

Harriers Pick Top Seven and Prepare for Patriots

by Tim Probst

Prep News Reporter

The SLUH cross country team received a preview of its talent for the upcoming season last Saturday at its intrasquad meet in Forest Park. The race also served to designate the varsity (top seven) runners for the team's first meet next Wednesday at Castlewood Park.

Senior Tim Probst won the race with a time of 19:15. Placing second was sophomore Kevin Myers, who ran a 19:35 for the 3.1 miles. Myers commented, "My goal all summer was to make varsity, and I knew that as long as I could stay near the number two man, I could have a great finish."

Myers had to race near the leaders for second place because the race for second place exchanged leads four times, which made for a very competitive race. Close behind Myers were junior Ray Griner (19:39) and sophomore Matt Schuckmann (19:40). Rounding out the top seven were senior Mike Russo, sophomore Pat Hamel, and junior Chris Jones, respectively.

Senior Matt Dougherty finished in eighth place after tripping about 100 yards from the start. Because of his fall, Dougherty lost nearly 40 seconds from the leaders, but battled back and missed a varsity position by only one second. Coach Jim Linhares was very impressed with Dougherty's performance saying, "[Matt] learned how important the mind is in racing."

In the freshman race, Ben Fanson ran an impressive second mile of the two mile race and won in 13:07. Joel Brown and Ben Duchek placed second and third with times of 13:42 and 13:56 respectively. Rounding out the top seven freshmen were John Caldwell, Keith Myers, Max Ferrigni, and Mike Harvath.

Coach Jim Linhares was impressed by his team's overall performance. "I saw the spark of people being competitive on a course that is so hilly and tough. But we still have to build into our team to see who will do the job."

The team's first meets will be next Wednesday in a dual meet against Parkway South at Castlewood State Park and next Friday in the SouthPaw Invitational at Jefferson Barracks. Linhares said, "They will be two tough meets. We will be meeting rivals who we've beaten in past years but who have us beaten this year, at least on paper."

Linhares is also looking forward to the meets because he wants to see his team compete against other teams. "Kevin Myers is there

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mentally and Matt Schuckmann is so competitive. I also want to see if our number one guy—Tim Probst—can run with the other number ones. I think he can.”

Also this week, Linhares separated his team into three groups (A, B, and C) to better organize practices. The groups are based on speed and mileage coming into the season, and there are subgroups within the large groups.

Linhares was forced to separate the team into groups because of the large size of the team. “The size of the team is a big statement for cross country. There’s also going to be great talent from a pool like that,” concluded Linhares.