

## Girls win three events, break two school records during second-place finish in Eastwood Relays



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### By Kevin Gordon

LUCKEY — Eastwood High School's girls track and field team won three events and set two school records Friday night on the way to a second-place finish in the Eastwood Relays.

The Eagles won the distance medley relay, the 4x800 relay and the hammer throw, and scored 84 points. Whitmer won the 12-team meet with 91 points, while Perkins was third with 80 and Liberty-Benton was fourth with 77½.

The meet was held in rainy, chilly and windy conditions. The rain caused the cancellation of the pole vault.

"I'm really happy with how everyone did. The weather conditions weren't great, but I'm proud of how everyone competed," said senior Olivia Newsome, who set a school record in winning the hammer throw.

"We saw a lot of grit and determination," said senior Kayden Firsdon, who ran on the winning distance medley team win a school-record time, and the winning 4x800 team. "We had a lot of good performances, and we were encouraging each other all night. It added up to a really good meet for us."



DMR Athletes: Kayden Firsdon, Z Ramsey, Haley Sponaugle, and Talia Baum

### Distance medley wins in record time

The Eagles' distance medley team of senior Talia Baum, Firsdon, and juniors Haley Sponaugle and Z Ramsey won in 13:32.95 to break the Eastwood record of 13:35.31 set in 1998.

The DMR had legs of 800, 400, 1,200 and 1,600 meters for a total of 2½ miles.

"We were looking at breaking the record, for sure," Firsdon said, adding



*Athletes: Firsdon to Sponaugle*

she and her relay teammates knew they had a chance to break the record after looking at their predicted splits for the race earlier in the week.

“We knew we could get there, and we did,” Firsdon added. “Everyone went out hard, and everyone ran well.” The Eagles were on pace for the record going into the final lap of the relay, and Ramsey finished the record-setting performance with an 84-second split to break the record by almost three seconds.

“She really pushed it to get her split times each lap,” Firsdon said of Ramsey. “She knew we were counting on her, just as she was counting on us. She really pushed herself to get across the finish line.”

“Grit, determination,” Sponaugle said of Ramsey’s run. Baum said the team enjoys running for each other.

“It’s encouraging when we know our teammates are trying their hardest, and that makes you try even harder

than you thought you could,” Baum said. “You want to run hard for your teammates and put them in the best possible position that you can.

“We all work well off each other, and we all want to succeed,” Baum added. “That really encourages us. (Ramsey) went out really hard in that last 400, and it was a strong finish for her.”

The Eagles won one other distance event, the 4x800 relay where the team sophomore Leah Emch, Sponaugle, junior Amelia Ward and Firsdon won in 10:21.61.



*Eastwood Throwers: Emma Kiefer, Olivia Newsome, Mariah Hahn, and Kennedy Ameling*

### **Newsome sets hammer throw record**

Senior Olivia Newsome won the hammer throw with a distance of 127-0. The previous Eastwood record of 121-9 was set by Ava Kiefer in 2021.

Newsome entered the meet second on the school’s all-time list at 121-9 last season. She also finished 10<sup>th</sup> in the state hammer meet last year.

“I was hoping I would the break the record by the end of the season since we only have a couple of meets with the hammer, so it’s not something I have to worry about for the rest of the season,

Newsome said. “It’s exciting to set the record.”

The hammer isn’t sanctioned by the Ohio High School Athletic Association, and is only held in a handful of meets. The Eagles practice the discus and the shot put every day, but Newsome said she’s practiced throwing the hammer only four times this spring.

“It’s really fun to do because not a lot of people get to do it,” Newsome said. “When we do throw it, it’s more of a fun thing, and there’s not so much pressure to do well as the other events.”

The rainy conditions also made the throwing rings for all three implements slick at times. "I was a little nervous going into it because some people were already slipping throwing the discus," Newsome said. "But after I threw a couple times, it wasn't that bad. You had to slow down and pay attention to what you're doing.

The Eagles finished second in the discus, and third in the shot put and the long jump. The discus team of Newsome, sophomore Mylie Frantz and freshman Kennedy Ameling had a distance of 301-1. Newsome threw 120-3, while Frantz threw 91-10, and Ameling threw 89-0. Newsome was the top individual in the event.

The shot put team of Newsome, sophomore Emma Kiefer and senior Mariah Hahn had a distance of 89-4. Newsome threw 33-11, while Kiefer threw 28-9, and Hahn threw 26-8.



*Athlete: Emma Downs*

The long jump team of senior Emma Downs, and sophomores Kyrie Henline and Bella Provo had a distance of 42-8½. Downs jumped 15-7¼, while Henline jumped 13-3¾, and Provo jumped 13-6½.

The field events were scored as relays. Each school could enter up to three athletes in the discus, shot put, high jump, long jump and pole vault, with the combined distance or height determining the team scoring.

The hammer throw was held as an individual event.

The top eight finishers in each event scored team points, with those points awarded on a 10-8-6-5-4-3-2-1 basis. Seventeen events were held.

In the seated shot put, Eastwood freshman Jenna Gallant won with a distance of 8-6½.

### **Eagles third in mixed relay**

Eastwood finished third in the mixed relay where the team of Baum, and sophomores Lilly Mullholand, Andre Lewis and Dayquan Oliver was timed in 3:58.97.

The mixed relay was held for the first time at Eastwood after it was approved last summer by the National Federation of High School Associations, and the Ohio High School Athletic Association.

Eastwood's girls and boys lined the track on the front stretch to encourage the runners from all of the schools during the final three laps. Eagles boys head coach Brian Sabo broke out new white jerseys for the mixed relay. Eastwood's girls and boys regular uniforms are red.

"I loved it," Eastwood boys head coach Brian Sabo said of the mixed relay, "The atmosphere was great. It made the night even better. Combining with the girls was a lot of fun, and the kids getting on the front stretch was really cool the last couple races supporting our teams, and the other teams. I hope the other schools enjoyed it. It was a lot of fun, and we want our sport to be fun."

Sabo anticipates running the mixed relay again next year, and a second mixed event might be added. All relays, including the shuttle hurdles, can be run as a mixed event.



*Athlete: Mallory Sandberg*

### **Great competition, handling the weather**

The Eagles enjoyed the great competition and the great environment offered by the Eastwood Relays — despite the terrible weather.

“The competition here is really good,” Firsdon said.

“It’s some of the best we’ll see all season. It makes us a lot more energetic and pushes us to do our best. The environment is great, too, and it’s a lot of fun to compete in this environment. A lot of people do their best when they compete against great competition, no matter what event it is.”

“We had a lot of strong finishes,” Baum said.

“Everyone went out strong, and finished strong. We were really encouraging each other. There was a lot of

cheering. Every corner of the track, there were people cheering for us, both girls and boys, and that really helps you to perform well. This meet shows us where we stand as we get closer to the end of the season.”

The Eagles compete in the Northern Buckeye Conference Championships May 13, followed by the Division II district meet the following week at Oak Harbor.

“The competition helps us get ready for NBCs, districts and beyond that,” Sponaugle said. “You’re going to face some really good times, heights and distances, and that gets us ready for that.”

Despite the adverse weather conditions, the Eagles still competed hard.

“It’s not only us when it comes to competing in bad weather,” Newsome said. “Every team has to deal with it. We’re all facing the same conditions. Everyone will be affected, not just us, so we just go out and do our best, regardless of the conditions.”

### **NEXT**

The Eagles travel to Otsego Tuesday for a Northern Buckeye Conference tri-meet against the Knights and Lake. The meet against Otsego and Lake originally was scheduled for Lake, but was moved to Otsego because of construction on the Lake campus. The starting times also have been changed, to 5 p.m. for the field events and 5:30 p.m. for the running events.

### **EASTWOOD RELAYS RESULTS**

<https://www.baumspage.com/track/trevent.php?peventid=830&table=C>

### **EASTWOOD-OTSEGO-LAKE INFORMATION**

<https://www.baumspage.com/track/trevent.php?peventid=181&table=C>