

Girls win district championship



By Kevin Gordon

FOSTORIA — Eastwood High School's girls track and field team thrived on the challenge of facing difficult competition in its most important meet of the season to date.

The Eagles scored in 16 of the 17 events and totaled 122 points to win a Division IV district championship at Memorial Stadium Friday night (May 27). They finished five points ahead of runner-up Huron, while Liberty Center was third with 78.

Eastwood qualified seven individuals and three relay teams for next week's regional during the final day of the two-day district meet. The top four finishers in each event at the district advanced to the regional May 27 (Wednesday) and May 29 (Friday) at Harding Stadium in Marion.

The Eagles qualified for the regional in 12 events in all.

"We knew we'd have a shot at the championship," Eastwood head coach Nathan Howard said. "We knew we had to have a really good night. We knew we had to perform and we did. I'm very proud of them. It's a great feeling to win the district because it's the product of a lot of hard work."

The Eagles had six personal records during Friday's competition.

"I'm proud of the girls. We had a ton of PRs in not ideal conditions," Howard said, referring to the cold, sometimes wet and windy weather. "That's a product of competing against good competition, and not being afraid which is what we've seen from our team most of the season. I'm so proud of the mindset for tonight more for anything."

The Eagles' goal for the district meet was to qualify as many athletes as possible for the regional, not to win the meet. But when the meet was over, Eastwood had its first district championship since 2012 and its sixth district title overall.

"I'm super-duper happy with the way things went," said Eastwood junior Josie Appelhans, who won the 100 and the 200, and helped the Eagles win the 4x200 and 4x100 relays. "I'm really proud of everyone on the team.

"That was amazing," Appelhans added. "Our goal wasn't even to win it, but it was to qualify for regionals in as many events as we could. But to win the district and get a lot of people to regionals is great."

The district championship came a week after the Eagles won the Northern Buckeye Conference title. Eastwood has performed consistently well this season, winning three invitationals and finishing third in two others.

“When the competition gets good, just like the NBC meet, we knew we needed to get a couple of places we weren’t expected to get, and we needed to perform in all areas,” Howard said. “They did that again. That’s the team that they are. They step up and perform.”

“Our energy really helps us when we have these big meets and face good competition,” Appelhans said. “We try to get our spirits up and build off each other. We love to compete and we love pressure.”

Freshman Sophie Gillespie advanced to the regional in both hurdles races. She finished second in the 300 race and fourth in the 100 race, while sophomore teammate Karissa Nelson advanced with a second-place finish in the 100 race.

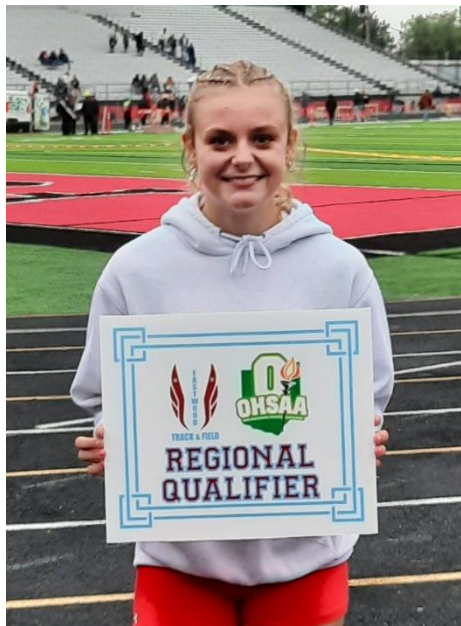
Sophomore Lauren Schuerman was an individual regional qualifier in two events, finishing second in the long jump and fourth in the 100. Junior Camille Foos was third in the long jump after winning the high jump Wednesday. Also for the Eagles, freshman Ava Majzun was fourth in the 400.

Freshman Macie Bradley, sophomore Macy Shoemaker and Schuerman joined Appelhans on the 4x100 relay team. The 4x200 team consisted of Gillespie, Foos, freshman Gabby Provo and Appelhans.

The 4x400 relay team of Foos, Provo, Schuerman and Majzun advanced to the regional with a third-place finish.

The top eight finishers in each event at the district scored team points. The points were awarded on a 10-8-6-5-4-3-2-1 basis.

“I’m really proud of the entire team,” Foos said. “When it mattered, we really came together and performed well. We come together and help each other when things get tough. We pick up each other up when things get tough. The competition forces us to get better and dig deep.”



Appelhans sweeps 100, 200

Appelhans won the 100 in 12.75 and the 200 in 25.79. Her time in the 200 broke her own school record of 25.82 set last season. She was the No. 1 seed in both races.

Appelhans won the 100 by 28 hundredths of a second and the 200 by 1.18 seconds.

“I’m really proud of myself,” Appelhans said. “The 100 set the tone for the night, and I knew that from the start. That was a strong race. I felt really good.”

Appelhans was happy to finally lower her school record in the 200 after setting the record last season. Her previous best this season was 25.97. She also holds the 100 record of 12.62, lowering the record twice this season after originally setting it last season.

“I’m thrilled with the way I ran in the 200,” Appelhans said. “It’s my fourth race, I don’t know how I’m going to



do, or if I'll do as well as I want to. Then, I popped out to a great start and ran that time, and I was really happy.

"It was definitely bugging me, that I hadn't PR'd and lowered (my 200 time) this year because I had already done it in the 100," Appelhans added.

Appelhans was a four-event district champion, winning the 100 and the 200, and running on the 4x200 and 4x100 relays.

"(Appelhans) was great again tonight," Howard said. "You can't ask for much more, can you? She deserves this. She works so hard and she's a great leader. I'm so happy for her."

"She's amazing," Schuerman said of Appelhans, "I love running with her. She competes hard. She hates to lose."

Schuerman was fourth in the 100 in 13.18. She was seeded second.

"I wish I would have done better, but I got out and did what I had to do," Schuerman said. "I'm glad I get a chance to run again next week."



4x200, 4x100 relays earn district championships

The 4x200 team of Provo, Foos, Gillespie and Appelhans won in 1:46.07 which is the sixth fastest time in school history. The Eagles already have run 1:45.27 and 1:45.72 this season with two different teams. Those are the second- and fourth-fastest times in school history. "That was awesome," Appelhans said. "Our handoffs were a little bit iffy, but we ripped it up. Everyone ran

so well. We need a little bit of finetuning on the handoffs and we'll be fine."

Huron was second in 1:47.41, and Liberty Center was third in 1:47.67.

"I've really grown to love the 4x2," Foos said. "It's a fun race and I'm really excited we get another opportunity to run it next week. It's a fast race, but there's a little bit of endurance to it. "That's a pretty good time for us."

The Eagles have run 1:50 or lower in each of their last five races.

"Two freshmen (Provo, Gillespie) and two juniors (Foos, Appelhans)," Howard said. "I have complete faith in the freshmen. I have zero doubt about how they're going to perform. They go out and rip it just like we tell them to. They did a great job."

In the 4x100, the team of Bradley, Appelhans, Shoemaker and Schuerman won in 50.13 to beat Huron at 51.11 and Ashland Crestview at 51.57.

"I'm really proud of us," Schuerman said. "Winning by that kind of margin is a big accomplishment."



Howard said. “The handoffs are really solid. They’ve jelled well with each other. I have a lot of confidence in them.”

Eastwood was seeded second in both the 4x200 and the 4x100 relays.

The same four ran Eastwood’s season best of 49.92. It’s the third-fastest time in school history. The school record of 49.49 was set in 2019, while the second-best time of 49.90 came in 2016.

“That was really good. I knew from the start we were going to be amazing,” Appelhans said.

The Eagles have run a 49- or 50-second time in the team’s last four big meets.

“The 4x1 has been so consistent,”



4x400 relay finishes third

The 4x400 team of Foos, Provo, Schuerman and Majzun was third in 4:09.86 to beat the Eagles’ season best of 4:10.12. Foos had a PR split of 60.7, beating her previous best of 61.1.

“The conversation was get out and run a great 150, 200 and then see how we did That’s what they did,” Howard said. “They might not love their times, but they’re still not fully recovered yet. In a week, you’re going to see a different team with that

4x4.”

Lakota won in 3:24.40, edging Margaretta by a hundredth of a second.

“That was good,” Foos said. “I was super proud of us for getting under the 4:10 mark, and we’re close to the 4:05 that we really want. I’m glad I was able to get out strong and put us in a good position.”

“I’m really proud of us for getting a season best in cold weather,” Schuerman said.

Schuerman finishes 2nd, Foos 3rd in long jump

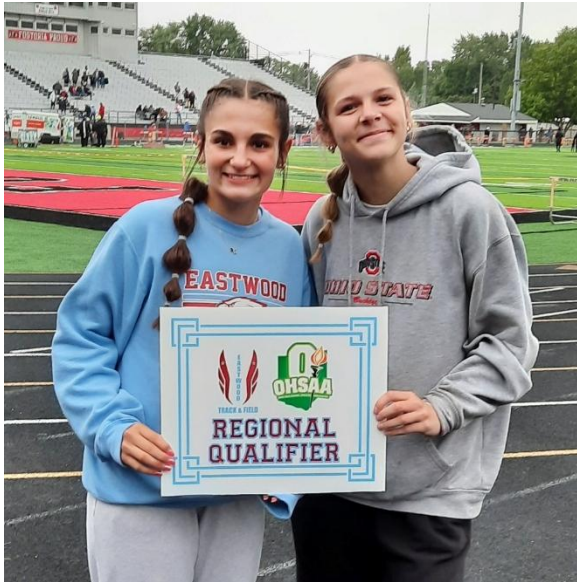
Schuerman jumped 15-8³/₄ to finish second in the long jump, and Foos was third at 15-4¹/₄. Schuerman was the No. 2 seed, while Foos was the fourth seed.

“I finished where I was seeded, but it wasn’t the best night for me,” Schuerman said. “But I advanced to the regional, so that’s good.”

“I’m super proud of both of us,” Foos said. “I went out and gave it my best.”

Swanton senior Aubrey Robinson won with a distance of 16-4¹/₂.

“We needed the long jump to go well because that’s a lot of points for us,” Howard said. “Second and third is more than we were supposed to get. It wasn’t about getting a PR. It was about places and we got great places.”



Gillespie, Nelson perform well to advance in hurdles

Gillespie and Nelson both advanced in the 100 hurdles, with Gillespie also qualifying in the 300 hurdles.

Nelson and Gillespie both ran PRs in the 100 hurdles, with Nelson finishing second in 16.23 and Gillespie finishing fourth in 16.47. Nelson’s previous best was 16.39, while Gillespie’s was 16.93. Nelson’s time of 16.23 is now the sixth fastest time in school history. Nelson was seeded second, while Gillespie was fifth.

“I felt good and went into it with confidence,” Nelson said. “I told myself I could do it. I went out and ran the best I could and I PRd, so I

was happy with it. I tried to do the little things right and have confidence. I knew everything would work itself out if I did those things.”

“I thought I could have run a better race, but I gave it everything I had and did better than I was supposed to,” Gillespie said. “I qualified for the regional, so I’m happy with that. I could have been better with my form and being faster, but I qualified and I had a PR. I didn’t expect to get out, but I ran well and everything worked out. I went into that race with a lot of confidence.”

Huron freshman Makenna Conley won in 16.50.

“The 100, we knew (Nelson) had one of the top times coming in,” said Eastwood assistant coach Jason Faykosh, who works with the hurdlers. “She had to run her race and she’d be good. She did that. She’s been super consistent all year. She ran a really good race. We knew (Gillespie) was close, being seeded fifth coming in. She had a good week of practice and really attacked those hurdles. She ran a really good time and was able to sneak in.”

In the 300 hurdles, Gillespie ran a PR with a time of 46.98, finishing as the runner-up by only two hundredths of a second. She beat her previous best of 47.14. Nelson was eighth in 50.79.

“I was very happy with that race,” Gillespie said. “I felt strong.”

“It didn’t go how I wanted it to, go but I gave it everything I had,” Nelson said. “I did my best; that’s all I can ask.”

Gillespie moved even closer to the school record of 46.08 set by Angie Getz in 1998. Gillespie is fourth on Eastwood’s all-time list. Lizzie Lahey is No. 2 on the list with a time of 46.26 in 2006, and Shelby Getz had a time of 46.90 in 2019 for third place.

Fostoria junior Ahzenet Hatter won in 46.96.

“(Gillespie) had one of the top times coming in,” Faykosh said. “We knew she was most likely going to get out, if she ran a good race. We had a really good day of practice

Thursday. She was able to attack the first couple hurdles and maintain her speed. She has a lot of endurance. If she can grit out the last 100 meters. She did that and ran a really good race.

“(Nelson’s) been a super consistent runner and does everything she’s asked,” Faykosh added. “She had to grit it out, but a lot of people in front of her ran a really good race. It was a really competitive race for her.”

“They’re both very coachable athletes,” Faykosh said of the improvement by Nelson and Gillespie. “They’re really consistent, they work hard and they’ve gotten better and better as the year has gone on. I’m happy for both of them. I’m excited to see what both of them do.”



Majzun finishes fourth in 400

Majzun was fourth in the 400 in 62.74 to advance to the regional, beating her preliminary time of 64.18.

“I felt really good because I gave it everything I had,” Majzun said. “It was enough for me to get out. I was confident in myself. I pushed myself as much as I could and tried to go out as hard as I could in the first 200.”

Majzun was seeded fourth in her event. Swanton senior Laura Bettinger won in 1:01.15, while Fostoria senior Maliyah Payne was second in 1:01.84 and Delta senior Abby Savage was third in 1:02.16.

“She ran two seconds faster than the prelims,” Howard said. “We knew she’d be fresher because she didn’t have to run an 800 before it. She has the no-fear attitude of our freshmen. She went out hard. That was a good race for her.”

Majzun also credited smiling for her success. She’s popular with her teammates and coaches because of her positive attitude and never-ending energy.

“Every time I’ve smiled, I’ve PRd or done really well, whether it be in my events or on a relay,” Majzun said. “Everyone smiling helps the team. I’m making everyone smile. I’m always telling people to smile.”

Ameling, Hannan score in discus

Senior Kennedy Ameling and freshman Addison Hannan both scored in the discus.

Ameling threw 105-5 for fifth place, while Hannan was eighth with a distance of 98-7. Hannan was seeded fourth, while Ameling was seeded sixth.

“Both of them scored points and we needed those points because some of the teams we were competing against didn’t get points,” Howard said.

Sheets finishes eighth in 800

Junior Brynn Sheets finished eighth in the 800 with a time of 2:33.68, just missing her PR of 2:33.16.

“When she runs an 800 fresh, she’s different,” Howard said. “She wasn’t supposed to score and she did, just like she did in the conference meet. Those little points, they don’t understand how big those points are when a meet comes down to five or six points.”

Sheets finished five places ahead of where she was seeded.

Also in the 800, senior Lilly Beckwith finished 16th in 2:51.29. She qualified for the 800 final Wednesday with a PR time of 2:46.74, beating her previous best of 2:48.84. Beckwith was seeded 17th.

“She PRd Wednesday, and I’m glad she did,” Howard said. “She works hard and she’s a team-first type of person, so for her to get to run in a district final is awesome.”

Mangette, Chaffee compete in 1,600

Freshman Taylor Mangette finished 10th in the 1,600 in 5:54.38, and junior Mackenzie Chaffee was 12th in 6:02.85. Taylor finished two spots ahead of where she was seeded, and Chaffee was seeded 13th to move up one spot.

“They finished ahead of where they were seeded,” Howard said.

NEXT

The Eagles compete in the regional meet Wednesday (May 27) and Friday (May 29) at Harding Stadium, 500 Presidential Drive, Marion, Ohio, 43302. The meet IS NOT at Marion Harding High School. On both days, the field events start at 4:30 p.m., followed by the running events at 6 p.m.

FOSTORIA DISTRICT RESULTS

<https://www.athletic.net/TrackAndField/meet/650235/info>

MARION HARDING REGIONAL INFORMATION

<https://www.athletic.net/TrackAndField/meet/651382/info>

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