

Community Sports



Tuscola boys' baseball looks for arm help

By Lenny Sementi

A busy schedule this past week and a few injuries had Tuscola baseball coach Caleb Englehardt searching for arm help this past week. The Warriors fell in a 15-12 shootout to Warrensburg-Lathem on Tuesday, then dropped another Central Illinois Conference contest on Thursday, falling to Clinton 13-4 before ending the week with two more defeats in the Tuscola Classic battling lack of available pitchers. Coach Caleb Englehardt's squad struggled on offense against a solid Eastland squad Friday evening and then simply

ran out of pitching in a loss to Rantoul on Saturday.

The offense, however, was not the issue in the week's opener verse Warrensburg as the Warriors pushed 12 across the dish in the CIC skirmish. Seven players in all hit safely in the game with Austin Cummings and Nate Thomason leading the way. The two juniors both went 3 for 3 on the night, combining for 5 RBIs and 3 runs scored. Tuscola put a big number on the board in the fourth frame erasing a 7-run deficit with a 10-run frame, highlighted by a Thomason homerun.

JJ Reynolds banged out a pair of base knocks, including an RBI double and Isaac Halverson and Caden Russo both had base knocks but it was not enough as the Cardinals pushed 4 across in the top of the fifth to take a 13-12 and added insurance runs in the sixth and seventh frames to steal the victory. Reynolds took the loss facing 18-batters in 3-innings of relief.

Two nights later, crooked numbers on the board in 4-innings for the visiting Maroons handed the Warriors their second setback of the week. Halverson had the

pill giving up 4-runs in both the first and third frames taking the loss. Cooper Lyons was strong in 5-innings of work, allowing 5 runs on 6 hits and 2 walks. The Warriors scored 4 runs on 4 hits to make it interesting early. Waugh and Reynolds both doubled and scored in the contest, while Halverson and Russo singled and scored.

Eastland is a perennial fixture in the Tuscola classic, entering this year's skirmish with an 8-2 record overall. They leaned on strong pitching to collect the win in Friday's nightcap. The visitors from the north put multiple

runs on the board in 3 of the first 4 innings and never looked back. Colton Musgrave, Thomson and Cummings all added doubles to their season stat sheet. Musgrave drove in Cummings and scored on the Thomason 2-bagger. Russo worked 4 innings of solid relief as Tuscola labored through the high-scoring contest attempting to save arms for Saturday's date with Rantoul.

Englehardt was left with one arm left after an injury following Friday night sidelined his starter. JJ Reynolds took the hill to open

the contest allowing 6 runs, 3 earned, on 4 hits and 2 walks lasting 3 and a third. Cummings, in the first outing of his career, blanked the Eagles in the fourth as the Warriors carried a 7-6 advantage into the fifth but was unable to silence Rantoul's bats late.

Musgrave punctuated 5-run bottom of the fourth with a 3-run blast to give the Warriors their first lead of the contest. Lyons, Thomason and Halverson all had multi-hit outings combining to score 4 runs. Cummings doubled and drove in a run in the loss.

Wilcox busy in girls' softball victory over Clinton

By Lenny Sementi

Tuscola's softball team rebounded from a shootout 10-8 loss to Warrensburg on Tuesday, April 4, with a thrilling 7-6 extra-inning win against Clinton two nights later on Thursday. Isabelle Wilcox not only collected the win in the circle, but the senior also had a big night with a bat in her hand, going 3 for 4 on the evening.

Bailey Taylor got the start giving up 3 runs all earned in three and two-thirds innings

of work, walking three. Wilcox took over with two gone in the fourth, working four and a third allowing three to cross the dish only one earned on 4 hits. She leaned on her defense late as the Boyer sisters Ella and Ava put on a show in the middle infield. The duo ended both the top of the sixth and the seventh with ESPN-worthy double plays.

Tuscola jumped out early, moving in front in the bottom of the first follow-

ing a walk to Ava Boyer to open the half inning. Wilcox moved the sophomore reaching on a bunt single, setting up Ella Boyer's sac fly knotting it at one. Addy Ring followed with a base knock to right scoring Wilcox to give Tuscola the lead. Clinton pushed one over in the second and another in the third before the Warriors scored again, making it 3-3 entering the later stanzas.

Wilcox and E. Boyer banged out back-to-back tri-

ples to rally the Warriors as both squads hung a three on the board in the fifth, sending it to the sixth tied at 6s. Nine outs later, Zoey Thomason set the table in the bottom of the eighth with a 1-out single to left. She moved on a single by A. Boyer and then scored the winning run on a laser beam single to left center by Wilcox to secure the Central Illinois Conference victory.

Both Boyer's banged out a pair of base knocks in the contest as did Emily Cz-

erwonka, Thomason and Ring. Wilcox, E. Boyer and Czerwonka all drove in two runs apiece and combined to score 4 of Tuscola's 7 runs.

Warrensburg struck first after two scoreless frames a few nights earlier and from that point forward, the two squads traded runs but a 4-run sixth, all unearned, by the Cardinals proved to be too much for the Warriors to overcome. Wilcox worked five and two-thirds giving up 5 earned striking out 5. Tay-

lor took over with one gone in the sixth, allowing one to cross the dish on 3 hits and a walk.

E. Boyer, Wilcox and Makenna Fiscus all tallied 3 hits in the contest, also delivering 6 RBIs and 4 runs. A. Boyer showed some power with a pair of extra-base hits, including a home run and an RBI double. Thomason had a pair of singles setting up the top of the order driving in one and scoring once.

Warrior runners on a mission to reach perfection

By Lenny Sementi

Both of Tuscola's track teams are seen night in and night out, not only putting in time inside the fences at TCHS but also all around town as the Warriors strive for perfection. Senior thrower Chris Boyd and the distance crew led by Josiah Hortin and Jackson Barrett set the tone for boys coach Ryan Hornaday while coach Drew Sterkel's defending state champion girls team leans on Natalie Hastings in the throws and Lia Patterson, Rylie Vanausdoll and the sprinters to show the way.

This past Saturday in Arthur, the extra work last week paid dividends at the

annual ALAH Invite as Sterkel's group ran away with the girl's first-place hardware and Hornaday's horde secured silver in the boy's team race in the 18-team event. Patterson secured 40 points sweeping four open races, winning the 100-meter with a personal best time of 12.95. She backed that up with a meet record 26.16 in the 200 while also dominating the hurdles collecting gold in both the 100 high hurdles and the 300 low hurdles crossing the line in 16.16 and 46.60, respectively. David Hornaday scored third-place hardware in the 300-highs on the boy's side and Alan Robello collected fifth-place team points in

the open 200 with a personal best of 24.56.

Hortin and Barrett switched spots in the distance races sweeping the top two spots in both the 1600 and the 3200. Barrett took home first place hardware in the 1600 PR'ing with a time of 4:33.97 and second place hardware in the 3200, finishing 8 laps in 9:24.53. Hortin switched it up, winning the grueling 3200 in a meet record 9:24.14 and was runner up in the 1600 as the duo combined for 36 team points. Kate Foltz did the damage in the distance runs on the girl's side, picking up a pair of second-place medals and posting a PR in the 1600

with a time of 5:21 before gutting out an 11:06 in the 3200.

Boyd secured 14 points of his own, winning the shot put with a toss of 56.23 feet before taking fourth in the discus. Senior classmate John Claxon added to the totals with a fifth-place effort thanks to a PR in the shot, while Sawyer Woodard landed one spot and a mere 10 inches behind Boyd in the disc-taking fifth. Natalie Hastings led way for the girls taking second in the disc and third in the shot, grabbing 14 team points. Vanausdoll, who scored in 3 of the 4 relays, added points in the field as well, taking second in the long jump

with a personal best leap of 16.14 feet. Kenna Clodfelder rounded out the field scoring winning the triple jump touching the sand at a personal best 34.45 feet while also donating fourth-place points in the long jump.

Clodfelder and Vanausdoll joined with Mia Hausmann and Chloe Bowden for wins in both the 4x100 and the 4x200-meter relay. They added to the precious medal haul with a silver place effort in the 4x400 exchanging Clodfelder for Belle Notaro, donating 28 points in all to the team totals. The boys scored a little better, combining for 36 points collecting 3-golds and a bronze. Senior Ben Hor-

naday anchored all three linking up with Kamden Flenner, Dylan Graves and Bryce Graves in the 4x100 for third-place points. The same group were two spots higher, reaching the top of the podium in the 4x200 with a season-best time of 1:35.18. Hornaday and the Graves brothers then handed the baton to Will Foltz in the 4x400 adding another gold medal to the stockpile. Next, Foltz joined with Blake McLeese, Xander Neamtu and Boyd Brewer, capping off a very successful night passing the baton with another trip to the top of the medal stand in the 4x800-meter relay.

May 2023

Baseball

Tues., 5/2 vs St. Teresa 4:30 p.m.

Wed., 5/3 vs Monticello 4:30 p.m.

Thur., 5/4 @ Central A&M 4:30 p.m.

Mon., 5/8 vs Unity 4:30 p.m.

Wed., 5/10 vs Salt Fork 4:30 p.m.

Thur., 5/1 vs Arcola 4:30 p.m.

Mon., 5/15 IHSA Regionals Begin

Sat., 5/20 IHSA Regional Championship

Wed., 5/24 IHSA Sectionals

Sat., 5/27 Sectional Championship

Mon., 5/29 IHSA Super-sectional

Fri., 6/2 IHSA State @ Peoria

Tuscola Softball

Tue. 5/2 vs St. Teresa 4:30 p.m.

Wed. 5/3 vs Villa Grove 4:30 p.m.

Thur. 5/4 @ Central A&M 4:30 p.m.

Mon. 5/8 @ SJO 4:30 p.m.

Tue. 5/9 @ Unity 4:30 p.m.

Thur 5/11. vs Cumberland 4:30 p.m.

Fri. 5/12 @ Georgetown 4:30 p.m.

Sat. 5/13 vs Salt Fork 10 a.m.

5/15 IHSA Regionals

5/20 Regional Championship

5/23 IHSA Sectionals @ Home vs TBA

5/26 Sectional Championship @ Home vs TBA

5/29 IHSA Super-Sectional

6/2 IHSA State @ East Peoria



KATE FOLTZ (left) races against Belle Notaro in the Arcola Triangular meet 4x400 on April 5. Tuscola athletes cheer on the racers on the side of the track. Photo by Tracy Hornaday.