

Boys win Liberty-Benton Relays with team effort

By Kevin Gordon

FINDLAY — Eastwood High School's boys track and team started its season Thursday night (April 2) by winning the Liberty-Benton Relays.

The Eagles won five events and scored in all 14 events to win the seven-team meet with 84 points, three ahead of second-place Fremont Ross. Liberty-Benton was third with 77.

"I'm thrilled," Eastwood head coach Brian Sabo said. "We've come here before and finished fifth. I thought we could have been fourth or fifth, but I also thought we had a chance to win. I looked at Fremont Ross' times coming in and knew they'd be tough, and Columbus Grove is always good.

"But for us to come in and fight, and run times and post distances ... some of this stuff, I was shooting for at the end of the year," Sabo said. "These guys came in and rocked it right away. We'll get better because that's what we do. If we weren't winning an event, it was still a quality performance."

Eastwood finished no lower than fifth in any event. The top six finishers in each event scored team points, awarded on a 10-8-6-4-2-1 basis. The Eagles also finished second three times, fourth twice and fifth four times.

"I loved the energy we had as a team," Sabo said. "There were so many new guys and guys who hadn't competed in a big meets last year, and they believe. That's what I appreciated the most. They were cheering each other on. There was good energy to try and win this meet. I appreciate that about these guys."

The Eagles originally were scheduled to open the season Tuesday (March 31) against Wauseon and Clay, but the meet was canceled because of inclement weather.

"It's such a youthful group, and we have great leaders," Sabo said. "That's why I'm excited about seeing where this team is going to go. We're ahead of where we thought we might be. We're a good team. We're a very solid team, all the way around. This just validates the training."

The Eagles overcame an eight-point deficit to Fremont Ross during the final two events. Eastwood clinched its championship by finishing second in the 4x400 relay — the final event of the meet — where it finished second for eight points, while Fremont Ross was sixth for one point. The Eagles' team of Cody Hefflinger, Zach Mullholand, Carsyn Jones and Austin Miller had a time of 3:29.28.

"We performed very well as a team today," Eastwood senior Hunter Lauer said. "We had a lot of new faces who had never performed in a big meet and they showed up well. Everyone contributed. Overall, it was a great team effort. It wasn't just one area or one person."

Now, the Eagles are looking forward to the rest of the season.

"Even during the pre-season, we knew we were in a great spot," Lauer said. "This shows what kind of team we can be. This shows us how good we can be when we perform at the highest level and everyone puts in the highest effort which is what happened today.

"We can be happy about this tonight and through the weekend, but we have to get back to work on Monday," Lauer added. "We have to keep grinding, keep working, keep getting better ... improve every day, if we want to achieve our goals."

Eastwood won five events

The Eagles' winners were:

- The discus team of Lauer, Logan Miesmer and Max Chaffee won with a combined distance of 425-10, fifth-best in school history. Lauer finished third individually.

The field events were scored as relays. Each school entered three athletes in an event, with the three heights or distances being added together to determine the order of finish.

Lauer threw 157-3 in the discus, while Miesmer threw 143-1 and Chaffee threw 125-6. Lauer's throw was the fifth-best in school history. His previous best of 156-2 last season ranked eighth in Eastwood history.

- The shot put team of Lauer, Miesmer and Grady Greulich was fourth with a distance of 133-8, sixth-best in school history. Lauer threw 50-5 for fifth place individually, followed by Miesmer 43-4½ and Greulich 39-10½.

- The pole vault team of Cullen Shank, Dylan Perkins and Everett Ward won with a height of 37-0. Shank and Perkins both cleared 13-0, while Ward jumped 11-0. Shank and Perkins finished in a three-way tie for first individually, while Ward finished fourth.

- The 4x800 team of Austin Miller, Henry Howard, Ben Buehler and Casen Henline won in a meet-record time of 8:27.18.

- The 4x110 shuttle hurdles relay team of Brayden Luidhardt, Levi Strayer, Zach Mullholand and Jones won in 1:01.68, the sixth-fastest time in school history.

Completing Eastwood's results

The remainder of the Eagles' results:

- 4x100 — 5) Brady Mohr, Jones, Hefflinger and Edmund Opfer, 45.58.

- 4x100 throwers — 2) Brady Mullholand, Lauer, Miesmer and Chaffee, 50.98, the fifth-fastest time in school history.

- 4x200 — 4) Jones, Zach Mullholand, Opfer and Miller, 1:32.78.

- 4x1,600 — 5) Scott McKenzie, Cole Schimmoeller, Noah Bryant and Braxton Stutts, 23:29.18.

- 800 freshmen sprint medley (100-100-200-400) — 2) Elijah Snowden, Don Booker, Strayer and Schimmoeller, 1:45.78.

- Distance medley relay (1,200-400-800-1,600) — 4) Howard, Luidhardt, Henline and Buehler, 11:34.78, the third-fastest in school history.

- Long jump — 5) 53-1¾; Zach Mullholand, 18-10¾, Hunter Wilson, 18-6, and Gage Stephenson, 15-9.

- High jump — 5) 15-8; Stephenson, 5-4, Mohr and Luidhardt, both 5-2.

NEXT

The Eagles host Swanton and Wauseon in a non-conference meet (April 7) and compete in the Whitmer Invitational (April 10).

LIBERTY-BENTON RELAYS RESULTS

<https://www.baumspage.com/track/trevent.php?peventid=21&table=C>

EASTWOOD-SWANTON-WAUSEON INFORMATION

<https://www.baumspage.com/track/trevent.php?peventid=37&table=C>

WHITMER INVITATIONAL INFORMATION

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

MORE INFORMATION ON EASTWOOD TRACK AND FIELD

<https://www.eastwoodtrack.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/EastwodTF>

<https://x.com/EastwoodTF>