

## Four boys qualify for regionals

### By Kevin Gordon

OAK HARBOR — Eastwood High School athletes Dalton Hesselbart, Cullen Shank, Kevin Lewis and Bryce DeFalco are headed to next week's regional high school track and field meet.

They all finished in the top four of their respective events during Thursday night's Division II district meet at Oak Harbor High School.

Hesselbart finished second and Shank was fourth in the pole vault, while Lewis finished third and DeFalco was fourth in the long jump.

The finals of the pole vault, long jump, shot put and 4x800 relay, and the running semifinals of the 100, 200, 400, 110 hurdles, 300 hurdles, and the 4x100, 4x200 and 4x400 relays were held Thursday. The regional concludes Saturday with the remaining field events at 10:30 a.m. and the remaining running finals at noon.

The top four finishers in each event at the district advance to the regional at Lexington High School, located near Mansfield. The regional is May 25 and 27.

### Hesselbart, Shank advance

Hesselbart's quest for a third straight trip to state wasn't easy. His early warmup runs and vaults weren't sharp, but the senior eventually fought back to finish second with a height of 14-0. Shank, a freshman, finished fourth with a vault of 12-0 to match his personal record.

"I was nervous at the beginning," Hesselbart said. "My jumps were all over the place, but we got it done and got some good heights again. I ended up jumping well, and I had some very good attempts later on. My last attempt at 14-3 was a 14-6 vault, but my standards were a little too far back."

Oak Harbor senior Will Rahm cleared 14-3 to win the event.

"My goal is to qualify for state, so as long as I advance, I'm happy," Hesselbart said. "I would hate to not make it my senior year."

Hesselbart's PR of 14-6 came earlier this season to tie for fourth on Eastwood's all-time list.

"He was nervous early, and we talked about relaxing his shoulders and loosening up, and focus on making a bar and running and jumping," said Eastwood assistant coach Ethan Downey, who coaches the team's vaulters. "We just had to get past a few nerves, and then everything was fine."

Shank vaulted well after not competing in Saturday's Northern Buckeye Conference Championships. But he matched his PR of 12-0, established during a dual meet May 3 against Fostoria. He nearly made 12-6 after clearing 12-0 Thursday.

"I'm happy to be going to regionals," Shank said. "Now, I'd like to get 12-6 or 13-0 at the regional, and clear at least 12-0 to stay consistent. I've gotten over my fear of no-heighting, and I've become more confident."

"A great day for him, Downey said of Shank. "There's a lot left for him. It's exciting to have him make it. For him to come in and vault with confidence in a meet like this as a freshman is important for him in terms of building confidence."

### **Lewis, DeFalco move on**

Lewis and DeFalco both jumped 20-1½, but Lewis had the better distance on his second-best jump to earn third place outright.

“I’m definitely happy to be going to the regional, and I’m happy Kevin is coming with me,” DeFalco said. “I’d be really empty if he wasn’t coming with me. I’m really proud of him for what he’s accomplished this year.”

Lewis and DeFalco have pushed each other to improve all season. In the NBC meet, DeFalco finished first at 21-3 and Lewis was second at 20-7. Both were PRs.

“We always push each other in practice and meets,” Lewis said. “We didn’t have our best jumps today, but we both made it to regionals and that’s what counts. But we’ll working on fixing everything in practice for next week.”

“Iron sharpens iron,” DeFalco said. “We both know what each other can do. One of us pops off a big jump, and the other feeds off of it. We keep rolling and feed off each other.”

### **4x800 relay, shot put finals**

The Eagles’ 4x800 relay team of senior Keagan Kerr, freshmen Austin Miller and Henry Howard, and sophomore AJ O’Brien finished fifth in a season-best time of 8:51.25, beating its previous best of 8:55.76. Herr and O’Brien both ran PR splits.

In the shot put, junior Ian Sibbersen finished sixth with a throw of 48-1 and freshman Hunter Lauer tied for 10<sup>th</sup> at 42-2½. Sibbersen’s distance was a PR, beating his mark of 47-5½.

### **EAGLES ADVANCING TO SATURDAY’S FINALS**

#### **(The eight fastest times advanced from the semifinals)**

**100:** 8) junior Kaiden Sanchez, 11.55.

**200:** 5) sophomore Dayquan Oliver, 23.04 (pr, bettering his time of 23.39); 8) Sanchez, 23.81.

**400:** 6) senior Noah Smith, 53.47.

**110 hurdles:** 6) sophomore Jesse Poiry, 16.11; 7) sophomore Andre Lewis, 16.13.

**300 hurdles:** 3) Andre Lewis, 42.06; 6) Poiry, 42.70.

**4x100 relay:** 5) team of Sanchez, Oliver, Andre Lewis and DeFalco, 45.31.

### **EAGLES ALSO COMPETING THURSDAY**

**4x200 relay:** team of Lewis, freshmen Collin Brogan and Zach Mullholand, and sophomore Hayden Hoelter, 1:38.91. Brogan ran a PR split.

**4x400 relay:** team of Kevin Lewis, Herr, Mullholand and Hoelter, 3:46.72.

### **OAK HARBOR DISTRICT RESULTS AND INFORMATION**

<https://www.baumspage.com/tf/nw/2012/oakharbor/2023/Thursday%20Results.htm>

### **LEXINGTON REGIONAL INFORMATION**

<https://oh.milesplit.com/meets/550111-ohsaa-division-2-region-6-lexington-2023>

### **TRACK AND FIELD MEET PHOTOS**

We appreciate Danielle DeFalco and thank her for sharing her photo talents with us. Visit her page to check out photos from previous meets. She does her best to get to as many events as she can. Thank you, Dani!!

<https://www.facebook.com/danielle.koprowski.1>