

## Elks stun Warriors with wins

*Elkton gets series win heading into the final week of play*

By Zach Silva  
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Elkton's head baseball coach Bill Shaw may not be a gambling man, but all his bets seemed to pay off last week for the Elkton baseball team.

"It doesn't usually go that way as a coach...and it all worked out. You want to put the kids in the best possible spot to have a chance," said Shaw.

In a three-game series against their nearby rival North Douglas, it was Shaw pulling the right strings to guide the Elks to two big wins to draw within one game of the Warriors – and the fourth and final league playoff spot – heading into the final week of play.

On paper, North Douglas has been the better team all season; they have allowed the least runs in the league and were the first team in league to beat top-10 team Monroe.

"Our MO all year long has been the inability to put two games together," said North Douglas head coach Jeff Davis. "And I just told them again that sometimes when we have success, we seem to get a little giddy with that success and just assume that because things went our way for an hour and a half or two hours, that it's going to continue."

In the first game of the series on May 8, it was Elkton going to North Douglas and coming away with a 1-0 victory in extra innings.

"If you would have asked me three weeks ago if these guys could win a 1-0 nine inning game I would have told you, you were nuts," said Shaw.

It was a battle of the pitchers for both teams. Elkton's duo of Austin Luzier and Brad Doudna struck out 16 batters while North Douglas's combination of Carson Burris and Brian Erickson struck out 13.

Hyperaware of the pitch count rules that dictate required rest days based on how many pitches are thrown, Shaw's plan going into the game was to not let either of his pitchers go above 60 pitches so they would be able to throw on Friday.

"But it's a 0-0 game at their place with a chance to get in the playoffs, you know. So I left Bradley (Doudna) on the mound and he went to...the finish," said Shaw.

In the ninth inning of the game, Luzier's double started the inning off before he got home on a passed ball to first for the only run of the game.

With Doudna not able to pitch and at least one win secured for the Elks, it was Luzier who took the mound to start the day on Friday May 11. But it didn't last long.

"We get off to a bad start. He's 20 pitches in, we don't have an out and they've got two runners on base. And I know I need to win the series. We've got to, you know?" said Shaw. "So I pull him off the mound. I start monkeying things around and I don't know if it was right or wrong, we end up getting ten-runners, but it worked out. It worked out the way I dreamed it up."

It seemed like more a nightmare for the Elks in the

BASEBALL continued on B2

# Lions do it again: Sky-Em Champs



Cottage Grove's Jacob Woods leads the boys team in a victory lap after the team captured its third straight district title.

PHOTOS BY ZACH SILVA/CG SENTINEL

*For the third year in a row the Cottage Grove boys win the team title and combine with girls for coed championship*

By Zach Silva  
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Champions. Champions. Champions.

It was another successful weekend at the Sky-Em Track and Field Districts for the Cottage Grove track and field teams. Competing at Sisters High School last Thursday and Saturday, the Cottage Grove boys won the team title for the third year in a row. Additionally, the boys and girls team combined scores led to the third year in a row of winning the coed team championship at the meet. The girls team took third place overall.

"It's hard to put it into words, they're a

great group of kids," said Cottage Grove head coach Ricky Knutson. "We knew the guys were going to be strong coming into this year. We didn't lose many to graduation last year. The girls were more of a question mark. You know the reason we won the coed, obviously, the guys were strong, but the girls were strong with their depth."

On the boys' side, the team was dominant across the board as they scored 209 points to take first. Knutson, who has been involved in the program for the past 13 seasons, could not remember a time Cottage Grove scored over the 200-point threshold. Last season they won with 162 points and the year before with 180. The second place team this year, Sweet Home, finished with 120 points.

"I had us around maybe scoring 190. But you know to end up with that extra 19 points, that's what happens every year. The kids, they step up. And they perform," said Knutson.

The team saw 21 different athletes score points in 16 of the 17 events (no one scored in the 400) and had 10 athletes and the 4x100 team qualify for the state meet this week at Hayward Field. Those going to Hayward that qualified in individual events include Jacob Woods (100, 200, long jump), Juice Clafin (110 hurdles, shot put), Jimmy Talley (3000), Paesen Timm (3000), Konrad Raum (1500), Hayden Glenn (300 hurdles), Hunter Hall (shot put, javelin), Erick Giffen (high jump), Takoda Brooks (pole vault) and Mitchell Krokus (triple jump). The 4x100 team of Woods, Clafin, Glenn and Cooper Ladd will also be competing.

On the girls' side, the team finished tied for third with Elmira at 109 points. 18 different Lions scored points and Matty Ladd (high jump), Syndey Boxberger (javelin) and Rhea Florez (800) will all be competing at state.

Sisters took first with 186 points and Junction City second with 110.

"We've seen some great competition over the course of the year...and so while this is a big meet for us, it's only six teams. So we just want those kids confident that they're going to be able to compete at the highest level next week with some of that great competition," said Knutson.

"A lot of those kids have been there before. Hopefully that experience puts them a little more at ease in terms of the magnitude of the event."

The state meet begins for Cottage Grove on Friday and will continue on Saturday. The first events that the Lions are involved in (boys 3000, boys pole vault) begin at 9:45 a.m. Friday morning.

Tickets are \$12 for adults and \$5 for students and can be bought online at OSAA.org or onsite.

*For more track and field coverage, turn to B3*

## Woods leads the way, sets school record



Jacob Woods (center) anchors Cottage Grove's 4x100 relay team to a first-place finish and a spot in the state meet.

By Zach Silva  
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After the Cottage Grove boys track and field team ran away with the team title, head coach Ricky Knutson was discussing the team's success: the individual surprises, the heightened level of success and then, the one constant.

"And I mean, obviously, Jacob Woods," he said.

Obviously, Jacob Woods.

Woods, who was voted Sky-Em athlete of the meet by the coaches, seemed to do it all during the Sky-Em Districts

as he won three individual events (100, 200 and long jump) and anchored the winning 4x100 team.

The two-days of competition got started for Woods on a high note as he broke a 57-year old Cottage Grove High School record. In the 100, Woods ran a time of 10.92 to not only beat the competition on the track but to take down Jim Easley's record of 10.94 that was set in 1961.

"It was insane. Like the race itself kind of felt a little slow at first to me because I was just really comfortable. But that's

BOYS continued on B3

## Girls team takes third, three headed to state



Cottage Grove's Rhea Florez sprints to the finish line in the 800. Florez's second place finish qualified her for the state meet.

By Zach Silva  
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A point away from either finishing in second or fourth place, the Cottage Grove girls track and field team finished tied for third at last week's district meet.

The competition got underway on Thursday and freshman Matty Ladd got things started for the Lions as she won the high jump clearing a winning height of 5 feet 3 inches. This jump, a personal best, ties Ladd for third best in the 4A classification heading into state. The high jump competition begins at 10:30

a.m. on Friday at Hayward Field.

Later in the day it was senior teammate Sydney Boxberger coming in second in the javelin with a throw of 112 feet 2 inches. The javelin competition begins Friday at 11 a.m.

On Saturday, it was another freshman from Cottage Grove, this time Rhea Florez, punching her ticket to state with a second-place finish in the 800.

"I had the second fastest time of the girl that beat me so I was trying not to get too psyched out but at the same time like, I thought that I could at least try my

GIRLS continued on B3

## Athlete of the Week



*This week's athlete of the week is Cottage Grove's Mitchell Krokus. Krokus continued to drastically improve in the triple jump last week as he won the district meet in the event. To read more turn to B3.*



Mitchell Krokus competes in the triple jump at districts on Saturday.  
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