.

**800:** 3) freshman Camille Foos, 2:26.59 (pr); 6) senior Amelia Ward, 2:31.40.

**3,200:** 1) junior Leah Emch, 11:27.63 (pr); 5) senior Haley Sponaugle, 12:38.45.

**4x400 relay:** 4) team of Might, Ward, Foos and Emch, 4:12.24 (season best).

## **THURSDAY'S RESULTS**

### **FINALS**

- **4x800 relay:** 1) team of Ward, Foos, Sponaugle and Emch, 9:55.40.
- **High jump:** 6) Foos, 4-10; 10) tie, junior Lilly Mullholand, 4-8.
- **Discus:** 8) sophomore Kennedy Ameling, 100-4; 14) Hartman, 83-0.

### **PRELIMINARIES**

**The eight fastest times, regardless of heat, qualified for the finals**

- **100:** 17) senior Lila Kiefer, 14.19; 20) sophomore Mackenzie Hady, 14.46.
- **200:** 11) King, 28.47; 15) freshman Zurie Sanford, 30.19.
- **400:** 9) junior Emerson Sheets, 1:06.64; 13) sophomore Caitlin Stiner, 1:08.55.
- **100 hurdles:** 5) Sandberg, 17.00; 9) Buehler, 18.04.
- **300 hurdles:** 6) Kiefer, 52.36; 8) Nelson, 53.25.
- **4x100 relay:** 7) team of King, Mallie Bradley, Sandberg and Might, 52.63.
- **4x200 relay:** 7) team of King, Bradley, Sandberg and Might, 1:52.84.
- **4x400 relay:** 4) team of Ward, Might, Foos and Sheets, 4:18.26.

## **OAK HARBOR DISTRICT INFORMATION**

<https://oh.milesplit.com/meets/607611-ohsaa-division-2-district-oak-harbor-2024>

## **OAK HARBOR DISTRICT RESULTS**

<https://www.baumspage.com/tf/nw/2012/oakharbor/2024/Results.htm>

## **LEXINGTON REGIONAL INFORMATION**

<https://oh.milesplit.com/meets/568342-ohsaa-division-2-region-6-lexington-2024>