

Middle school boys, girls win conference titles again

By Kevin Gordon

FOSTORIA — Eastwood Middle School's boys and girls track and field teams won Northern Buckeye Conference championships Friday night at Memorial Stadium.

The boys won eight of the 16 events and scored 182 points to win their championship. Genoa was second with 123½, while Otsego was third with 90, and Woodmore was fourth with 89½.

The girls had three first-place finishes and totaled 135 points on the way to their championship. Elmwood was second with 114, while Otego was third with 110, and Woodmore was fourth with 85.

The boys have won all 10 NBC championships since the conference was formed for the 2011-12 school year. The 2020 championships were canceled because of Covid.

The girls repeated their championship of last season, and was their third in the last four seasons and sixth overall.

BOYS RECAP

Eastwood's eight first-place finishes were complemented by six second-place finishes and two third-place efforts.

The Eagles had two of the top eight scorers in 10 of the 12 non-relay events. The points were awarded on a 10-8-6-5-4-3-2-1 basis. They finished first and second in the discus, shot put, the 110 hurdles and the 800; first and third in the 1,600; and second and third in the pole vault.

"Everyone gave great effort, and everyone was focused on what they had to do," Eagle coach Ken Perkins said. "They performed the way we needed them to perform."

Drew Luidhardt swept the hurdles for the Eagles, winning the 110 race in 17.49 and the 200 race in 28.83.

Eastwood's other individual winners were: Hunter Lauer, shot, 44-6½; Braden Dix, discus, 129-7; Raif Johnson, 1,600, 5:19.48; and Ben Buehler, 800, 2:22.37.

The Eagles won two relays.

The 4x800 team of Austin Miller, Tyler Bengry, Buehler and Johnson won in 9:30.60.

The 4x100 team of Collin Brogran, Steven Nelson, Cullen Shank and Wyatt Ashby won in 50.45.

Perkins and the rest of the Eagle coaching staff also were pleased with the way the team improved and work hard during the season.

"The biggest thing we want for them is to enjoy it and have a lot of fun," Perkins said. "We talk a lot about being a team and competing as a team. At the end of the year, we always talk about performing our best at the last meet of the year, and we did that tonight."

"We want them to have fun, so they come back and stay in the program and move onto the high school program," Perkins added.

GIRLS RECAP

In addition to its three wins, Eastwood had four second-place finishes, two third-place finishes and three third-place finishes. The Eagles had two of the top eight scorers in eight of the 12 non-relay events.

“They gave it their all,” Eastwood coach Lucas Hoodlebrink said. “All of the coaches told them throughout the day, throughout the week, this is the last meet, so give it our all. You could that see that in their faces and their performances. They gave it everything they had.”

Eastwood’s winners were: Mackenzie Hady, long jump, 14-0; Piper Sutton, pole vault, 6-6; and Josie Appelhans, 400, 1:05.71.

The conference championship came after the Eagles had two difficult meets to start the season. They finished eighth with 26 points in the 11-team Woodmore Invitational April 8, and scored just four points in the Perkins Invitational April 16.

“The team really improved during the season,” Hoodlebrink said. “The seventh graders, being new to track, were just a little bit skeptical the first couple meets, and that gave them a lot of motivation to work hard and improve.

“The eighth graders were a little shocked about the way we performed the first couple meets, but they knew what they were capable of doing,” Hoodlebrink added. “They got the seventh graders motivated, and they all came together and performed great tonight.” Hoodlebrink and the other Eastwood coaches praised the team for having fun, and working hard to improve during the season.

“The biggest thing we told them was to go out and have fun,” Hoodlebrink said. “That’s what they did. They realized the hard work they were putting in, they would get something out of it, and it showed a lot today. We want them to have fun and enjoy the sport, so they’ll do it again next year.”

NBC Championships results

<https://www.baumspage.com/track/trevent.php?peventid=719&table=C>