

Columbus Grove Wins PCL Track Title

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Field event records were falling like leaves on a breezy fall day Friday evening at the Putnam County League Track and Field meet.

Two PCL field event records were broken during the meet at Clymer Stadium including one state inter scholastic record. However, when all the excitement was over, it was Columbus Grove that accepted the team championship trophy for a sixth straight season.

Overall, this was the 14th straight PCL championship for the Grove boys as they outscored Ottoville 195-110. Pandora-Gilboa finished third with 85 points followed by Fort Jennings with 54 points. Continental had 45 points and Leipsic was sixth with 27 points.

While the Bulldogs swept the team title, it was the field events that drew a lot of the early attention.

New records were established Friday in the shot put and discus. One record that some expected to fall was the boy's long jump. The 1922 record belongs to Continental's Owen Lowe at 21'11½".

In 1923, Owen Lowe set the long jump record with a leap of 20'11½". A few years later, however, the newspapers incorrectly listed his leap at 21'11½". In 1955, Larry Johnson of Leipsic set the PCL record with a leap of 21'4", but it was not recognized. The mistake was not discovered until 2009.

Knippen, a senior, also established a new record in the boy's shot put. Knippen's winning throw of 56'9¼" bested the four year old record of Continental's Ken Diltz (55'6¼").

The final record broken came in the discus where Grove Junior Blaine Maag won with a throw of 179'3". Maag's effort broke the 1966 record of 169'4" set by older brother Ben Maag, who was on hand to see his record fall.

Ironically, Knippen finished second to Maag in the discus with a personal best throw of 163'11". Maag finished second to Knippen in the shot with a throw of 54'1½".

Aside from the records, the PCL meet was business as usual as the Bulldogs used their depth to keep alive their string of titles.

The Grove boys won nine events and had double placements in winning for the 14th straight season. They also finished second seven times and were third seven times.

"Fourteen in a row, that's a product of the Columbus Grove track community," Columbus Grove Coach Jerry Cooper said. "It's not just this year's kids. It is a product of the whole community and the track program."

While balance was the key for the Bulldogs, their distance runners were a big help in sweeping all four events. Taylor Jesko won the 400 meter dash in a time of 52.6, while Andy Dunn won the 800

run in a time of 2:06.7. Kyle Smith was a double winner for the Bulldogs, winning the 1600 (4:49.5) and

3200 (10:23.20) meter runs. Each time he had a teammate right behind as Nate Schumacher was second in the 1600 (4:49.51) and Chris Niese was second in the 3200 (10:49.60).

Niese and Schumacher also were part of the Bulldogs winning 3200 relay team that included Eric Altstaetter and Andy Dunn. Their winning time was 8:50.4.

Overall the Bulldogs won three of the four relays as Maag, Jesko, Ryan Keck and Danny Woods won the 400 relay (45.4) and Dunn, Altstaetter, Matt Heffner and Brandon Baxter won the 1600 relay (3:39.1). Woods also won the 110 high hurdles with a time of 15.4.

"Our depth was a key," Cooper added. "We were real solid in the distance events, plus we have enough sprinters and hurdlers. That's a good combination and we performed well in the field events. Overall, I felt we had some kids that stepped up and performed really well today. There was only one event we didn't score in, so that's pretty outstanding."

Ottoville finished second as they won five total events.

Kevin Hoersten won the 200 intermediate hurdles with a time of 42.2, while Bret Heitmeyer won the long jump with a leap of 20'¾". Keith Ricker won the high jump as he cleared 6'0".

Also Rick Schneider, Hoersten, Cody Maag and Heitmeyer won the 800 relay in a time of 1:34.3. This time also is a record as this is the first year for the event in boys track.

Pandora-Gilboa had three event wins Friday, two by sprinter Brett Siefer. Siefer won the 100 dash with a time of 11.10. Siefer also won the 200 dash with a time of 23.3. The Rockets' Brett McPherson won the pole vault as he cleared 12'6".

SUMMARY

Columbus Grove 195, Ottoville 110, Pandora-Gilboa 85, Fort Jennings 54, Continental 45 and Leipsic 27.

*NR SHOT PUT - Matt Knippen (Ottoville) 56'9¼"

*NR DISCUSS - Blaine Maag (CG) 179'3"

HIGH JUMP - Keith Ricker (Ottoville) 6'0"

LONG JUMP - Brett Heitmeyer (Ottoville) 20'¾"

POLE VAULT - Brett McPherson (PG) 12'6"

110 METER LOW HURDLES - Danny Woods (CG) 15.4

300 M. INTERMED HURDLES - Kevin Hoersten (Otto) 42.20

100 METER DASH - Brett Siefer (PG) 11.10

200 METER DASH - Brett Siefer (PG) 23.30

400 METER DASH - Taylor Jesko (CG) 52.60

800 METER RUN - Andy Dunn (CG) 2:06.7

1600 METER RUN - Kyle Smith (CG) 4:49.5

3200 METER RUN - Kyle Smith (CG) 10:23.20

400 METER RELAY - Blaine Maag, Taylor Jesko, Ryan Keck and Danny Woods (CG) 45.4

*NR 800 METER RELAY - Rick Schneider, Kevin Hoersten, Cody Maag and Brett Heitmeyer (Ottoville) 1:34.3

1600 METER RELAY - Andy Dunn, Eric Altstaetter, Matt Heffner and Brandon Baxter (CG) 3:39.1

3200 METER RELAY - Chris Niese, Nate Schumacher, Eric Altstaetter and Andy Dunn (CG) 8:50.4