

Girls dominant in winning Whitmer invitational



By Kevin Gordon

TOLEDO — Eastwood High School's girls track and field team dominated to easily win the Gold W Invitational Friday night (April 10) at Whitmer High School.

The Eagles stacked quality performance on top of quality performance on top of quality performance to win the eight-team meet with 183 points — good for a 66-point margin over runner-up Toledo Notre Dame and an 85-point margin over third-place Bedford (Mich.). Sylvania Northview was fourth with 73.

Eastwood scored in all 22 events, including 10 first-place finishes, eight second-place finishes and two third-place finishes. The Eagles' other finishes were a fifth and a sixth.

"We all stepped up and did what we were supposed to do, getting top three in almost all of our events," Josie Appelhans, who won the 100 and the 200, and ran on the winning 4x400 relay team and the second-place 4x100 relay team. "It was a great performance by everyone."

Appelhans won two thrilling finishes in her individual events, winning the 100 by four one-hundredths of a second and the 200 by 19 hundredths of a second. The junior had times of 12.89 in the 100 and 26.01 in the 200 — just off her school records.

Although the Eagles quickly had the invitational championship in hand, they still cheered loudly when they heard their school's name announced as the champion during the middle of the team's post-meet meeting. The Eagles received their trophy and celebrated with a victory lap around the track before taking a team photo.

"We had a really solid night," Eastwood head coach Nathan Howard said. "Our girls really competed well tonight. They weren't intimidated by the moment at all. They just went after it."

The Eagles' 183 points represented 83.2 percent out of a possible 220 points or an average of 8.32 points per event. The top six finishers in each event scored team points, with the points awarded on a 10-8-6-4-2-1 basis. Schools had one entry in each event.

Eastwood's night also included one school record and three other additions to the Eagles' all-time Top 10 list. The Eagles also had eight personal records.

The meet consisted of eight individual running events, eight running relays and six field events.

The discus, shot put, high jump, long jump and pole vault were scored as relays. Each school could enter up to three athletes in each of those event with the combined heights or distances from those athletes being used to determine the order of finish.

The triple jump was scored as an individual event because it had only one competitor.

Appelhans reaching another level

Appelhans set the Eastwood records in the 100 and the 200 late last season. The records are 12.68 in the 100 set May 9 and 25.82 in the 200 during the district finals May 24 at Oak Harbor.

“I can’t believe how well I’m running,” Appelhans said. “This meet has boosted my confidence so much and I’m really proud of myself. I’m running at an even higher level right now, but I believe I can run even faster.”

Appelhans’ records figure to go even lower at some point this season.

“She did a great job,” Howard said. “She’s so far ahead of where she was last year.

Compared to where she was at this time last year, she’s so far ahead of where she was and she looks so much better. She has a great year ahead of her.”

Appelhans and her relay teammates ran well, too.

The 4x400 team of freshman Gabby Provo, Appelhans, freshman Ava Majzun and sophomore Lauren Schuerman took victory laps, of sorts, as they won in 4:16.11 during the final event of the meet.

The 4x100 team of sophomore Macy Shoemaker, Appelhans, freshman Macie Bradley and Schuerman was second in 51.49.



Athlete: Ava Majzun

More winners for the Eagles

The Eagles also won three field events.

The discus team of freshman Addison Hannan, senior Kennedy Ameling and sophomore Ryleigh Perry won with a combined distance of 294-5. Hannan was 105-2 (pr), while Ameling had a throw of 99-5 and Perry had a distance of 89-10. Hannan was sixth individually, while Ameling was sixth and Perry was ninth.

The long jump team of Schuerman, freshman Katelin Russell and Majzun won with a combined distance of 45-3³/₄, the 10th-best distance in school history. Schuerman jumped 15-11³/₄, Russell jumped 14-10¹/₄ (pr) and Majzun jumped 14-4³/₄. Schuerman was first individually, while Russell was third and Majzun was ninth.

Majzun broke the Eastwood record in the triple jump in winning the event. She jumped 33-11 to easily break the record of 33-0¹/₂ set by Hannah Firsdon in 2013.

Eastwood’s other winners were:

- 4x100 shuttle hurdles — sophomore Karissa Nelson, senior Kenna Nelson, freshman Gracyn Reiter and senior Lily Hanneman, 1:09.76, the eighth-fastest time in school history.
- Sprint medley (100-100-200-400) — Shoemaker, Provo, Foos and Reiter, 2:01.26. Reiter’s split of 65.6 was a pr.

- 4x800 —Katelin Russell, junior Brynn Sheets, freshman Taylor Magnette and junior Mackenzie Chaffee, 11:06.03.
- 4x100 throwers — Ameling, senior Piper Sutton, sophomore Sophia Zunk and sophomore Teagan Lloyd, 59.75, the fourth-fastest time in school history.

Second-place finishers for the Eagles

Eastwood's other second-place finishes:

- Pole vault — Sutton, Karissa Nelson and sophomore Skylar Chrisman, 23-0. Sutton finished third at 8-0, while Nelson and Chrisman both cleared 7-6 to tie for sixth.
- High jump — Foos, Hanneman and Provo, 13-6. Foos was the top individual at 5-0, while Hanneman was ninth at 4-3 and Provo was 13th, also at 4-3.
- 4x200 — Shoemaker, Foos, freshman Sophie Gillespie and Schuerman, 1:51.64.
- 400 – Provo, 1:03.78 (pr).
- 300 hurdles — Gillespie, 51.74 (pr).
- 800 – Majzun, 2:33.15.
- 100 hurdles — Karissa Nelson, 17.06 (pr).

Also scoring for the Eagles

Eastwood had two third-place finishes.

The shot put team of Ameling, Sutton and Hannan was third with a combined distance of 82-4. Ameling had the top individual throw with a distance of 31-6, while Sutton was 10th at 27-5½ and Hannan was 14th at 23-4½.

The distance medley team (1,200-400-800-1,600) of Sheets, senior Caitlyn Stiner, sophomore Kylie Mathia and freshman Melody Myers had a time of 14:19.82. Myers' split of 6:05.4 was a pr.

Also for the Eagles, junior Raegan Russell was fifth in the 3,200 in 13:42.11 and Magnette was sixth in the 1,600 in 6:10.97.

Freshmen impact, team depth

One of the many strengths of the Eagles is they have a terrific mix of seniors, juniors, sophomores and freshmen contributing to the team. The freshmen have had contributed from Day 1.

"They've stepped up so much," Appelhaus said of the freshmen. "They've trained a lot over the winter, they competed indoors, and we've built really good connections with them. We all want to work towards the same goal and motivate each other."

The freshmen have added talent and depth.

"We're developing a lot of depth, and it's a lot of freshmen, too," Howard said. "(The freshmen) are stepping in and attacking with no fear at all. That's helping the team a ton. We've had great leadership from the juniors and seniors, and they're bringing the freshmen along with them. That's the stuff that gets me excited about the season."

"The team environment is a big part of it," Howard added as to the why freshmen have contributed so quickly. "They know it's OK to fail, and they're going to be encouraged no matter what. You also have to credit our middle school coaches. They do a really good job with them, to get them prepared for this."

The Eagles have performed well in their two big invitations this season following a third-place finish in the Liberty-Benton Relays (April 2). They also survived a brutally cold and windy tri-meet April 7 against Swanton and Wauseon.

“This was our first time with the whole group together at a big meet like this. To not just win, but to win the way we did was the next step for us,” Howard said. Eastwood was short-handed at Liberty-Benton because the Eagles were on spring break. “So many kids performed well tonight. How do you list them all.:

“We’re one big family,” Appelhans said. “We’re all contributing and doing our part to reach our goals.”

NEXT

The Eagles visit Genoa Tuesday (April 14) for a Northern Buckeye Conference tri-meet with the Comets and Lake.

WHITMER INVITATIONAL RESULTS

<https://www.athletic.net/TrackAndField/meet/637325/info>

EASTWOOD-GENOA-LAKE INFORMATION

<https://www.baumspage.com/track/trevent.php?peventid=110&table=C>

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