

# Community Sports



## Strenuous week for Warrior's baseball season

By Lenny Sementi

Coach Caleb Englehardt's squad had a few rough outings in a busy week for Tuscola baseball. The Warriors opened it up against one of the best teams in central Illinois, falling to the Rams of Shelbyville this past Tuesday, March 28, then took losses on the road to both Arthur-Lovington-Attwood-Hammond and Sullivan the next two evenings.

A grand slam and the Warrior's first round-tripper of the season by Nate Thomason in the third inning wasn't enough in a 19-5 loss to Central Illinois Conference favorite Shelbyville. The Rams posted crooked numbers in the first four frames

en-route to the CIC victory. Austin Cummings scored on the Thomason dinger and went 2 for 3 on the evening. Colton Musgrave doubled and scoured while JJ Reynolds and Cooper

Lyons both donated base knocks to the stat sheet. Thomason started on the hill for coach E. and took the loss. Lyons fired an inning, as did fellow freshman Clayton Neuner. The duo gave way to sophomore Aiden Devlin.

"I was very disappointed in our performance on the mound today," stated the coach. "We walked 11 batters, hit 2 batters and threw 7 wild pitches. They made us pay for the unforced freebies by pounding out 15 hits on

top of that. You can't give up those kinds of walk numbers and expect to win, but when you do it against a solid hitting team you're really in for a long day. We did some good things defensively with routine plays and we did string a few nice hits together to put up a 5-run inning."

Jacob Waugh fired a gem the next night in Arthur, walking none and striking out six. Four miscues in the field and some timely hits by the Knights scratched 6 across behind a 1-hitter collecting the win for the home team. Musgrave flirted with the fence, adding triple to his season wrap sheet but never left third as the Warriors stranded six runners in the contest.

"We played very timid and uninspired baseball today and that is something that was addressed before, during and after the game," Englehardt said. "Part of my job is to get them in the right frame of mind to play and I will be pushing them harder until we see the appropriate level of focus and effort. Their pitcher was respectable but not enough to strike us out 12 times and hold us to one hit. We have to continue to preach about taking good approaches at the plate and understanding counts. We are taking some very good pitches to get behind in the count and then not anticipating the pitch selection after we get behind. I would like to

see us take a more aggressive approach and show more grit in our at-bats. We took a step backward defensively today and guys are going to have to learn there are consequences to repeated mistakes."

Tuscola went on top first the next night in Sullivan thanks to a single by Lyons and an RBI double by Musgrave, but a 4-run bottom half was all the Redskins would need in an 11-3 loss. Isaac Halverson took the loss giving up 8 runs, 7-earned on 6 hits and 5 walks in three innings of work, striking out 3. Reynolds scattered 3 hits and 3 walks out over the final three innings of relief for the Warriors.

"Although we came out on

the losing end today, I was happy with the attitude and effort coming off a really bad game the previous day," the coach quipped. "Offensively, we were more aggressive and battled into some long at-bats. End result was still too many strikeouts, but progress was made on our approach. Defensively we had a few errors again but most were done in the context of good hustle and being aggressive with some throws. We also had some defensive plays that were outstanding and our communication on the field was much better. These are all learning points for a very young team that is working hard to improve."

## Warrior's track and field take the show outside

By Lenny Sementi

After a successful indoor track season, head boys coach, Ryan Hornaday's squad opened their outdoor season this past week, highlighted by an early six-team event last Thursday that included some of the best in the area. Hornaday's horde ended up second, 11 points shy of Salt Fork, one of the best in the state in small school track.

The distance and middle distance runners did more than their fair share of the damage taking three firsts in the open races while comprising a 4x800 relay team that crossed the line first as well. Will Foltz got the ball rolling, winning the open 800 with a personal best time of 2 minutes and 10 seconds. Blake McLeese PRd as well, taking third overall with a 2:13. Jo-

siah Hortin glided over the line first in 1600 while Xander Neamtu won the grueling 3200 with a PR of 10:27. Mason Veach scored in the 3200 as well, collecting fourth place points.

Hortin, McLeese, and Foltz joined with Boyd Brewer for a first-place performance in the 4x800 posting a very respectable 9:06. Senior Ben Hornaday joined with Kamden Flenner, Dylan Graves and Bryce Graves for the Warriors, grabbing first place in the 4x200-relay. The same group produced a second-place effort in the 4x100 breaking tape in 45.75 seconds. Hornaday also found his way onto a 4x4 group consisting of Neamtu, Brewer and Brady Cain that took fourth overall. One spot in front of them in third was Kalen Shinn, Carter Simp-

son and Dylan Graves and one behind was McLeese, David Hornaday, Aaron Hegarty and Bryce Graves.

Tuscola entered nine runners in the open 100 field and ended the night with seven PRs. B. Hornaday led the way taking second with a time of 11.76. Flenner led a flight of nine warriors in the 200, all of which PRd. Both Flenner and Alan Robello scored in the event, taking fourth and fifth, respectively, finishing within a whisper of each other and less than a second behind first place. Robelleo shined in the 400 posting a blistering career-best 54.98 taking third overall, while Brewer secured fifth-place points.

David Hornaday set PRs in both hurdle races taking second place in both, finishing the 110-meter highs in 18.67

and the grueling 300-lows in 46.81. Carter Simpson placed in both as well, ending up in third in the 110s and fourth in the 300s. Cain was right on his heels, posting a PR with a 51.16.

Senior Chris Boyd added 18 points in the throwing events collecting 10 points in the shot with a first-place finish hitting the sand just over 58 feet from the front of the ring. He backed it up with a second-place effort in the discus with a toss of 143 feet 11 inches. Senior John Claxon placed in both as well, ending his night third in the shot and fifth in the disc. Sawyer Woodward donated to the totals as well, with a third-place outing in the discus. Flenner rounded out the field scoring capturing third place in the long jump, leaping 17.42 feet.



MASON VEACH, TAVI NEAMTU AND JAMES JONAS run the 800-meter event during the Sullivan track and field meet on March 29. Photo by Tracy Hornaday.

## Personal records abound for Lady Warriors

By Lenny Sementi

It was a good old-fashioned rout for the defending state champs in their first home outdoor meet of the spring season this past

Thursday. Girls track coach Drew Sterkel's squad outdistanced their nearest competitor Broadlands-Heritage by nearly 150 points scoring over 200 points as a team

when the dust finally settled. Tuscola posted 17 personal records during the meet, collected nine first places in open events, won 2-relays, and swept the top two spots

in six events.

The black and gold dominated the field events to open the six-team event winning four of six. Natalie Hasting swept the throws, winning and PRing in both, taking first in the shot with a toss of 35.83 feet and then hurled the discus 119.06'. Olivia Wallace PRd in the shot and donated second-place points to the cause in both events. Sophomores Lia Patterson and Rylie Vanausdoll went one, two in the long jump, both PRing by posting leaps of 15.78 feet and 15.29 feet, respectively. Kenna Clodfelder ended up on top of the standings in the triple jump with a personal best hop, skip and a jump of 33.4 feet. Addyisyn Pettry PRd in the triple as well, taking home third place points. Belle Notaro rounded out the field with a second place finish in the pole vault delivering 8 points.

Senior Mia Hausmann led off both first-place relay teams for coach Sterkel. She joined Zoe Clifton, Vanaus-

doll and Chloe Bowden to win the 4x100 and Clodfelder, Vanausdoll and Bowden in the 4x400-meter relay. Notaro handed the baton to Bailey Ritter, who gave it to Reese Davis, who then passed it to Clifton in the 4x200 leading to a second-place effort. Ann Brazzell, Lauren Woods, Brady Stahler and Olivia Coll secured second-place points as well in the 4x800 relay.

Patterson added to her first-place outing in the long jump with three more wins in the open runs. She cruised to wins in the 200, the 100-high hurdles and set a personal best while winning the 400 with a time of

58.33 seconds. Bowden was the second to cross the line in the 400 but broke the tape first in the 100 with a personal best time of 13.80. While Pettry was second in the low hurdles and Ritter was second in the 300 low hurdles. Vanausdoll was right on Bowden's heels in a virtual dead heat, taking second in the 100. Freshman Kate Foltz ran away from the field in the 3200 ending the night with yet another PR circling the track eight times in 11:05.



WARRIOR ELLA BOYER hits the ball during the March 29 game against Paris. Photo by Dominik Stallings.

## Freshman Bayleigh turns in a strong softball debut

By Lenny Sementi

Freshman hurler Bayleigh Taylor turned in a solid in the circle for Tuscola's softball team, getting the win against a good Paris squad in her debut outing. The first-year player kept the Lady Tigers off-balance, mixing fastballs and changeups. Taylor gave up just one run on 4 hits and a walk in 5 innings of work in a 4-2 Warrior victory. Isabelle Wilcox closed it out collecting her first save of the year, giving up one hit and a pair of walks in 2 innings on the bump.

Wilcox plated the first run in the bottom of the second, following a single to left. The senior swiped second moved to third on a ground ball by Alaina Smith and stole home. Ava Boyer walked to start the third, stole second and scored on a double by Addy Ring who in turn crossed the dish on a double by Ella Boyer making

it 3-0 Warriors. They added 1 more in the fourth before the Tigers scored 1 of their own in the fifth and another in the sixth but Wilcox looked to her defense.

Zoey Thomason made a diving catch in center for the final out of the game, securing the non-conference victory. Ella Boyer and Claire Meyer led the way at the dish, both adding a pair of hits to the stat line. Ring drove in a pair and scored while A. Boyer battled her way on with a pair of walks and scored once.

The win over the Tigers was sandwiched in between a pair of losses falling to Shelbyville 6-3 and Sullivan 7-5. Tuscola led in both contests as late as the fifth and sixth frames but was unable to close the door. Wilcox was in the circle in both, striking out 6 against the Rams at home and 7 at Sullivan. Tuscola managed just 4 hits in the

loss to Shelbyville behind a solid outing by the Ram's Mallory Holland. Both Boyers, Smith and Makenna Fiscus all posted base knocks and the Warriors put the ball in play throughout the contest but just couldn't find the open gaps consistently in the loss.

Tuscola plated a pair at Sullivan in the top of the first, 2 more in the third and another in the sixth, building a 5-3 advantage, but a big 4-run in the sixth by the Redskins proved to be too much to overcome. A. Boyer led the way from her leadoff spot with a 3 for 3 effort that included a double, a run scored, a stolen base and an RBI. Emily Czerwonka pushed 3 across on a 2-hit night. Fiscus, Ring and E. Boyer all reached safely once in the contest as well. Tuscola moved to 4-2 on the year when the dust settled on the third week of the season.



WARRIOR BAYLEIGH TAYLOR winds up to pitch the ball during the March 29 game against Paris. Photo by Dominik Stallings.