

Bulldogs Sweep PCL Track Title Friday

Putnam County Sentinel – Charlie Warnimont – May 9, 2007

Columbus Grove knew where they could score points at the Putnam County League track and field meet Friday. It was the unexpected that was a bonus to them. The Bulldogs picked up some unexpected points during the meet that helped them repeat as league champions once again.

In one of the closest PCL meets in recent years the male Bulldogs retained their league title as they outscored Pandora-Gilboa 151 – 142.5. Ottoville finished third with 99 points and Continental was fourth with 80 points. Leipsic took fifth with 31 points and Fort Jennings had 22.5 points for sixth.

The Grove boys were led by standouts Cory Meuleman and Heath Nickles as both set new meet records Friday in the field events. However, it was a one-two finish in the shot put and discus that may have helped the Bulldogs to their win at Clymer Stadium.

Freshman thrower Dylan Vogt was the unexpected surprise for the Bulldogs as he finished second in each event after being seeded third in each coming in to the meet.

“In the field events, point wise, we came out a little ahead of where we thought we would be,” Grove coach Chris Grothaus said. “We were excited with the records that Heath and Cory both set tonight. Dylan Vogt stepped up his performance and had his best throws in each event. He was seeded third in both and to finish second in both with his PR, that’s a big four point swing. Dylan works hard. He’s out here every Sunday throwing and it was very nice to see his hard work pay off.”

Meuleman, a senior and defending Division III discus champion excited the crowd early with a record setting effort. On his second throw of the prelims, Meuleman unleashed a throw of 188’4” to break the two year old record of former teammate Blaine Maag 177’3” by nine feet.

This was not quite true. The old record throw by Maag was 179’3”.

Meuleman felt if the weather conditions were right and if he nailed a throw the record was within reach. “I had been throwing well all week and I knew if we had a wind like we did today. I would have chance at the record,” Meuleman said. “With that cross wind coming into your face all I had to do was get it there. Once I let it go I knew it was a pretty good throw.”

His throw of 188’4” was his best to win the event by nearly 41 feet. Vogt moved up into second place with his best effort of the season throwing 147’2”.

Meuleman also won the shot with a throw of 52’9” and Vogt was second with a throw of 44’4½”.

On the other side of the track, junior Heath Nickles went about his business setting a new meet record in the pole vault. Despite jumping into a head wind, the junior vaulter cleared 15’5½” to break his PCL record of 14’5½” set in 2005.

This also was not accurate. The old pole vault record, set in 2005, was 14’5¼”.

“With the head wind, I didn’t dream of going that height,” Nickles said. “Everything on that vault just worked out great.” Nickles made two attempts at 15’9”, but after failing the second time he called it quits for the day.

“Cory and Heath are our student athletes and we’ll ride them as long as we can ride them,” Grothaus said. “They are pretty incredible records to break and they are both school records. If they keep performing like that it’s hard to say what they can do the rest of the season.”

Nickles continued his winning ways on the track taking the 110 high hurdles in 15.10 and the 300 hurdles in the 40 seconds flat to break the meet record of 40.6 set by Riley Morman in 2006.

Columbus Grove had three other wins on the track as the 3200 relay team of Brandon Roof, Eric Maag, Bryce Luginbill and Nathan Birkemeier won with a time of 8:39.7. Roof also won the 1600 meter run in 4:51.7 and Luginbill took the 3200 in 10:52.20.

The wins were just enough to hold off a young but talented P-G squad that picked up five wins Friday. Freshman sprinter Sam Spallinger led the way with wins in the 100 (11.2) and 200 (23.30). Spallinger also was part of the winning 800 (1:35.7) and 400 (45.40) meter relay teams. He was joined in each event by Luke Diller, Derek Morrison and Mike Shuey. Freshman Thomas Hochstetler also won the high jump for the Rockets clearing 6’0”.

Ottoville and Continental both had a pair of wins Friday night.

Phillip Sargent won the long jump for the Big Green with a leap of 20’1” and Ryan Kerns won the 800 in 2:09.4. For the Pirates, Nathan Schmidt won the 400 dash in 52.4 and he was part of the Pirates winning 1600 meter relay team. He was joined by Tanner Basinger, Michael Recker and Dustin Geckle to take the event in a time of 3:36.5.

SUMMARY

CG 151, PG 142.5, Ottoville 90, Contil 80, Leipsic 31 and FJ 22.5.

SHOT PUT - Cory Meuleman (CG) 52’9”
*NR DISCUS - Cory Meuleman (CG) 188’4”
HIGH JUMP - Thomas Hochstetler (PG) 6’0”
LONG JUMP - Phillip Sargent (Ottoville) 20’1”
*NR POLE VAULT - Heath Nickles (CG) 15’5½”
110 METER HIGH HURDLES - Heath Nickles (CG) 15.10
*NR 300 M. INTERMED HURDLES - Heath Nickles (CG) 40.0
100 METER DASH - Sam Spallinger (PG) 11.2
200 METER DASH - Sam Spallinger (PG) 23.30
400 METER DASH - Nathan Schmidt (Continental) 52.4
800 METER RUN - Ryan Kerns (PG) 2:09.4
1600 METER RUN - Brandon Roof (CG) 4:51.7
3200 METER RUN - Bryce Luginbill (CG) 10:52.20
400 METER RELAY - Sam Spallinger, Luke Diller, Derek Morrison and Mike Shuey (PG) 45.40
800 METER RELAY - Sam Spallinger, Luke Diller, Derek Morrison and Mike Shuey (PG) 1:35.7
1600 METER RELAY - Phillip Sargent, Tanner Basinger, Michael Recker & Dustin Geckle (Conti) 3:35.50
3200 METER RELAY - Brandon Roof, Eric Maag, Bryce Luginbill and Nathan Birkemeier (CG) 8:39.7