

Girls impressive in third-place finish at Whitmer



All photo credits: Danille DeFalco Athlete: Mallory Sandberg

By Kevin Gordon

TOLEDO — Eastwood High School's girls track and field team had plenty to be proud of Friday night.

Most of all, the Eagles finished third in the Gold W Invitational at Whitmer.

Eastwood scored 103 points and trailed runner-up St. Ursula by only two points in the eight-team meet. Tiffin Columbian won with 103. Eastwood finished seven points ahead of fourth-place Notre Dame.

"The girls went after it which is exactly what we wanted them to do," Eagle head coach Nathan Howard said. "They weren't intimidated. They ran well. We saw some really good things. It wasn't a perfect night, but the effort was there and the attitude was great."

The Eagles won the high jump and the 4x100 shuttle hurdle relay.

The high jump team of Camille Foos, Frances Lockyer and Addie Hartman had a combined height of 13-7. Foos cleared 4-11 to tie for first individually, while Lockyer tied for fifth at 4-5 and Hartman tied for ninth at 4-3.

The shuttle hurdle team of Makenna Nelson, Kayla Buehler, Bella Provo and Mallory Sandberg won in 1:13.54.

The field events were scored as relays. Schools were allowed to enter three athletes in each field event, with the combined height or distance of those athletes being used to determine the order of finish.

The invitational consisted of 22 events — the 17 standard events held during a dual meet plus the triple jump, distance medley relay (800-200-400-1,600), sprint medley relay (100-100-200-400), 4x100 shuttle hurdle relay and 4x100 throwers relay.

Eastwood was competing for just the second time. The Eagles opened the season March 28 at the Liberty-Benton Relays, but their dual meet Tuesday against Swanton and Liberty-Benton was canceled because of inclement weather.

It also was Eastwood's first meet with all of the regular events during a dual meet. The Liberty-Benton Relays consisted of all relays.

The Eagles also had five second-place finishes and two third-place finishes.

"We were nervous going into this meet," Sandberg said. "It's a really big meet. We didn't know what to expect. We're really pleased and really proud of everyone. We got a lot of base times down, and now we know what we can do, and that will give us a lot of confidence. We can keep building off this."

"We had a lot of positive energy and effort tonight from everyone, even those who weren't competing," said Amelia Ward, who helped Eastwood finish second in the distance medley relay and third in the 4x400 relay. "We had a lot of good performances. All in all, it was a good night."

Strong finish, big night

Sandberg's strong finish in the final leg enabled Eastwood to win the shuttle hurdles in come from behind fashion. The Eagles edged Notre Dame by 36 one-hundredths of a second.

"We were looking at the times coming in, and we knew it would be a close race," Sandberg said. "When I got out of the blocks, I knew had to push really hard and go for it. All four of us ran really well."

Sandberg also finished fourth in the triple jump with a distance of 30-11, moving her from 10th to fifth on Eastwood's all-time list. Her previous best 29-3½.

"That was great," Sandberg said. "I was looking to PR (personal record) and I did. I'm really happy with that."

Sandberg also finished second in the 100 hurdles in 17.85. She helped Eastwood finish fifth in the 4x100 relay with a time of 55.98. Joining Sandberg on the relay were King, Lila Kiefer and Kyrie Henline.

"She had a big night," Howard said of Sandberg. "She's been working hard and getting healthy, and she's feeling healthy right now."

Howard also praised Ward and King.

The distance medley team of Ward, Mallie Bradley, Vanessa Evans and Leah Emch was second in 9:48.49.

The 4x800 team of Emch, Haley Sponaugle, Z Ramsey and Ward was second in 10:36.32. The 4x400 team of Lilly Mullholand, Foos, Ward and Emch was second in 4:19.25.



Saylor King

Ward was a last-minute addition to the 4x400 team and ran the race only 20 minutes after the completion of the 4x800.

"She's healthy for the first time in a while," Howard said of Ward. "She's faster. For her to run two 800s and a 4x400 at the end, she went after it. She's running well, and she's going to run even faster."

King helped Eastwood finish fifth in the 4x100 relay.

In addition to the 4x100 relay, King helped Eastwood finish second in the 4x200 relay with a time of 2:00.20. Reilly Might, Kiefer and Piper Sutton joined King on the relay.

The 4x200 team finished third, even though Kiefer had to jump over a runner who had fallen into her lane.

The sprint medley relay team of Kiefer,

Mackenzie Hady, King and Might was fourth in 2:06.01.

More finishes

Eastwood's Z Ramsey finished second in the 1,600 with a time of 5:49.05.

The pole vault team of Kyrie Henline and Sutton finished third with a height of 15-0. Henline tied for third at 8-6, while Sutton tied for 10th at 6-6.

Haley Sponaugle ran the tenth-fastest time in Eastwood history in the 3,200. She had a time of 12:05.35 for fifth place, lowering her previous best of 12:11 last season.

Young and old, great competition

The Eagles have an impressive mix of young and old. The juniors and seniors are performing well and providing quality leadership. The freshmen and sophomores also are performing well and quickly filling roles.

Among the freshmen is Foos, who finished fourth in the 800 with a time 2:35.52.

“She’s just tapping her potential,” Howard said of Foos. “She ran well.”

“We have a lot of freshmen and sophomores, and for a lot of them, this was their first meet of the year,” Howard added. “To get that taste of competing, the idea we go after it no matter who we’re competing against... that attitude, I love it. They did everything we asked them to do and they did it without fear. They had some really good times and just got beat by better performances.”

Seniors and juniors are providing leadership, like Ward helping freshman Mallie Bradley warm up for the 200 where she finished eighth in 28.67.

“That’s exactly what this is supposed to be all about,” Howard said. “The juniors and seniors are stepping up athletically and with the leadership.”

“Foos and Mallie Bradley ran really well, and it’s good to see all of the freshmen and sophomores building confidence,” Ward said. “It’s all about leadership for the juniors and seniors. We know we can bring our times down, and we’re trying to be good leaders and support our teammates.”

The Eagles were successful in a meet that featured quality competition against Division I schools. Eastwood is a Division II school.

“Today, you’re humbled a bit because the competition is so good,” Ward said. “But it gives you confidence, for sure, because you’re competing against good competition. This meet will help our freshmen and sophomores because they competed hard and did well against good competition.”

“Competing against bigger schools helps,” Sandberg said. “It shows us we can beat bigger schools and compete with them. It builds our confidence.”

NEXT

The Eagles have two meets next week, hosting Maumee and Genoa in a Northern Buckeye Conference tri-meet Tuesday and competing in the Napoleon Invitational Saturday.

WHITMER GOLD W INVITATIONAL RESULTS

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