

Bulldogs Balance Leads to PCL Track Title

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Not much changed as the Putnam County League track and field meet was held Friday night at Clymer Stadium in Columbus Grove. With perfect weather descending on the athletes only four meet records changed hands. Among the things that didn't was where the team championship trophies went.

Columbus Grove continued its streak of PCL titles as the boys collected their 16th straight title and the girls their sixth straight, both doing it in dominating fashion.

The Grove boys won by 106 points as they compiled 196 points in winning the championship. Ottoville and Pandora-Gilboa tied for second place with 90 points, while Fort Jennings was fourth with 75 points and Continental was fifth with 59 points. Leipsic finished sixth with 10 points.

The Grove boys started their assault on the championship with a strong showing in the field events. Grove won four of the five field events as freshman Heath Nickles started things with a meet record in the pole vault.

Nickles cleared 14'5¼" to break the old mark of 13'9 1/5" by Ottoville's Brett Klima in 2003. Nickles accomplished his feat despite being only 80 percent healthy.

This was not quite accurate. The old mark was set by Brett Klima of Ottoville, but it was accomplished in 2002 and the height was 13'9½".

"No way was I 100 percent," Nickles said. "I've been having problems with my ankles and the doctor said I may be 80 percent right now. I wasn't expecting to go 14'5" as my best was 13'6" at Liberty-Benton last week. I got on a 15-foot pole this week and it shot me up over 14 feet by a foot. The weather conditions were good today and there was a good tail wind."

Blaine Maag helped his teammate by winning the shot and discus. Maag won the shot put with a throw of 53'8½" winning the event by almost 10 feet. In the discus, Maag won with a throw of 176'9", winning by nearly 30 feet.

Kyle Meyer picked up a win for the Bulldogs in the high jump as he cleared 6'0".

"We had a strong start in the field events," first year Grove coach Chris Grothaus said. "They were key in getting a jump on people." It wasn't just winning them. It was how we won them. The distances and heights just keep getting better. For Heath to go 14'5" in the pole vault was impressive and Blaine had five throws over 170 feet in the discus."

On the track, the Bulldogs started their winning way with a victory in the 3200 Relay. The team of Meyer, Barto, Bryce Luginbill and Eric Maag won with time of 8:52.0.

Eric Maag also won the 800 run with a time of 2:05.0 as he beat P-G's Dan Shively (2:05.7) down the stretch.

Jordan Shafer was a double winner in the 1600 and 3200 meter runs winning the mile with a time of 4:48.1 and the 3200 run in a time of 10:33.5.

The Bulldogs also won a pair of relays winning the 400 and 1600 meter events.

Blaine Maag, Danny Woods, Ryan Keck and Taylor Jesko won the 400 Relay with a time of 45.2 while Jesko, Riley Morman, Keck and Woods combined to win the 1600 Relay in a time of 3:36.3.

"The kids are self motivating," Grothaus says. "They are never satisfied. The seniors know what they need to do to accomplish their ultimate goal and they work to get better each week."

Pandora-Gilboa's Caleb Arthur was a triple winner at the meet winning the 100, 200 and 400 meter runs. Arthur won the 100 in a time of 11.2, the 200 in 23.5 and the 400 in 52.0. Arthur was nearly a four time winner, but his effort to give the Rockets a win in the 1600 Relay fell short.

Ottoville's Kevin Hoersten was a double winner as he won both hurdle events.

Hoersten won the 110 High Hurdles in a time of 16.10 and he won the 300 hurdles in a meet record time of 41.2.

Fort Jennings also picked up a pair of wins winning the 800 Relay and the long jump.

Matt Burgei won the long jump for the Musketeers with a top leap of 19'10" as Owen Lowe's 83 year record of 21'11 ½" is safe for another year.

Burgei then joined Nick Luebrecht, Trent Stechschulte and Brad Luebrecht to win the 800 Relay in a time of 1:35.1.

SUMMARY

Columbus Grove 196, Ottoville 90, Pandora-Gilboa 90, Fort Jennings 75, Continental 59 and Leipsic 10.

SHOT PUT - Blaine Maag (CG) 53'8½"

DISCUS - Blaine Maag (CG) 176'9"

HIGH JUMP - Kyle Meyer (CG) 6'0"

LONG JUMP - Matt Burgei (FJ) 19'10"

*NR POLE VAULT - Heath Nickles (CG) 14'5¼"

110 METER HIGH HURDLES - Kevin Hoersten (Otto) 16.10

*NR 300 M. INTERM HURDLES - Kevin Hoersten (Otto) 41.2

100 METER DASH - Caleb Arthur (PG) 11.2

200 METER DASH - Caleb Arthur (PG) 23.5

400 METER DASH - Caleb Arthur (PG) 52.0

800 METER RUN - Eric Maag (CG) 2:05.0

1600 METER RUN - Jordan Shafer (CG) 4:48.1

3200 METER RUN - Jordan Shafer (CG) 10:33.5

400 METER RELAY - Blaine Maag, Danny Woods, Ryan Keck and Taylor Jesko (CG) 45.2

800 METER RELAY - Matt Burgei, Nick Luebrecht, Trent Stechschulte and Brad Luebrecht (FJ) 1:35.1

1600 METER RELAY - Taylor Jesko, Riley Morman, Ryan Keck and Danny Woods (CG) 3:36.3

3200 METER RELAY - Kyle Meyer, Barto, Bryce Luginbill and Eric Maag (CG) 8:52.0