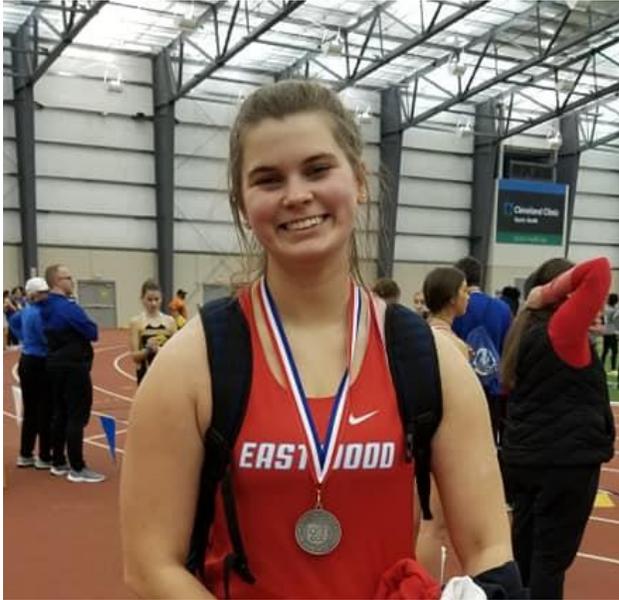


Hodulik, girls have big day at state indoor meet



By Kevin Gordon

GENEVA — Ashley Hodulik had a day to remember Saturday.

The Eastwood High School senior finished second in the weight throw with a school-record mark during the Division II-III state indoor track and field championships at the SPIRE Institute.

Hodulik had a distance of 49-10 to finish as the runner-up to Leipsic junior Ella Rigel, who won with a throw of 50-8½. Hodulik was in first place with two throws remaining before Rigel won on

the final throw.

“I’m a little disappointed because I had first until the last throw, but I’m happy overall,” said Hodulik, who extended her school record of 48-5 earlier this season. Hodulik already held the Eastwood record coming into the season, thanks to a throw of 41-11 last year at state where she finished fourth. She extended the record five times this season, the last three coming Saturday.

The weight throw is indoor track’s version of the hammer throw.

“I’m happy because this is only my second season of indoor throwing, and to throw almost eight feet better than last year is great,” Hodulik said.

The athletes were divided into two flights for the prelims where they received three throws. The top nine distances advanced to the finals where the athletes had three more attempts to improve their mark.

In the finals, the athletes throw in the reverse order of standing, starting with the ninth-place thrower.

Hodulik had an excellent series of throws. She started the competition with two school records, throws of 49-1½ and 49-6½, and finished the prelims with a mark of 47-6¾. In the finals, she threw 45-11¾, 49-10 and 49-1½.

The top eight finishers in each event earned All-Ohio honors and were recognized on the awards stand.

“I’m pretty happy with that,” Hodulik said of throwing at least 49-0 on four of her six attempts. “I didn’t feel my greatest coming into the meet today. Hopefully,

that means next week I'll feel better and go over 49. I'm hoping for a big finish to the indoor season."

Hodulik competes in the New Balance Nationals in New York City this weekend, and hopes of to hit the 50-0 mark or better.

"She wanted to hit 50," Sabo said. "That's a big number in the weight throw. To have that competition prior to nationals will give her the extra confidence to achieve that. She had a good day today, and the results showed. That was a great competition."

Rigel ranked first and Hodulik was second among the state qualifiers. Rigel qualified for state with a throw of 50-0.

"We've become pretty good friends through indoor track during the last year," said Hodulik, who practices with Rigel. "I threw well, and the cards fell where they fell. It was fun to compete against her. I'm super happy for her."



FIELD EVENTS

Kiefer has monster day throwing

Sophomore Ava Kiefer had a superb day, posting PRs in the weight throw and increasing her school record in the shot put. She finished 10th in the weight throw with a mark of 42-10½ and 15th in the shot with a distance of 35-1. Her previous bests were 41-8½ in the weight throw and 34-5 in the shot. "I'm really happy today, especially knowing how far I've come since my freshman year," Kiefer said. "I want to do my best every day

and be a role model. I was nervous, so I just took some deep breaths and tried to calm myself down."

Entering the state meet, Kiefer ranked 11th in the weight throw and 24th in the shot put.

"I feel really good right now," Kiefer said. "Practicing outdoors has really helped me, that's why I got two PRs today. I'm really excited about the outdoor season."

Sabo attempts PR in pole vault

Freshman Julia Sabo attempted a PR of 10-0 in the pole vault after clearing 9-6. She finished 20th after qualifying 23rd.

“I’m pretty happy,” said Julia Sabo, who cleared 9-8 earlier this season to set the school record. “It was a really neat experience, being a freshman and seeing all of the upperclassmen vault. It was a lot of fun and enjoyable.”

Sabo was one of only three freshmen among the 24 state qualifiers in the vault.

“What I take out of today is I have to work harder to get on the podium and take the leadership of the upperclassmen to help me and be a role model to the other girls later on.”

Sabo nearly cleared 10-0 on her second and third attempts.

“That’ll come during the outdoor season,” Julia Sabo said of the 10-0 mark. “I feel really confident about outdoors. I had a good practice coming in to this meet, and outdoors is going to be good. I’m really excited about the rest of the season.”



RUNNING EVENTS

4x200 relay posts PR

The 4x200 relay team of senior Shelby Getz, sophomores Mikayla Hoelter and Maisy Stevenson, and Sabo had a PR of 1:54.72, beating its previous best of 1:56.79. The team finished 22nd after qualifying 24th. Getz and Sabo ran PR splits. “We’re really pleased with the time, Getz said. “Everyone had a good split, so that’s cool.”

The state meet is run on a 300-meter track, while most regular-season meets are run on 200-meter tracks. Some of the handoffs are on the curve, making them even more challenging.

“We were nervous and worried about that, but we dropped two seconds, so that’s good,” Getz said. “We’re excited about the outdoor season because we’ll have more time to practice. It’s hard to get your form and handoffs down when you’re only getting together once a week, but good competition made it easier to run on this track.”

During the indoor season, the Eagles meet once a week, whether it’s for a meet or a practice.

“Now, that we have more practice time, we’ll be pretty good,” Getz said. “We’re off to a good start, especially since we’re here, and we’ve only run it a couple of times.”

Getz competes in the hurdles

Getz had a time of 9.95 in the 60 hurdles and didn’t make the finals. She finished 16th. The top two finishers in each of the three preliminary heats and the next three fastest times overall qualified for the finals.

Getz set Eastwood’s record of 9.81 earlier this season.

“My start was really good, but, in the middle of the race, I was more worried about getting over the hurdles and getting back on the ground instead of running the race,” Getz said. “I hit a couple of hurdles and that slowed me down

“I still had my second-fastest time despite that,” Getz added. “It was still a good race. I’m already faster than last year, and I can fix those little mistakes easily. I’m really confident.”

IN CONCLUSION

Nikki Sabo was thrilled by her team’s performance.

“I’m really happy,” she said. “It was a great meet. It started right away with (Kiefer) getting a huge PR in the shot, and then Julia (Sabo) cleared her opening height that was higher than what she was used to, and it carried right through the meet. I’m very proud of everyone.”