

Outlaws track teams ready for District

By **Charlie Kanzig**
Correspondent

A solid showing at the 17-team Wally Ciochetti Invitational at Cottage Grove High School Friday, May 6, convinced Head Coach Jeff Larson that his track and field team is ready for the Sky-Em District meet. Districts are set for Thursday, May 12 and Saturday, May 13, also at Cottage Grove.

The meet featured 4A teams from throughout Oregon and many of the state-level leaders in every event, making it a preview of sorts for the upcoming district and state meets.

The district meet serves as the qualifier for the OSAA State Track and Field Championships, which will be held the following weekend in Eugene at Hayward Field on the University of Oregon campus. The top two finishers in each event, along with any individuals or relay teams that meet a qualifying mark, punches a ticket to the state meet.

Temperatures peaking in the high 70s with light breeze made the twilight meet at Cottage Grove perfect for athletes and spectators alike. The conditions, along with state-of-the-art facilities, resulted in a top-quality event that sets a standard for how a high school track meet should be conducted.

The boys team placed a respectable seventh with 43.5 points. Henley, probably the best boys team in the 4A classification, easily won the meet with 119 points.

Larson pointed to some key performers who are likely to lead the Outlaws in the upcoming district meet based on their results Friday.

The Outlaws' 4x100-meter relay team put together a strong performance on its way to fifth place in the meet

with a time of 44.87, which currently ranks tenth in the state. Suddenly the Outlaws are a threat at the District meet level. Cody Martin, Jacob Allen, Sam Garbrecht and Colton Mannhalter comprised the foursome.

"I am so pleased for these four," said Larson. "They are starting to make things exciting."

In the 1,500, Jadon Bachtold put the hammer down with just over 200 meters to go against a talented field to win in 4:13.77.

"No one was going to beat him from there," said Larson.

T.J. Hooks recorded a personal best in the race, finishing sixth in 4:20.76, moving into the number-four ranking in the Sky-Em League. He came back later in the meet to place third in the 3,000 meters in 9:27.59, which puts him in the top position in the Sky-Em league.

Sam Garbrecht also faced a deep field in the 100 and scratched out a sixth-place finish in 11.77. Times were not spectacular due to a slight headwind that kicked up at race time.

Colton Mannhalter, a senior in his first year of high school track, learned a little bit more about the open 400 meters, which will serve him well next week. Running in lane eight, he went out a little too fast and "carried the gorilla" the final 100 meters. He finished sixth in 52.47 giving him the fourth ranking in the Sky-Em.

"Clearly, if he evens out his pacing, he will be a threat at District," said Larson.

Izaak Kanzig showed that he is coming into form at just the right time as he finished second in a quality field of 800-meter runners in 2:04.31. The race was fairly tactical, which played to Kanzig's strength of having a fast finish.



PHOTO BY CHARLIE KANZIG

Colton Mannhalter wins his heat in the 100 meters.

"I think if I had gone harder a little earlier I could have won it," he said. Chris Ramirez from Henley, who has run 2:00 this year, won the race in 2:03.13.

Freshman Asher Bachtold showed that he could potentially score some points at district in the 800, ran a personal best of 2:10.77 in an earlier heat.

Keegan Greaney, who is ranked fourth in both the 110- and 300-meter hurdles in the Sky-Em, struggled a bit Friday in both races, finished 12th in the 110s (17:07)

and 11th in the 300s (43.17). Greaney ran against the best in the state Friday.

To give perspective to the talent in the field, the 300-meter hurdles race was won by Dylan Castle of Henley in 38.19 seconds, which broke the Hornets' school record held by former Olympic decathlete Dan O'Brien.

Sam Lewis improved his best in the pole vault to 12 feet, which puts him in contention for the top spot in the Sky-Em League, where the best jump this season is 12 feet 6 inches.

"I am hoping that moving up to a longer pole will help improve my ability to go higher," Lewis said after the meet.

The 4x400-meter relay team of Garbrecht, Mannhalter, Greaney and Bachtold lowered its season best to 3:29.98, which moved the Outlaws into the number-three spot among 4A teams this year. Henley (3:26.16) and Crook County (3:28.83) hold the top two positions.

"It was great that we got to run against those two

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