

Boys perform well in winning Oak Harbor Invitational



Photo Credit: Tammy Schmeltz

By Kevin Gordon

OAK HARBOR —Eastwood's boys track and field team appeared headed for a third-place finish in the Oak Harbor Invitational Friday night.

The Eagles then dominated the final four events. The result was a team championship for Eastwood, which won the nine-team meet with 120 points to edge Milan Edison with 116 and Oak Harbor with 113.

The Eagles trailed Oak Harbor by 22 points and Edison by 17 with only the discus, the pole vault, the 3,200 and the 4x400 left to be scored. But Eastwood scored 43 points in those events, compared to 22 for Edison and 14 for Oak Harbor.

The discus typically isn't one of the final four events and was over long before the 3,200 and the 4x400 relay, but was one of the last events scored. The 3,200 and the 4x400 relay are the final two running events. Senior Erik Fertig was first and junior Austin Kieper was third in the discus, senior Quinn Booth was second and junior Riley Welker was fourth in the pole vault, and junior Luke Coffman was second in the 3,200.

The 4x400 relay team of senior Alex Boyer, junior Nate McCauley-Benner, freshman Jacob Limes and senior Jack Chappuies clinched Eastwood's championship with a third-place finish.

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

"I'm shocked because of where we were," Eastwood coach Brian Sabo said. "You're watching guys battle, you're watching guys get season bests, and they're fourth or sixth, and that's OK because there's a lot of great athletes here. We knew Edison and Oak Harbor have very solid teams.

"We really battled all the way through. The kids kept battling, and when the points were added up, we were first. I'm really proud of the group."

Even though the Eagles trailed Edison and Oak Harbor for most of the meet, they still enjoyed another night of quality performances. Eastwood had a ton of personal records and season bests — even in cold, wet and windy conditions.

"We go after it and compete, not only for ourselves, but the team, no matter what the weather is," said Eastwood junior Logan Wendt, who won the 110 hurdles in 15.74. "The individual success builds the team's success, and we're all about the team."

Wendt and Fertig had Eastwood's only first-place finishes during the 17 events, but the Eagles had five second-place finishes, four third-place finishes and two fourth-place finishes.

Eastwood totaled 68 points in the running events and 52 points in the field events.



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"We love weather like this because we go after it," Wendt said. "The weather isn't an excuse. You have to show up and compete, no matter the conditions." "To have a PR mindset in really, really crappy weather is what we were looking for," Sabo said. "They came out with that attitude."

Wendt ran well in winning the 110 hurdles and won by a narrow .08 margin.

"It was a good race," Wendt said. "I got out strong, better than I normally do, and that set the tone for the rest of the race. I went after, it and it felt good. I hit a couple hurdles, but it's hard to have a perfect race. I feel really good right now. I'm really looking forward to the rest of the season."

Fertig had one of his best meets of the season. He threw 164-8 to win the discus and 54-8 to finish second in the shot put.

His distance in the shot put was a PR, his first of the season, after he threw 53-4¼ last season. The discus throw was his third-best of the season. His PR of 172-3 came earlier this season.

Fertig is the defending Division II state champion in the discus and finished ninth in the shot at state last season.

"I was very pleased with today," Fertig said. "Today was something I needed. I've been kind of stagnant in the shot, about 50 feet, and the discus, about 158 feet. It feels good to get up over those marks heading into championship season."

Fertig was second in the discus after preliminaries, but took the lead for good with his first throw of the finals.

The athletes received three throws each during the prelims with the top nine distances advancing to the finals. Each athlete received three more throws in the finals in an attempt to improve their distance.

Fertig changed from his throwing spikes to tennis shoes after the prelims to improve his traction in a wet throwing ring.

"I was glad to get the win," Fertig said. "It started out a little rough, but it finished well."

Four of Fertig's six throws in the shot beat his previous best.

"That was the best day I could have had," Fertig said.

Also finishing second for Eastwood were: freshmen Emmet Getz, high jump, 5-10; Booth, pole vault, 12-0; Coffman, 3,200, 10:32.16; and the 4x800 relay team of Coffman, Boyer, Chappuies and junior Lucas Pease, 8:34.51.

The Eagles' next action comes Saturday when they host the Northern Buckeye Conference meet.

Eastwood is bidding for its 19th consecutive league championship. The Eagles have won all seven NBC championships after winning the final 11 titles in the now-defunct Suburban Lakes League.

“I’m happy because we got better today,” Sabo said. “We had a lot of season bests. I’m excited for next week. We’ll have a great week of practice and be ready to go for the league meet.”

Complete results of the meet are available at:

<http://www.baumspage.com/track/oakharbor/2019/2019%20Results.htm>