

Girls perform well again in second-place finish at Napoleon



Ava Kiefer

By Kevin Gordon

NAPOLEON — Eastwood High School's girls track and field team scripted a familiar story Saturday.

The Eagles competed hard and performed well again, this time at the Napoleon Invitational.

They won five events, finished second in three events and added six third-place finishes on the way to a second-place team finish.

Eastwood scored 142½ points to trail only Celina with 170½ in the eight-team meet. Defiance was third with 91, while Bowling Green was fourth with 73½.

"We had a lot of solid performances," Eastwood head coach Nikki Sabo said. "We're competing hard, and

we're getting in quality events and quality races against some top-notch teams. Those are the experiences we'll continue to build on for our future meets."

The Eagles have performed well in all of their competitions this season. They've already won the Liberty-Benton Relays and the Gold W Invitational at Whitmer, and are 4-0 in dual meets.

Celina is the defending Western Buckeye League champion.

"The competition here was really good," Sabo said. "Celina, Archbold, Bowling Green, Napoleon — they all have very good programs, and they're going to compete hard which is going to bring out the best in us. That's why we come to meets like this. We want to be challenged which is going to help us in the long run."

Eastwood's Ava Kiefer was named the field event athlete of the meet. The senior threw 123-3 to win the discus and 35-6¼ to finish second in the shot put.

Eagle Emma Downs also had a strong day, winning two individual events, helping the 4x100 team finish first and running a leg on the second-place 4x400 team.

Downs won the 200 in 27.95 and had a distance of 15-7 to win the long jump.

In the relays, the 4x100 team of senior Mikayla Hoelter, junior Julia Sabo, sophomore Saylor King and Downs had a time of 53.34; and the 4x400 team of senior Maisy Stevenson, Hoelter, senior Aubrey Haas and Downs had a time of 4:24.90.

Julia Sabo was Eastwood's other winner, clearing 10-3 to win the pole vault.

The Eagles scored in all 17 events. Schools were allowed to enter up to three individuals in the 13 non-relay events. The four relays were limited to one entry per school.

The top eight finishers in each event scored team points.

Eastwood had three scorers in three of the 13 non-relay events, and two scorers in four other events. The Eagles had 10 PRs and one-season best during the meet.

“Everyone did an awesome job,” Downs said. “They put themselves in their events and competed with confidence. It was a good day. That’s what we stand for, so that was cool to see.”

“I’m proud of everyone on the team,” Kiefer said. “Everyone gave their best effort.”

Kiefer improves Eastwood Top 10 distance

Kiefer’s throw of 123-3 in the discus was a PR, beating her previous best of 122-7 earlier this season.

She already ranked third on Eastwood’s all-time list, but she moved closer to second-place Jena Jacoby, who threw 128-6 in 2012. Current Eagle assistant coach Whitney Recker is the Eagle record-holder, throwing 141-2 as Whitney Hartman in 2004.

“The weather was nice, so you could get some quality throws in,” Kiefer said. “I was really proud of my discus throw. It felt really good to get that. I’ve felt like that throw was coming, especially with the weather today. I’m happy to finish second in the shot because it helped the team, but I know I have some things to work on there.”

“She had a PR in the discus,” Nikki Sabo said. “I was happy to see that. She is consistently throwing in the 110-120 range and that is a huge improvement over a year ago.”



Downs performs well

Downs saw plenty of positives during her performance. Her day included a PR in the long jump where she jumped 15-7 to beat her previous best of 15-1¾ earlier this season.

“I was shocked. I was nervous coming back from spring break,” said Downs, who didn’t compete in Tuesday’s meet against Genoa and Lake. “I wasn’t feeling very confident, so I was shocked with the way my events finished, but I’m very happy.”

“She had a big day,” Nikki Sabo said.

Downs ran well in the 200, winning by less than one-tenth of a second. She ran a total of four races and competed in the long jump. The 200 included preliminary races.

“I really ripped up the curve in the finals, and that really felt powerful,” Downs said. “It felt strong. It felt like a good race.”

Even more contributors

Also scoring for the Eagles by event were:

- 100 — Sabo, third, 13.71; and King, eighth, 14.32.
- 400 — Stevenson, fourth, 1:06.29.
- 800 — sophomore Amelia Ward, sixth, 2:44.36; junior Kayden Firsdon, seventh, 2:45.60; and junior Talia Baum, eighth, 2:49.76.
- 1,600 — sophomore Z Ramsey, fifth, 5:45.79 (pr); and sophomore Haley Sponaugle, seventh, 5:48.40 (pr).

- 3,200 — freshman Leah Emch, third, 12:21.35 (pr); and Ramsey, fifth, 12:37.95 (pr).
- 100 hurdles — Haas, fourth, 17.41.
- 300 hurdles — Haas, second, 51.65.
- 4x200 relay — seventh, team of freshman Kyrie Henline, and sophomores Joelle Jared, Lila Kiefer, and Allison Kwiatkowski, 2:03.14.
- 4x800 relay — third, team of Baum, Ward, Firsdon and Emch, 10:31.78 (sb). Firsdon's split was a PR.
- High jump — Stevenson, third, 4-8; and Hoelter, tied for fourth, 4-8.
- Pole vault — Henline, sixth, 8-9 (pr).
- Long jump — Hoelter, third, 14-10; and Henline, seventh, 14-1¼ (pr).

On the horizon

Eastwood visits Fostoria in a Northern Buckeye Conference dual meet Tuesday. The meet is at Memorial Stadium, not Fostoria High School. The stadium's address is 530 Stadium Drive, Fostoria, 44830. The Eagles then host the Eastwood Relays Friday.

Napoleon Invitational results

<https://www.baumspage.com/track/trevent.php?peventid=664&table=C>