

Meyer wins long jump, advances to 100 hurdles final; 4x100 relay and Schmeltz in the 200 advance to finals



Photo Credit: Tammy Schmeltz

By Kevin Gordon

LEXINGTON — Eastwood’s girls track and field team enhanced its already-impressive résumé Thursday night.

The Eagles performed exceptionally well on the first day of the Division II regional at Lexington High School.

Their effort was highlighted by senior Katelyn Meyer’s championship in the high jump, and the team advancing to the finals of three other events. Meyer’s victory qualified her for next weekend’s state meet at Ohio State University’s Jesse Owens Stadium.

Advancing to Saturday’s regional finals were Meyer in the 100 hurdles; sophomore Jamie Schmeltz in the 200; and the 4x100 relay team of senior Nichole Swartz, Schmeltz, senior Jessica

Lang and Meyer.

The top four finishers in the running events at each of the four regionals advance to state, along with the next two fastest times overall, regardless of region. The at-large qualifiers are new this season. In the field events, the top four finishers in each event advance to state. There are no at-large qualifiers to state.

The regional concludes Saturday with the field events at 11:30 a.m., followed by the running finals at 12:30 p.m.

“Today went as well as we could have asked,” Eastwood coach Nikki Sabo said. “All in all, a really good day.”

Meyer needed only three attempts to win the high jump. The event began at 4-8, but Meyer passed that height and at 4-10. She cleared 5-0, 5-2 and 5-4 on her first try at each of those heights and knew she had clinched no worse than second place.

The Bowling Green State University volleyball recruit then left the high jump to run her semifinal of the 100 hurdles where she posted a school-record time of 15.23 to earn a berth in the finals. Her time was the fifth fastest of the eight finalists.

Moments after finishing the hurdles, Meyer discovered she had won the high jump. She glanced over to the high jump area and noticed the officials had closed the pit — an indication to Meyer she had won the event. When she actually returned to the high jump area, Eastwood assistant coach Jack Corken told Meyer she had won.

Meyer then ran on the 4x100 relay team which qualified for the finals with a time of 49.67 — the fastest of the finalists.

“It was a really good day for our whole team. I’m really proud of everyone on our team for the way they competed,” Meyer said.

Meyer won the high jump when Oak Harbor junior Peyton Bloomer missed all three attempts at 5-6. That gave Meyer first place because she had no misses, and Bloomer missed her first attempt at 5-4.

"I'm really happy. That was a goal, to get back to state in all of my events, and this is a good start," said Meyer, who competes in the long jump Saturday. She's the two-time defending regional champion in the long jump.

Meyer was a four-event state qualifier the last two seasons. She finished third in the high jump, fourth in the long jump and 12th in the 100 hurdles. The relay also was at state last season.

As a sophomore, Meyer was third in the long jump, tied for fifth in the high jump and eighth in the 100 hurdles.

"The high jump was really good today. I had a lot of fun with my coach, working on my form and talking about each jump," Meyer said, praising Corken. "We were working on each height, and things that can help me get ready for next week."

Meyer won a district championship at Oak Harbor last week by making her first try at 5-0, 5-2 and 5-4. She could have kept going in the high jump Thursday, but opted to stop.

Meyer's season-best jump of 5-8 is tied for the best jump in Division II this season.

"That saves on her legs going into next week, so she's as fresh as possible," Sabo said of Meyer not jumping after 5-4.

Clearing a height on the first attempt is a big advantage.

"It puts you in first place, then you don't have to worry about how many misses this person has or that person has," Sabo added. "You're controlling your own destiny. You're setting yourself up to do very, very well."

Meyer also ran well in the 100 hurdles where she broke her Eastwood record of 15.35 first set in 2016 and matched last season.

"Today was so much better," Meyer said. "We've been working on my starts in practice, and everything came together nicely today. We really went after the first hurdle, and it worked out nicely. I try to attack the first hurdle, and, when I do that, it sets up the rest of the race, and I run a whole lot faster.

"I didn't expect that time today," Meyer added. "But I've been wanting to PR all season, and I finally did it today. That was really exciting."

The time also lowered her season best from 15.41.

"She ran great in the hurdles," Sabo said. "She comes out and she competes. She loves this level of competition, and it brings out the best in her."

The 4x100 relay also was exciting as the Eagles' just missed their school-record of 49.49 during last week's district preliminaries with its 49.67 clocking.

"Our handoffs were a lot better, so that helped us move the baton around the track a lot faster," Lang said. "Our main focus was getting into finals, and that's what we did today. The time was really good, not our PR, but we'll get it Saturday."

Eastwood's 49.49 clocking is fourth in Division II this season.

"Our relay team is doing so well," Meyer said. "It's a team effort. Everyone is running really well."

"They ran well," Sabo said. "The exchanges were smoother today. It's a big confidence boost going into Saturday."

Schmeltz qualified for the 200 final in 26.69 from Lane 8, the seventh-fastest time of the finalists.

“She went out really hard, hugged the curve and looked really good,” Sabo said.

Schmeltz had a time of 13.15, in the 100 but missed the final by .21.

Shelby Getz ran well in the 300 hurdles with a time of 48.69, but missed the finals by .22. The sophomore’s time was her second-best this season. She ran 47.71 in the district final last week, the fourth-fastest time in school history.

“Shelby ran a great race. She has nothing to be ashamed of,” Sabo said. “She’ll benefit from the experience of today, this season and learning what you have to do to run the 300 hurdles. You’ve got to get out fast.

“As she gets stronger, because she works out in the weight room, it’ll help her in the last part of the races,” Sabo added.

For complete results of Thursday's events and Saturday's meet program, visit <http://www.baumspage.com/track/trevent.php?peventid=799&table=C>