

## Lewis qualifies for state in the high jump; podium finishes for Poiry and Oliver



All Photo Credits: Danielle DeFalco Athlete: Andre Lewis

**By Kevin Gordon**

LEXINGTON — Andre Lewis had an agonizing wait of approximately 90 minutes Saturday afternoon. It turned out to be worthwhile.

The Eastwood High School junior earned an at-large berth in the high jump to the Division II state track and field championships.

Lewis cleared 6-3 for fifth place in the Lexington High School regional, one place shy of an automatic berth to his sport's showcase event and leaving him to wonder if his season was over.

But Lewis eventually learned from assistant coach Jack Corken, who works with the team's high jumpers, that he had earned an at-large berth to state. The other at-large qualifier jumped 6-4.

The top four finishers in each event at the regional and two at-large qualifiers advanced to state. The two at-large berths in each event go to the next two best times/heights/distances, regardless of region.

The top eight finishers in each event at the regional received medals and are recognized on the awards stand.

Two other Eagles — juniors Jesse Poiry and Dayquan Oliver — had podium finishes. Poiry finished sixth in the 110 hurdles, while Oliver finished seventh in the 400. Also, for the Eagles, sophomore Austin Miller finished 15<sup>th</sup> in the 800.

### **Lewis finishes 5<sup>th</sup> in high jump, earns at-large berth to state**

Lewis jumped 6-3 to match last week's personal record during the district meet at Oak Harbor High School.

He finished jumping around 12:35 p.m. Corken then stress tested his cell phone, repeatedly checking the live results on the internet of the three other regionals to see if Lewis had earned an at-large berth.

The wait was even longer than usual because the Youngstown regional was delayed by rain and lightning. The Youngstown was easily the last regional to finish.

Corken also received at-large updates from his daughter, Leesa Caris, and her husband, Matt.

"I'm excited to be going to state, but I was nervous waiting as we figured out the at-large spots," Lewis said. "My heart was still pumping because we have a very talented and skilled region. It's tough to get out of this region, so I knew there was a chance I could still get to state. Being in the top four is guaranteed to go to state, but I knew I had a chance for an at-large bid."



Corken and Lewis shared a hug after Corken informed his athlete he had qualified for state. "It was hard to wait that long, but it's awesome to have another week with the coaches," Lewis said. "I've created a strong bond with Coach Corken this year. It was a great feeling to find out I was going to state, and that was a great moment, sharing a hug with him."

Lewis jumped well all day after missing his first attempt at 5-8.

After passing the opening height of 5-6 and clearing 5-8, he cleared 5-10, 6-0, 6-2 and 6-3 on his first attempt. He then missed all three attempts at 6-4.

"After the miss at 5-8, everything else looked really good," Corken said. "We really didn't change anything. He jumped really well."

Bellevue senior Wyatt Sumser cleared 6-7 to win

the event. Oak Harbor sophomore Braden Schultz was second, while Elmwood senior Micah Oliver was third, and Bellville Clear Fork freshman Hoeflich Davis was fourth. Schultz, Oliver and Davis all cleared 6-4, with the ties broken by misses.

Lewis' miss at 5-8 was the result of him not hearing his name called when it was his turn to jump. Corken had to tell him it was his turn. As a result, Lewis rushed the attempt. He was in a four-way tie for the third seed in the regional, based on district heights.

"I didn't even hear my name called because I was so dialed in," Lewis said. "After that, everything was good. I had a good day. I jumped well."

Lewis qualified for the regional in four events. He also ran the 300 hurdles, and was a member of the Eagles' 4x100 and 4x400 relay teams.

### **Destination Dayton**

Lewis competes in the state high jump Friday afternoon at 1.

"Ideally, I'd like to go 6-4, 6-5 and get a PR," Lewis said. "I jumped well. It's all mental now. I know I can get 6-3. Now, it's a game of the mind. I have to keep jumping the same and not change anything. I can definitely go higher. State is a whole different level. The competition is going to be awesome."

Lewis has jumped well all season, although he cleared only 5-8 in the Northern Buckeye Conference Championships May 11 at Rossford's Glenwood Athletic Complex.

But he's bounced back the last two weeks, clearing 6-3 in the district and regional meets.

"My confidence is a lot better now," Lewis said.

Lewis first cracked Eastwood's Top 10 list with a 6-2 effort during a dual meet against Oak Harbor April 24. The jump moved him into a six-way tie for seventh on the Top 10 list. The 6-3 jump put him in a two-way tie for fifth place.

"He came back really happy and focused both days," Corken said of Lewis' jumping the last two meets. "When he's feeling good and confident, he can do a lot of good things."

Corken said Lewis had several good attempts at 6-4 the last two weeks after clearing 6-3.

“That’s one of the things we’ll work on next week, getting to those higher heights and staying consistent,” Corken said. “He’ll probably have to jump 6-5 to place well and 6-4 with no misses might place. If he can have another good day and get 6-4 on his first attempt, he can do well.”



### **Poiry finishes 6<sup>th</sup> in the 110 hurdles**

Poiry finished sixth in the 110 hurdles with a time of 15.29, the second-best time of his career. His best was a 15.12 clocking in the district meet.

The top four finishers all broke the 15-second mark, including winner and Huron senior Beau Harkelroad, who won in 14.26. Oak Harbor sophomore Wyatt Augsburger was second in 14.72, beating Liberty Union junior Caleb Hague by .01. Liberty-Benton senior Owen Wilkins was fourth in 14.98.

Harkelroad, Hague and Wilkins qualified for state last season, with Harkelroad finishing sixth and Wilkins finishing seventh.

“I knew I was going to have to break 15 seconds if I wanted to go to state, and that didn’t happen,”

Poiry said. “I’d have been in the top four in every other region, but our region is so tough.

“It was my second-best time, but it wasn’t my best race,” Poiry added. “I was a little bit out of control with my arms, and it’s different running against this competition. You have to run well here to advance.”

Poiry also was a regional qualifier last season, finishing fifth in the 300 hurdles.

“This is motivation for next year,” Poiry said. “I want to get back here next year, so I’ll keep working and do whatever I need to do, so I can get to state.”

### **Oliver places 7<sup>th</sup> in the 400**

Oliver finished seventh in the 400 with a time of 50.39.

The top four finishers all broke the 50-second mark. Clyde junior Damarius Christman won in 48.69, followed by Jonathan Alder senior Cameron Jewell 49.72, Columbus Academy junior Patrick Flythe 49.89 and Fredericktown senior Grant Hartley 49.97.

“I was super confident coming into the race, and I was prepared,” Oliver said. “I took it out 100 percent. Coach Sabo (Eastwood Head Coach Brian Sabo) said I executed the race perfectly. I still had a decent time. It could have been better, and it needed to be better, but it’s not a terrible time.”



Oliver appeared to be ready to make a run at a position in the top four going into the final curve, but he came up short. He was less than a second off his PR of 49.72. “I usually accelerate more than I did today, but I didn’t have that next gear,” Oliver said. Oliver was a three-event regional qualifier, also running on the Eagles’ 4x100 and 4x400 relay teams.

“I’m happy I made it this far,” Oliver said. “It’s the best track season I’ve ever had. It was a good experience running here. I’ll be ready to come back here next year. This is a big-time motivator for me, 100 percent.”



### **Miller narrowly misses 800 PR**

Miller ran well in the 800 with a time of 2:03.34, missing his PR of 2:01.74 during last week’s district meet at Oak Harbor by 1.6 seconds.

“I didn’t feel very good honestly,” Miller said. “I came through the first 400 with what I needed to do, and I ran a 57-second first lap. The goal after that was to race the second lap, but I just didn’t have it. The first lap, I felt like I was pushing out harder than I’ve ever pushed.”

Jonathan Alder’s Luke Goode, who finished sixth in the state meet last season, won the race in 1:53.07.

The second-, third- and fourth-place finishers also broke 1:54. Caledonia River Valley’s Gabe Douce was second in 1:53.22, and London’s Cameron Carn was third in 1:53.53, beating Ontario sophomore Jace Young by .09.

Goode and Douce are seniors, and Carn and Young are sophomores.

“That was the fastest race I’ve ever been a part of without a doubt,” Miller said. “You have to run this race like it’s a normal race. You can’t look at the competition. You can’t worry about what you’re going to do if this happens or that happens. You just run the race, and that’s what I did.”

Miller was a three-event regional qualifier, running on the Eagles’ 4x800 and 4x400 relay teams.

“Obviously, I wish I had a faster time today,” Miller said. “I’m happy how the season went, and it came to a decent conclusion. I’m super excited for next season. This will motivate me even more to keep working hard and keep improving.”

### **LEXINGTON REGIONAL INFORMATION AND RESULTS**

<https://oh.milesplit.com/meets/568342-ohsaa-division-2-region-6-lexington-2024>

### **STATE MEET INFORMATION**

<https://www.ohsaa.org/Sports-Tournaments/Track-Field/2024-Track-and-Field/2024-State-Tournament-Coverage>