

Girls have 'awesome' performance in 2nd place NBC finish



All photo credits: Danielle DeFalco

By Kevin Gordon

TONTOGANY — Eastwood High School's girls track and field team had a terrific performance Saturday during the Northern Buckeye Conference Championships. The Eagles had 13 personal records, seven season bests and a number of near PRs/season bests.

They won two events and totaled 147 points to finish second in the eight-team meet at Otsego High School.

Woodmore won nine of the 17 events and scored 162 points to earn the conference championship and end the Eagles' streak of 21 straight league titles. Otsego was third with 107.5.

The Eagles had won all 10 championships in the NBC after winning the final 11 championships in the Suburban Lakes League.

The SLL became the NBC for the 2011-12 academic year with Fostoria and Rossford replacing Lakota and Gibsonburg.

Eastwood had two individual champions — sophomore Leah Emch won the 3,200 in a conference-record time; and junior Julia Sabo won the pole vault for the third straight season.

"It's disappointing not to win the league, but we were second with class, and Woodmore has a good team," Eastwood senior Emma Downs said. "We had a great meet. A lot of people stepped up and performed well. We competed hard, and we competed with confidence. I'm proud of how we performed."



Leah Emch

In addition to being the only school to score in every event in the meet, the Eagles had two scorers in 11 of the 13 individual events.

The top eight finishers in each event scored team points, with the points awarded on a 10-8-6-5-4-3-2-1 basis. Schools could enter up to two individuals in the non-relay events, and one team in each of the four relays.

Entering Saturday, Eastwood had won its conference championship in 25 of the last 26 seasons.

"Our performance was amazing," Sabo said. "I'm so proud of everyone on our team. We did everything we could to win the league."

The Eagles' performance was so good, their 147 points would have been enough to win three of the last seven NBC championships.

"It started from the get-go. They didn't let the rain bother them at the beginning," Eastwood head coach Nikki Sabo said. "The team gave great effort all day long. It was so fun to watch them compete. I'm incredibly proud of the effort they gave."

Woodmore had beaten Eastwood by 30.5 points at the Oak Harbor Invitational May 5, but the Eagles closed the gap and gave the Wildcats a great run at the NBC title. All nine of the Wildcats' wins were on the track, and Woodmore scored only 14 points in the field events.

"I knew it was going to be tough to win after last week. To close the gap to (15 points), that was awesome," Sabo said. "It was fun to watch them compete."

Emch easily won the 3,200 in 11:51.71, breaking the NBC record of 12:00.24 set in 2015. Junior teammate Z Ramsey was second in 12:10.33, a PR.

"I thought I had a chance at it, and I knew it was a manageable time because of what I ran last week," said Emch, who ran a PR of 11:35.51 at Oak Harbor last week, the third-fastest time in Eastwood history. "I came in with a good mindset. Knowing I had just run 11:35, I knew if I put in the effort, I could break the record."

Emch also was second in the 1,600 in 5:31.87, the ninth-fastest time in Eastwood history. Sponaule was third in 5:35.91.

Sabo, Downs and sophomore Kyrie Henline all had big days as each of them competed in the maximum four events.

Sabo cleared 10-4 to win the pole vault, and was sixth in both the 100 (13.30, season best) and the 200 (27.74). Downs finished third in the long jump with a PR distance of 16-4½, fifth in the 100 (13.24) and seventh in the 200 (27.80). Downs had another PR in the long jump, jumping 16-4 on her fifth attempt. Sabo also ran a season best in the 100 during the preliminaries with a 13.38 time.

Sabo and Downs joined junior Saylor King and Henline to finish second in the 4x100 in 51.47, a season best.

Henline finished third in the pole vault, clearing 10-0. The height moved her into a tie for fourth place on Eastwood's all-time list. She had been tied for seventh at 9-6.



Lilly Mullholand

Henline also was seventh in the long jump (15-0) and ran on the 4x200 relay team which finished third in 1:51.95, a season best. Also running the relay were King, junior Lila Kiefer and sophomore Lilly Mullholand. The 4x800 relay team of seniors Talia Baum and Kayden Firsdon, and juniors Amelia Ward and Haley Sponaugle was second in 10:08.69, a season best. Baum and Firsdon both ran PR splits, and Ward's split was a season best. Downs and Sabo each ran in five races and competed in one field event, thanks to semifinals in the 100 and the 200. Henline had two races and two field events.

"It's a lot, but you just reset your mind after each event," Downs said. "You concentrate on the event you're at and when you're done with that one, you go to the next one and concentrate on that one. You get dialed in on the event you're at, and focus on what you need to do."



Kennedy Ameling

OTHER NBC SCORERS BY EVENT

Shot put — senior Olivia Newsome, third, 34-3; and sophomore Mylie Frantz, fifth, 29-10¼.
Discus — Newsome, third, 118-11; and freshman Kennedy Ameling, 95-5.
High jump — Mullholand, fourth, 4-10 (pr).
100 hurdles — sophomore Mallory Sandberg, fourth, 17.20. Sandberg ran a PR time of 16.94 during the semifinals.
400 — Mullholand, third, 1:03.00 (pr); and Baum, sixth, 1:04.98 (season best).
300 hurdles — Sandberg, seventh, 53.36; and sophomore Bella Provo, 53.91 (pr).
800 — Ward, third, 2:33.73 (season best); and Firsdon, fourth, 2:37.86
4x400 — team of Baum, Mullholand, Ward and Firsdon, 4:19.52. Ward's split was a season best.

NEXT

The Eagles compete in the Division II district meet Thursday and Saturday at Oak Harbor.

NBC CHAMPIONSHIPS RESULTS

<https://www.baumspage.com/track/trevent.php?peventid=149&table=C>

OAK HARBOR DISTRICT INFORMATION

<https://oh.milesplit.com/meets/544370-ohsaa-division-2-district-oak-harbor-2023>