

Eagles sending 10 to state track

Written by Deb Egenberger

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Boys take first at D-10 district, girls finish runner-up.

SUTHERLAND—Brady track coach Rich Britten spent a big chunk of time over the weekend searching trophy cases and storage rooms for a district track championship trophy.

Had he found one, he would have proven 2010 isn't the first time an Eagle track team won its district.

"The best I could do was a runner-up plaque for the girls from 1990," Britten said.

That means the Brady boys may have won the first-ever district track championship at the D-10 meet in Sutherland on Thursday.

"So far, no one has been able to prove me wrong," Britten said.

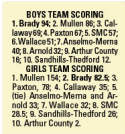
The Eagles scored 94 points to defeat the district favorite Mullen Broncos by eight team points.

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To make it twice as nice, the Brady girls finished second with 82.5 points to Mullen with 154.



BOYS TEAM SCORING
1. Brady 84; 2. Mullen 66; 3. Callaway 49; 4. Paxton 43; 5. SMC 37;
6. Wallace 37; 7. Anselmo-Merna 40; 8. Arnold 32; 9. Arthur County 16; 10. Sandhills-Theoford 12.

GIRLS TEAM SCORING
1. Mullen 154; 2. Brady 82.5; 3. Paxton 76; 4. Callaway 35; 5. (tie) Anselmo-Merna and Arnold 33; 7. Wallace 32; 8. SMC 28; 9. Sandhills-Theoford 26; 10. Arthur County 2.

“I think sometimes coaches move people around at district time to try and get more kids to state,” Britten said. “We pretty much did the same events we’ve done all year and I think it paid off.”

The Eagles will take five boys in six events and five girls in four events to the state meet in Omaha this week.

“I’m just really proud of all of these kids,” Britten said.

Two Brady boys won three event titles.

Junior Brad Ward was the champion in the long jump and triple jump. Britten said had it not been for a single solid attempt of 20 feet, 2.75 inches, Ward would not have even qualified in the long jump.

“No one jumped well,” he said, “but then they came back in the triple jump to post some really decent marks.”

Ward was first and Kyle Pohlman placed second in the triple jump to take both state spots from the district.

Senior Corbin Blede, who has not been beaten in the shot this season, won the district with a toss of 49-3.

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“Corbin has placed eighth at state the past two years,” Britten said. “Hopefully he can be toward the top this year.”

In the 3200-meter run, junior Dalton Riedel placed second to secure his trip to state. Britten said he improved his time by 24 seconds.

“Dalton went into the race determined he was going to qualify,” the coach said.

Sophomore Lincoln Blede was also determined in the 1600-meter run.

“It is only the second time he’s run the mile in a meet,” Britten said.

He fought step for step much of the race finishing six-tenths of a second behind the No. 2 runner, Collin Perlinger of Paxton.

“He was pretty deflated,” Britten said.

But Lincoln’s time ended up being one of the top two third-place finishes so he will run at state.

“He’s been pretty sick,” Britten said. “Hopefully he’s feeling better by the time we get to Omaha.”

The girls started off with an exciting finish in the pole vault.

With only two vaulters in the D-10 district, Brady junior Taina Taullie only needed to clear the

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required 6 feet, 6 inches to make it to state.

As it was, Taullie cleared 7-0 for second place.

“There were other districts with similar situations,” Britten said. “There just aren’t a lot of vaulters in small schools.”

Sophomore Courtney Widick won the only individual gold medal for the girls, taking first in the 800 in her personal best time of 2:32.5.

Classmate Megan Polt also qualified as an individual in the 400 after finishing fourth in the 100 and third in the 200.

“She had solid chances to qualify in the other sprints,” Britten said. “It’s good for her to get to state.”

The last race of the day brought the biggest drama as Mullen’s girls won the 4x400 relay but were disqualified because a runner was said to be wearing jewelry.

Britten said a Mullen girl took a rubber band from her hair and put it on her wrist. Nebraska School Activities Association rules consider that jewelry.

Britten said Mullen’s relay beat Brady to the finish by about eight seconds.

“It’s unfortunate someone at the start or at the finish didn’t say anything about it,” Britten said. “I end up being the bad guy because I have to file a protest. It’s a pretty minor thing. It’s a rubber band. They legitimately beat us but the rule is the rule.”

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Freshmen Brittney Christophersen and Dakota Terry join Polt and Widick on the qualifying relay.

The state meet begins Friday at Burke Stadium in Omaha. Ward and Taullie are in the first events of the day at 9 a.m.

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