

Girls win 21st straight conference championship



All photo credits: Danielle DeFalco

By Kevin Gordon

FOSTORIA — Olivia Newsome delivered an impressive start.

Her Eastwood High School track and field teammates followed the junior's lead.

The Eagles were terrific all day long to win their 21st straight conference championship.

They scored in all 17 events — including five first-place finishes — and totaled 167 points to finish first at Memorial Stadium. Woodmore was second with 145 points in the eight-team meet. No other team broke the 75-point mark.

Eastwood has won all 10 NBC titles after winning the final 11 championships in the Suburban Lakes League. The NBC was formed for the 2011-12 school year with Fostoria and Rossford replacing Lakota and Gibsonburg. The 2020 NBC meet was canceled because of Covid.

“It was a great team effort,” said Newsome, who finished second in the discus with a throw of 125-4 — the fourth-best throw in Eastwood history. She began the preliminaries with a throw of 119-0, beating her season best of 117-5 and just 11 inches off her PR.

Each of the 16 athletes in the discus received three throws during the prelims. The top nine distances advanced to the finals where the athletes received three more throws in an attempt to improve their distance.

Newsome also threw 124-4 on her last throw of the finals, one attempt after the 125-4 effort. Senior teammate Ava Kiefer was third in discus with a throw of 123-1. She already ranked third in school history in the event with a throw of 126-9.

“It definitely takes 17 events to win a meet, and we showed that today,” Newsome said. “We all came out and competed.”

The Eagles complemented their five first-place finishes with five second-place finishes, seven third-place finishes, one fourth-place finish and five fourth-place finishes. The top finishers scored team points, which were awarded on a 10-8-6-5-4-3-2-1 basis.

Eastwood had two scorers in 11 of the 13 non-relay events. Schools are allowed up to two athletes in the non-relay events. Schools are allowed one relay team per event.

During the semifinals of the 100 hurdles, 100 and 200, Eastwood qualified all six of its athletes to the finals and all six scored.

“That’s how you win championships,” Eagle head coach Nikki Sabo said. “We might not have had a lot of first-place finishes, but we had a lot of seconds, thirds, fourths and fifths, down the line. They all add up. We had a great day today.”

The Eagles performed so well, they had clinched the NBC championship going into the 4x400 relay, the final event of the meet.

“Everyone contributed,” Sabo said. “When we set up the lineup, we told them everybody has the ability to score, everybody has the ability to place, and that’s what happened. Everybody placed and everybody scored, and that’s awesome. They competed. They supported each other. The team energy was great. It was awesome and fun to see.”

The Eagle girls and boys teams had plenty of support during the meet. When they weren’t competing or warming up for their events, they were cheering on their teammates, and congratulating each other with high fives, fist bumps and hugs after each event. Loud cheers were heard regularly from the team’s coaches and athletes.

Eastwood has approximately 110 athletes, girls combined, in its program. Many of the ones who weren’t competing in the meet still traveled to Fostoria to support their teammates.

Retired Eagle girls head coach Richard Morgan and retired boys head coach Gary White attended the meet, along with a number of alumni, both girls and boys.

The girls streak of 21 straight conference championships is so long two moms who helped start the streak in 2001 watched their daughters win the 21st consecutive title Saturday.

The moms were Jamie Faykosh Henline, whose daughter is Kyrie Henline; and Whitney Hartman Recker, whose daughter is Addie Hartman. Both daughters are freshman. Recker is an assistant coach for the Eagles.



“The support we receive from everyone is incredible,” Newsome said. “That helps us to perform even better because you want to continue the tradition of the program.”

The NBC meet was the Eagles’ first invitational since the Eastwood Relays April 22 after the Oak Harbor Invitational

May 6 was cancelled because of rain. Eastwood did have a tri-meet against Elmwood and Rossford May 4.

“We had a feeling this could happen, that this was how we’d perform,” said Eagle senior Maisy Stevenson, who finished third in the 800 with a time of 2:32.04, a PR, and fourth in the high jump (4-10). “We were all antsy and ready to compete, and that’s what we did.

“Coming in, we knew it would be close with Woodmore, but it’s not about the time, the height or the distance you had today,” Stevenson added. “But it was about how you

competed. We all competed hard. Everyone did their best. It was amazing. I'm very proud of everyone on the team."

Stevenson also ran on two relays that scored.

The 4x400 team of Stevenson, sophomore Amelia Ward, senior Mikayla Hoelter and freshman Lilly Millholand was second in 4:16.10, a two-second season-best.

The 4x200 team of Stevenson, Hoelter, and sophomores Saylor King and Reilly Might was fifth in 1:51.90, a season best.

The Eagle boys also won the NBC title, giving Eastwood a sweep of all four NBC championships after its middle school girls and boys teams won conference titles Friday. "When we got on the bus, the energy was good. I knew it would be a great day," Newsome said. "The middle school started us off so well last night, and we just built on that."



Leah Emch

A fast start

In addition to the discus and the preliminary running results, the Eagles won the 4x800 relay which was held after the 100 hurdles and 100 prelims and before the prelims of the 200.

The 4x800 team of freshman Leah Emch, senior Addie Young, Ward and junior Talia Baum won in 10:33.78.

"When you hear the good news from other events, it makes you want to do well, and it helps you do well, and that's a great way to start the meet off," Newsome said.

"(Hoelter) came over and told me about the throws, and that really helped," Stevenson said. "Even before I started high jumping, that really helped. We were already building positive momentum and energy."

Kiefer won the shot put for the second straight season with a throw of 37-11½, while Newsome was third at 33-8¾.

Newsome's success in the discus came after she failed to qualify for the finals of the event last season as a sophomore. She fouled on her first two throws and then threw only 79-5 on her final attempt.

"I felt pretty good today," Newsome said. "That's' what I was trying to do in the discus, put a good mark in early and build on that. I wanted to make up for last season."

More success in the field events

The Eagles totaled 59 points out of a possible 90 points in the field events, including a first- and second-place finish by senior Julia Sabo and Henline in the pole vault. Sabo cleared 10-0 to repeat her championship of last season, while Henline cleared 9-0.

In the long jump, Hoelter was fourth with a distance of 15-2½ and junior Emma Downs was seventh with a distance of 14-9½.



Boys & Girls 4x100

Emch, 4x100 relay team finish first

Emch won the 3,200 in 12:07.75, and the 4x100 team of senior Aubrey Haas, Julia Sabo, King and Downs won in 51.58.

Emch's time was the ninth-fastest in school history and lowered her previous best of 12:21.35. The 4x100 time was a season best by .59 and just missed the school's Top 10 by .37.

Additional scorers for the Eagles

Also finishing the top eight for Eastwood were:

- 100 hurdles: Haas, second, 16.72; and freshman Mallory Sandberg,

eighth, 18.11.

- 100: Downs, second, 13.10; and Sabo, seventh, 13.65.
- 1,600: sophomore Z Ramsey, third, 5:48.19; and sophomore Haley Sponaugle, fifth, 6:03.16.
- 400: Mullholand, sixth, 1:04.64; and Baum, seventh, 1:04.96.
- 300 hurdles: Haas, third, 50.45.
- 800: junior Kayden Firsdon, fourth, 2:36.11.
- 200: Downs, third, 27.24; and Hoelter, fifth, 28.07.
- 3,200: Sponaugle, third, 13:21.44.

On the horizon

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

NBC results

<https://www.baumspage.com/track/trevent.php?peventid=721&table=C>

Oak Harbor district information

<https://oh.milesplit.com/meets/476125-ohsaa-division-2-district-oak-harbor-2022#.YoEi4ZPMJ3x>