

2007 SLUH Water Polo – Varsity Game Recaps

Game 1 – March 12, 2007

W (1-0) – 12-1 vs. Kirkwood

The Jr. Bills opened their season by dominating ninth seeded Kirkwood, jumping out to a 6-0 lead after one quarter and cruising to a 12-1 win. The offense was led by Jim Heafner (3 G, 3 A), Tim Dale (3 G, 1 A), and John Heafner (2 G, 1 A), while Jason Appelbaum and Zak Ancel notched three saves apiece. SLUH outshot Kirkwood 24-8 and converted three out of four 6-on-5's in the convincing win.

Game 2 – March 14, 2007

W (2-0) – 13-5 vs. MICDS

The Jr. Bills continued their winning ways by defeating the fourth-ranked but shorthanded Rams, who were missing one of their top players due to injury. Held scoreless by MICDS for nearly five minutes at the beginning, SLUH eventually got into gear, surging to a 9-2 halftime lead and easing to a 13-5 victory. The continuing solid play of two-meter guards Kerry Read and Ray Kreienkamp allowed SLUH to maintain its all-out press throughout the game, forcing numerous turnovers and leading to several man-up counterattacks which the Jr. Bills converted. The offense was led by Jim Heafner (6 G), John Heafner (2 G, 1 A), and William Page (1 G, 2 A), but Tom Tandler's ten-yard, left-handed, cross goal pass which led to a Tim Dale tally was the highlight of the game. Jason Appelbaum continued his solid play with four easy saves and an assist, and SLUH converted both of its penalty shots after missing its only opportunity in the opener.

Game 3 – March 15, 2007

W (3-0) – 7-0 vs. Chaminade

The Jr. Bills captured the MICDS Invitational championship for the first time since 2003 by shutting out the Red Devils 7-0. The combination of Chaminade's defense and a lack of patience kept SLUH's offense in check, but the Jr. Bills put together their best defensive effort of the season to secure a comfortable win. Seniors Jim Heafner, Ray Kreienkamp, Kerry Read, Jake Roeckle, and Tom Tandler accounted for all seven goals and all three assists, while fellow senior Jason Appelbaum recorded five of the six saves.

Game 4 – March 19, 2007

W (4-0) – 21-2 vs. Parkway Central

The Jr. Bills put together their most complete game of the season, rolling over the Colts 21-2. Featuring a variety of defenses and offenses, SLUH outshot Parkway Central 30-8 and converted seven out of eleven 6-on-5's. The onslaught included six assists from Jake Roeckle, four goals from Tim Dale, and points from thirteen of the fourteen players who saw time in the field.

Game 5 – March 21, 2007

W (5-0) – 7-6 vs. Oakville

The Jr. Bills struggled at both ends of the pool but survived to defeat the Tigers 7-6. Though ranked ninth in the latest coaches' poll, Oakville lost by one to second-ranked Lindbergh in their only game of the season the night before. The Tigers' tough play, combined with a handful of mental mistakes on defense and a host of unforced turnovers on offense by the Jr. Bills, kept the game close to the end. The offense was led by Jim Heafner (3 G), Tim Dale (2 G, 1 A), and John Heafner (2 G, 1 A). Kerry Read and Ray Kreienkamp combined to limit Oakville star Chris Duckworth to a single goal after he managed eight points against Lindbergh. Jason Appelbaum offset his six goals allowed by chalking up three assists. SLUH was outshot by Oakville 13-12 and converted only one out of three 6-on-5's but escaped with another win.

Game 6 – March 22, 2007

W (6-0) – 18-6 vs. Parkway West

The Jr. Bills rebounded nicely, displaying the offensive intensity that was missing the night before and overwhelming the Longhorns 18-6. Following an early afternoon service project at Karen House, SLUH jumped ahead 6-0 after one quarter and maintained the shutout through halftime. With the outcome no longer in doubt, SLUH attempted to run more conservative defenses in the second half, but Parkway West found enough holes to slip in six goals. The Jr. Bills' balanced attack again featured points from thirteen different field players, but the highlight of the game was Zak Ancel's diving save on a penalty shot. Despite leaving the Longhorns plenty of room on the perimeter during the latter two quarters, SLUH still outshot Parkway West 33-18 and converted six out of eight 6-on-5's.

Game 7 – March 28, 2007

W (7-0) – 15-5 vs. Marquette

The Jr. Bills put together another convincing win, exploding to a 7-1 lead after one quarter and finishing off the sixth-ranked Mustangs 15-5. The counterattack out of the press defense was impressive, but for the third consecutive game, SLUH struggled to score half court and gave their opponent a number of counterattack opportunities. The offense was led by Jim Heafner (4 G, 1 A) and Jake Roeckle (2 G, 3 A), while Tim Dale, William Page, and Tom Tandler contributed three points each. Again running a crash during the second half, SLUH still outshot Marquette 30-18 and converted their only two 6-on-5's.

Game 8 – March 30, 2007

W (8-0) – 17-6 vs. Schaumburg

The tradition-rich SLUH water polo program began writing a new chapter in its history by competing for the first time against teams outside of St. Louis. The Jr. Bills and the Flyers from Lindbergh High School traveled to Schaumburg, Illinois to participate in an eight-team tournament featuring the top two ranked teams from Missouri and two of the final four teams from last year's Illinois state championship.

Fresh off a five-hour bus ride, the Jr. Bills put on a clinic of press defense and counterattack, jumping ahead 9-1 after one quarter and finishing off the host Saxons 17-6. William Page led the barrage with five goals, while John Heafner (4 G, 1 A) and Jim Heafner (3 G, 2 A) delivered five points apiece.

Game 9 – March 31, 2007

W (9-0) – 17-2 vs. Hoffman Estates

The Jr. Bills dominated their first of four games in one day, outshooting the overmatched Hawks 27-10 and outscoring them 17-2. John Heafner registered six points, Tim Dale posted a personal best five goals, and Dan Geisman, William Page, and Mike Sizemore recorded four points each. Goalie Zak Ancel preserved a shutout through the first half and allowed only two goals in his 20 minutes.

Game 10 – March 31, 2007

W (10-0) – 16-3 vs. Latin School of Chicago

Despite playing their second consecutive game, the Jr. Bills maintained their intensity for four quarters in dispatching the Romans 16-3. Kerry Read and Ray Kreienkamp, with help from a host of perimeter defenders, limited Latin star Grant Wilkie to only two goals and contributed three points apiece at the other end of the pool. John Heafner (2 G, 4 A), Tim Dale (3 G, 2 A), and Jim Heafner (4 G) led an offense which scored a neat four goals each quarter. SLUH, ranked first out of 21 teams in Missouri, outshot Latin, ranked seventh out of 70 teams in Illinois, 29-14 over the course of the game.

Game 11 – March 31, 2007

W (11-0) – 15-5 vs. Mundelein

Playing against the most balanced team on their schedule, the Jr. Bills swam their way to a 15-5 win over the seventeenth ranked Mustangs. The offense was led by William Page (1 G, 6 A), Jim Heafner (5 G), and Michael O'Neill (2 G, 1 A). SLUH outshot Mundelein 30-16 and converted five out of six 6-on-5's. The victory secured a berth in the finals against Lindbergh, who squeaked past Latin 9-7 in overtime in the other semifinal.

Game 12 – March 31, 2007

W (12-0) – 16-5 vs. Lindbergh

The championship game of the inaugural Midwest Water Polo Classic held in Schaumburg, Illinois featured two teams from St. Louis. SLUH and Lindbergh appeared evenly matched, both having defeated the same Oakville squad by a single goal two weeks earlier. But the Jr. Bills, though playing in their fourth game of the day, put together a flawless first half and went ahead 11-1 at the break before coasting to a 16-5 win over the Flyers. Goalie and Player of the Game Jason Appelbaum tallied three assists to go along with his seven saves in just over two quarters of work. Jim Heafner (5 G, 1 A), John Heafner, (3 G, 2 A), Tim Dale (2 G, 1 A), and Jake Roeckle (1 G, 2 A) did much of the work on the offensive end, while Kerry Read held Flyers star Niko Filipi to a single goal before getting some well deserved rest in the second half. SLUH converted eight out of eight 6-on-5's to bring their conversion rate for the season to a ridiculous 71%.

Game 13 – April 2, 2007

W (13-0) – 18-2 vs. John Burroughs

Still recovering from a weekend of five games within 24 hours and eleven hours on a bus, the Jr. Bills mustered the energy to rout the Bombers 18-2. The game featured the Varsity debuts of sophomores Trent Going, Matt Hohenberger, John Savio, and Steve Sigman, who more than held their own against

an inexperienced John Burroughs team. Enjoying the competition against several fellow Jungle Cats, eleven different players scored for SLUH, led by Savio's four goals.

Game 14 – April 3, 2007

W (14-0) – 21-3 vs. De Smet Jesuit High

Playing their seventh game in five days, and matched up with the second-ranked team in the area, the Jr. Bills led the Spartans only 1-0 four minutes into the game. But Jim Heafner exploded for four goals within the last three minutes of the first quarter, and William Page and John Heafner added single tallies to put SLUH ahead 7-0 after one period. In their most relentless effort of the season, the Jr. Bills continued to pour it on and finished on top 21-3. Ten different players scored goals, as SLUH outshot DeSmet 31-13 and converted nine out of ten 6-on-5's.

Game 15 – April 12, 2007

W (15-0) – 16-4 vs. Parkway South

Despite nine days between games, the Jr. Bills opened as well as ever, blasting the eighth-ranked Patriots 9-0 in the first quarter and 16-4 for the game. The game had an amicable feel, as Parkway South's roster included only one player who has not practiced with SLUH's players in the offseason. Jim Heafner (4 G, 3 A) and Mike Sizemore (4 G, 1 A) led the attack, and William Page and Tom Tandler added two goals and two assists each. Zak Ancel stopped eight of nine shots in the second half to anchor the Jr. Bills' drop defense.

Game 16 – April 18, 2007

W (16-0) – 12-6 vs. Ladue

The Jr. Bills struggled at both ends of the pool but still managed a comfortable 12-6 win over the tenth-ranked Rams. SLUH overcame a rash of questionable offensive fouls at one end and several defensive lapses at the other. The balanced attack featured goals from eight different players, and Jason Appelbaum posted six solid saves in his two quarters of play.

Game 17 – April 21, 2007

W (17-0) – 8-2 vs. MICDS

Getting a taste of "The Big Pool" for the first time in eighteen months, the Jr. Bills overcame the Rams 8-2 at the Rec Plex. MICDS scored the first two goals of the game, but SLUH adjusted its defense to overplay the goal more and kept MICDS off the scoreboard for the remaining three and a half quarters. Forced to play half court offense by the patient Rams, the Jr. Bills scored only one counterattack goal but still pulled away for a convincing win. Jim Heafner (4 G), Tim Dale (2 G, 1 A), and William Page (1 G, 2 A) led the charge on offense, and goalie Jason Appelbaum tallied seven solid saves on the defensive end.

Game 18 – April 24, 2007

W (18-0) – 9-7 vs. Lindbergh

The Jr. Bills controlled the first three quarters and held on to defeat the second-ranked Flyers 9-7. Responding to an early one-goal deficit, Jim Heafner scored a natural hat trick within 32 seconds, and SLUH went unchallenged for much of the game. After a Ray Kreienkamp 6-on-5 goal halfway through the fourth quarter, the Jr. Bills led 9-4. Disturbingly, the defense buckled towards the end and allowed Lindbergh three late goals after the outcome was decided. Still, SLUH captured the second of six consecutive games against teams ranked in the top six in the state.

Game 19 – April 25, 2007

W (19-0) – 8-3 vs. Chaminade

Again displaying a lack of patience on offense, the Jr. Bills still clamped down defensively on the sixth-ranked Red Devils to secure an 8-3 win. Jim Heafner scored an impressive five goals and Jason Appelbaum recorded eight saves to lead a solid but unspectacular performance.

Game 20 – April 27, 2007

W (20-0) – 11-7 vs. De Smet Jesuit High

The Jr. Bills jumped on top of the Spartans 4-0 after one quarter and maintained the advantage for an 11-7 win. Jim Heafner scored a preposterous nine points on seven goals and two assists, and Jake Roeckle fed Ray Kreienkamp for two late 6-on-5 goals to secure the victory. SLUH outshot third-ranked DeSmet 27-17 in closing out the regular season with a perfect 20-0 record. The six seniors will conclude their SLUH water polo careers having won every home game during their four years.

Game 21 – May 2, 2007

W (21-0) – 6-4 vs. Chaminade

The Jr. Bills received a bye in the first round of the Suburban Central Conference Tournament due to their first place finish among the seven teams. Chaminade earned the right to play SLUH for the second time in a week in the semifinals by defeating Parkway South 13-6. The Jr. Bills played without much intensity at both ends of the pool, missing a handful of easy shots and surrendering two goals off of rebounds. Still, led offensively by Jake Roeckle (1 G, 3 A) and Tim Dale (2 G, 1 A) and defensively by Jason Appelbaum (12 saves), they outscored the Red Devils 6-4. SLUH will meet MICDS in the conference championship after the Rams dominated DeSmet 9-2 in the other semifinal.

Game 22 – May 4, 2007

W (22-0) – 11-6 vs. MICDS

The Jr. Bills captured the Suburban Central Conference championship by pulling away from the Rams late to win 11-6. SLUH led 2-1 after one quarter and 5-3 at half, as the crash defense goaded MICDS into low-percentage perimeter shots and the single 2-meter offense generated several quality chances. However, the Rams played even with the Jr. Bills and, coming out of a time out with just under five minutes remaining, trailed by only two. But SLUH smartly switched to a press defense, and MICDS responded poorly, giving up two counterattack goals in under a minute to seal the outcome. Jim Heafner (5 G, 2 A) and William Page (2 G, 2 A) provided the bulk of the offense, while Jason Appelbaum registered 10 saves at the defensive end. Despite drawing no personal fouls for the first time all season, the Jr. Bills secured the top seed for the Missouri District Tournament beginning May 12.

Game 23 – May 16, 2007

W (23-0) – 17-7 vs. Parkway South (State Quarterfinals)

With the bottom nine teams in the area siphoned off to the Challenge Cup, SLUH reached the quarterfinals of the Missouri District Tournament via a bye, while ninth-seeded Parkway South had upset eighth-seeded Parkway West. Despite a twelve-day layoff between games, the Jr. Bills swam past the Patriots to an 8-2 halftime lead and a 17-7 win. The Heafner brothers led the offense to a season-high 37 shots, with Jim compiling seven goals and an assist and John managing three goals and three assists. Jason Appelbaum recorded four saves and no goals against in his two quarters of work. With the win, SLUH advances to the semifinals for a remarkable 20th consecutive season.

Game 24 – May 18, 2007

W (24-0) – 10-2 vs. Oakville (State Semifinals)

The Jr. Bills avenged their closest win of the season, bursting ahead of the Tigers 3-0 halfway through the first quarter and pulling away for a convincing 10-2 win. Once again Jim Heafner led the way offensively with six goals, although two were courtesy of penalty shots drawn by John Heafner and Mike Sizemore. Kerry Read played perhaps his best game of the season, limiting Player of the Year candidate Chris Duckworth to two shots and a disputed goal. Jason Appelbaum notched eight more saves and assisted on the first two goals of the game. SLUH advances to play arch-rival MICDS in the championship game and is asked to accomplish the extremely difficult task of defeating a good team for the fourth time in one season.

Game 25 – May 19, 2007

W (25-0) – 11-6 vs. MICDS (State Championship)

The Jr. Bills capped off their undefeated season by winning the Missouri District Tournament, defeating the Rams for the fourth time this season. Opting for a goal-side press early in the game, SLUH surged to a 7-1 lead through one and a half quarters and maintained the advantage for an 11-6 win. A balanced offensive attack featuring points from nine different players was led by Jim Heafner (4 G), John Heafner (3 G, 1 A), and Tim Dale (1 G, 2 A). The defense was led by defenders Kerry Read, Ray Kreienkamp, and Michael O'Neill and goalie Jason Appelbaum (11 S). The state championship is the second consecutive and the twelfth in the history of the program.