

## Boys perform well in 2<sup>nd</sup> place NBC finish



### By Kevin Gordon

GENOA — Eastwood High School's boys track and field was outstanding Friday night (May 15).

Unfortunately, the Eagles fell just short of a Northern Buckeye Conference championship. Still, the Eagles won five events and scored in all 12 events to finish second in the conference meet at Genoa High School. Eastwood scored 161½ points to finish 9½ points behind Oak Harbor, which won the championship for the third straight season. Genoa was third in the eight-team meet with 76.

The Eagles won eight events in all after winning three events during Wednesday's opening day of the two-day meet. They also scored in all 17 events over the two days.

"Our kids definitely wanted to win, and they went out and performed well," Eastwood head coach Brian Sabo said.

Eagle athletes won three major awards in a vote of conference coaches.

Eastwood senior Austin Miller was named athlete of the year and the co-running athlete of the meet. In the conference meet, he won the 400 and the 200, finished second in the 100 and ran on the winning 4x400 relay team. Eagle senior Hunter Lauer was named the NBC's field athlete of the meet. The senior won the discus Friday after finishing first in the shot put Wednesday.

The Eagles had a team effort to finish second. They scored 82 points in the eight individual running events, 42½ points in the five field events and 38 out of a possible 40 points in the four relays. They also had two scorers in 11 of the 13 non-relay events.

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

"There was nothing that could happen today performance-wise to make me love them any less than I do today," Sabo said. I'm proud of who they are. We're going to go out and give great effort, have great team spirit, a PR mindset. If we come in and have season bests and PRs, and we get beat, we get beat by a better team.

"I'm super proud of them, but the most pride that I have in them is how they act as people and who they are and how they carry themselves," Sabo added. "When others watch us, I want them to say we really get after it and we go after it hard, and how well we carry ourselves."



The Eagles had eight personal records Friday, to go along with two Eastwood Top 10 all-time performances and six performances that ranked in the NBC Top 10. The NBC's conference records and Top 10 are based solely on times, heights and distances in the NBC meet.

"Everybody came out with the intention of winning, but that's not quite the way it turned out," Miller said. "It's the intention that matters. Everybody came out wanting to win. I wish the result was a little different, but I wouldn't change a thing about our mentality and what we did."

"I know we did everything in our power to win, and we gave great effort tonight and we've worked hard all season, but it's super frustrating to come up a little bit short," said Eagle senior Collin Brogan, who ran on the winning 4x200 and 4x400 relay teams, and the

runner-up 4x100 relay team. "I can't be mad when we PRd in basically every event. Guys really went after their events. I'm proud of the team."

The Rockets joined the NBC for the 2023-24 academic year, and they've won the conference every year since. Eastwood has finished second in each of those seasons.

"Oak Harbor coming into our league has made us better, and we've made them better," Sabo said. "We just got beat by a better team. Our guys were great. We ran times, because we were battling, I didn't think we'd run this year. We had guys run things because they wanted to run for the team and they had serious PRs."

The Eagles saddled their workhorses in the running events, and rode them in three and even the maximum four events. Miller, Brogan, seniors Henry Howard and Zach Mullholand, junior Ben Buehler, sophomore Carsyn Jones also performed well, often competing in back-to-back races,

"They've done it before, but to do it at the level of the league meet with really good competition, we rose to who we are today and that will help us the next couple weeks," Sabo said. "I'm super proud of those guys."

### **Miller wins twice in the sprints**

Miller won 400 in 50.02 and the 200 in 22.47 to rank fourth in NBC history in both races. He's also third on Eastwood's all-time list in the 400 and sixth in the 200. Miller's previous bests were 50.34 in the 400 and 23.43 in the 200.

He was second in the 100 in 11.28, just off his PR of 11.24.

"That was a tough four events," Sabo said. "When you perform and win, it's a super quick recovery and let's start thinking about the next race. He ripped up all three races."

"I'm definitely happy with my times, but I also was hoping to go a little faster," Miller said of the 400 and 200. "But I have no complaints. I PRd in both, so I'm pretty happy with that. I went after it."

Oak Harbor senior Wyatt Augsburg won the 100 in a meet-record time of 10.88.

“Augsburger is legit,” Miller said. “That was the only race I didn’t think I was going to win, but I still felt like I had something to prove. My time was pretty solid and I finished second, so that’s good.”

Mullholand and Hefflinger also ran well in the sprints.

Mullholand was third in the 200 with a PR time of 22.86, beating his previous best of 23.43.

Hefflinger was fourth in the 400 in 53.90 and eighth in the 100 in 11.75. Hefflinger maintained fourth place in the 400, despite grabbing the back of the leg and slowing down near the finish line.

“He really ran well, and to finish the race says about him and who he is,” Miller said.

### **Lauer wins third NBC championship**

Lauer threw 170-9 to win the discus, his second conference title in two days and third conference championship in the last two years. The senior also won the shot Wednesday and as a junior. His winning throw was just shy of his PR earlier this season of 171-6, the fourth-best throw in school history.

Lauer’s throw was the second best in NBC history. He won by just over five feet.

“I’m very happy,” Lauer said. “To win both events and throw 170, I’m definitely happy. It feels great to double. I was a little nervous earlier in the week, but I threw well in the shot and I came back and threw well again tonight. I had a great practice yesterday and was ready to get after it today.”

Lauer had three other discus throws of at least 160-0, including one of 169-2. Each of the 16 throwers received three attempts during the preliminaries with the top nine individuals advancing to the finals. In the finals, each athlete received three more attempts in an attempt to improve their standing.

“That’s awesome being a double league champion,” said Eastwood assistant coach Tyler McCrory, who works with the throwers. “He looked really good, really consistent all day.” Eastwood junior Logan Miesmer also scored in the discus, throwing 136-2 for seventh place.

### **Relays have impressive meet**

The 4x200 and 4x400 teams both won, and the 4x100 team was second.

The 4x200 team of Jones, Mullholand, Brogan and Howard won in 1:31.37, the second-fastest time in NBC history.

“We PRd and got on the top 10. It was a beautiful race,” Brogan said.

The 4x400 team of Miller, Brogan, Howard and Jones won in 3:29.93. Brogan ran a PR split of 51.5 as he was a late addition after Hefflinger was injured. Brogan hadn’t run the 4x400 this season, although he had competed in the open 400. The Eagles nearly beat their season best of 3:29.62.

“It was cool to run the 4x400,” said Brogan, whose previous best split in the 4x400 was 53.5. “It’s a little bit longer race than I’m used to and it hurts a little more, but it was great to run it. I’ve been running well all year, so I thought I’d take it out hard and give it my best. We had a good time. When Coach Sabo asked me to run, I said ‘Why not? I was ready to run it. Everyone ran well.’”

The 4x100 team of Brogan, Jones, Mullholand and sophomore Trace Johnson was second in 43.88, a season-best and the 10<sup>th</sup>-best time in NBC history. The Eagles' previous best this season was 44.43.

"That was a great time," Brogan said. "We all performed and gave great effort. To run a time in the 43s makes it even better."

### **Howard finishes second in the 800**

Howard ran an outstanding race in the 800, posting in a PR time of 2:00.19 to finish less than a second behind Oak Harbor senior Bodee Miller, who won the in 1:59.66. Howard's previous best was 2:02.90.

Howard and Miller battled the entire race, and running stride for stride coming out of the final curve to set up the thrilling finish.

"He went out hard and put himself in position," Sabo said. "He really gave great effort."

Buehler was fifth in 2:12.32.

Also for the Eagles, Buehler was fifth in the 1,600 in 4:48.79, and sophomore Oliver St. Louis was sixth in 4:50.14 — a PR of over six seconds. His previous best was 4:56.75.

### **Hurdlers place in their events**

Eastwood hurdlers Brayden Luidhardt, Levi Strayer and Nolan Taylor all placed in their events.

Luidhardt, a sophomore, was fourth in the 110 hurdles with a PR time of 15.87, beating his previous best of 15.98. Strayer, a freshman, was eighth in 17.35, just missing his PR of 16.85.

Taylor, a senior, was sixth in the 300 hurdles in 44.38 and Luidhardt was seventh in 44.75. Taylor's PR was 43.89, and Luidhardt's was 44.42.

### **Mohr, Stephenson post PRs in the high jump**

Juniors Brady Mohr and Gage Stephenson both matched their PRs in the high jump to finish seventh and ninth, respectively. Mohr cleared 5-10 for seventh place, while Stephenson was ninth at 5-8.

"They jumped out of their minds," Sabo said. "Those guys attempted PRs or had a season best; that's what we ask. I'm elated for them. In a competition like this, sometimes, guys get nervous and don't feel like they belong here, but they felt like they did belong. A couple of years ago, 5-8, 5-10 would be big places for us, but the competition was a lot better and both of those guys are back next year."

### **Team spirit and support**

The Eagles boys and girls had tremendous support from their teammates at Genoa, even those who weren't competing in the meet. Athletes on both teams filled the field event venues for those competitions, and then headed to the track for the running events.

The runners who competed in the meet also filled the field event areas, with the field eventers then returning the favor during the running events.

"We had a big number of people watch us who weren't in the meet because they know they add value to the team and they feel valued by the other guys who they want to come and support," Sabo said. "That matters to us."

## **NEXT**

The Eagles compete in the Division IV district meet May 20 (Wednesday) and May 22 (Friday) at Memorial Stadium in Fostoria. The meet IS NOT at Fostoria High School. The address for Memorial Stadium is 530 Stadium Drive, Fostoria, Ohio, 44830.

## **NBC CHAMPIONSHIPS RESULTS**

<https://www.baumspage.com/track/trevent.php?peventid=177&table=C>

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<https://www.athletic.net/TrackAndField/meet/650235/info>

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