

Prep News

"If nothing else, value the truth."

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Issue 11

XC wins State in dramatic fashion

One-point victory gives SLUH runners first trophy since 1961

Joe Hoffman and Dan Graesser
Editors

The purest expression of genuine hope and longing gleamed from the face of cross country coach Jim Linhares as the scores were estimated. St. Louis U. High's five scoring team members had all finished relatively well, but whether their placings were strong enough to win the State Meet was in doubt. A dismal Linhares had initially figured a fourth or fifth-place finish in the moments immediately following the race. But as John Monda, faithful fan and father of senior team member Mark Monda, scored the meet as best he could in the hectic environment, it began to look like St. Louis U. High might have a chance. Indeed, by his estimate, SLUH had the lowest unadjusted total. Moments later, an explosive and sustained cheer erupted from the SLUH camp as it was announced that after the scores were adjusted, St. Louis U. High had won the Missouri State High School Cross Country Championship by one point.

The last time the St. Louis U. High cross country team claimed the State Title, the year was 1961, and the meet was held at neighboring Forest Park. The victory over such teams as Beaumont, Kirkwood, and CBC capped an undefeated season for the Jr. Bills, and it marked one of the last bright spots for the program before it

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Sneak peek at Sneak Peek '99

Tim Elfrink
Staff

On November 12, at 7:00 p.m. in the St. Louis U. High gym, the unstoppable, money-making machine that is Cashbah will awaken from its summer slumber with the Cashbah sneak preview. The party, which gives interested people a glimpse of what will be auctioned off at Cashbah, will feature ten items to be auctioned orally and forty to fifty items to be sold in a silent auction. "The Sneak Peek isn't necessarily a fundraiser," said Mothers' Club member Jane Wacker, "as much as it's a rally to build up excitement for the actual Cashbah."

The Sneak Peek traditionally fea-

tures a few more unusual items than Cashbah. In the past such items have included a team of sophomores to do housework for the highest bidder and a dinner to be prepared by some teachers/amateur chefs. One of the most unique items up for bidding this year is a private Christmas Eve Mass to be said by Ralph Houlihan, SJ, at the winning bidder's home.

"We expect to make anywhere between one and three thousand dollars," said Wacker, "but the Sneak Peek is more about having some fun and creating some anticipation."

Along those lines, counselor Dave Mouldon's band, The Old Kids on the Block, will be providing the entertain-

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STATE

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went into hibernation for most of the seventies and early eighties.

Then Theology teacher Jim Linhares arrived at SLUH and began to turn the program around, drawing from his experience as a member of a state championship team in 1975 when he attended Prep North High School. Slowly the team became respectable with outstanding individual runners such as Sean Lock '92, Chris Woodward '87, Mickey Luna '90, and Rob Behm '86 carrying the torch for the team. The evolution of the team continued in steps as SLUH won their first invitational trophy in 1987, and then in 1989 qualified for the State Meet for the first time underneath Linhares. Then in 1997, the team took home a third-place state trophy with a team led by senior captains John Christie, Ben Rosario, and Chris Graesser. Drawing from their experience in this meet, and knowing how close they came to winning it all, the sophomores on this team vowed to be the ones to bring home the title.

When these sophomores became juniors, they would realize just how difficult it was to win that most illustrious trophy as they finished a disappointing twelfth place. Using that experience as fuel to stoke the fire in their hearts, the team trained extensively throughout the winter and summer, knowing that the 1999 sea-

son would be their last opportunity to realize their goal. Last Saturday at Hough Golf Course in Jefferson City those sophomores, now seniors, made good on that vow (with help from two outstanding juniors).

In a narrow, heart-stopping, one-point victory, the SLUH Junior Billikens defeated Kansas City power Liberty by one point. In accumulating 112 points, SLUH displayed a true team effort as they only had one all-state medalist, but all five scorers placed fiftieth place or higher.

Going into the meet, the team knew that they had a chance, but it would in no way be easy. SLUH had been undefeated in the St. Louis area, but had yet to beat West Plains and had lost to Jefferson City on two occasions. However, SLUH had not met either of these teams since the Hancock Invitational, a race in the middle of the season. The team knew that it had improved drastically in the weeks since then, and hoped that it would be enough. Linhares explained, "Coming into the meet, I hoped we would win the title, and I knew we could, but deep down I wondered if it was asking too much."

Before the race Linhares tried to ensure that the team was calm and in the right

state of mind by moving the team to a secluded location to stretch, avoiding the distraction of the circus-like atmosphere of the meet. Pulling from the wisdom of



Couch Linhares doused with water after XC wins state.

assistant coach Pat Hamel, Linhares instructed the team to "pull back and be patient from the very beginning" to avoid being worn out by the unseasonably high temperatures.

Taking this advice and the countless other snippets of advice and wishes of good luck they had received, the team stepped to the line and waited for the gun. The starter raised his arms, the crowd

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Film Festival visits SLUH theater

**Raj Joseph
Reporter**

Saturday night roughly 150 people gathered in the St. Louis U. High Performing Arts Center to view the 140-minute film "The Life of Brian Epstein." The film, shown on Saturday, November 6, at 7:00 p.m., was presented by the St. Louis Film Festival.

This film featured Paul McCartney, George Martin, Billy J. Kramer, Jude Law, and Marianne Faithfull and was directed by Anthony Wall. As the title implies, this

film describes Epstein's life, as well as his managerial decisions while he worked with the Beatles. Although he died tragically at the young age of thirty-three due to an accidental overdose of sleeping pills, he still took an unpolished British band and catapulted them to stardom.

The BBC originally created this documentary on a video medium, but all local St. Louis theaters are capable of projecting only film medium. Thus, the Festival turned to SLUH because of its central location and because they could use SLUH's video projector to show the film

on the white cyclorama. The video was just one of many films shown around the St. Louis area during the festival.

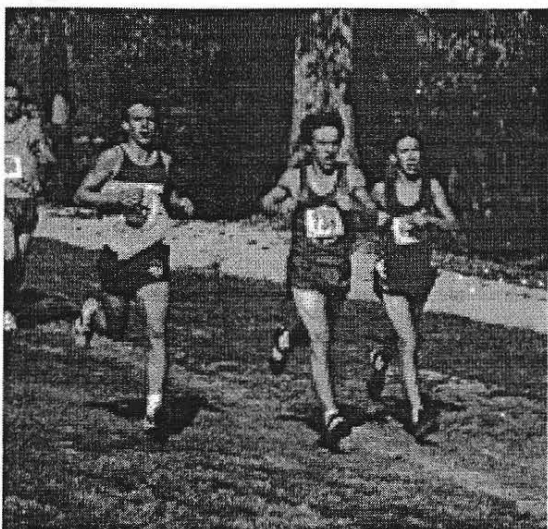
The film was introduced by members of the St. Louis Film Festival and McCartney's sister. Afterwards, a question and answer forum took place.

Tom Dunsworth, the Fine Arts Department's technical theater consultant, felt that the film was "a good opportunity to see some historic footage that will be seen in the United States only a few times. It was interesting from both a

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CHAMPIONS

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went silent, and then the gun fired. The race had started. In less than eighteen minutes dreams would be either fulfilled



Snodgrass cruises through first mile or shattered.

Drawing from their experience in last year's State Meet, almost all the members of the team were able to secure places from the start that were in the top half of the field. The lone team member who stayed near the back of the pack was senior Nathan Tower, who explained, "It's simple: I just like to wait back and pass the other runners as they tire."

Through the first mile, the SLUH runners held decent position while Senior Ted Snodgrass extended himself with a 4:52 first mile that had him in fourth place overall. Snodgrass stated, "My goal was to come out right from the beginning and secure the position that I wanted to finish in." Following Snodgrass was the senior pack of Dan Westlund, Tim Huegerich, Murphy O'Brien, and Tower. Juniors Dan Leinauer and Ryan Hatch followed close behind.

O'Brien explained, "I knew my place was not good enough at this point and that I would have to move up; but I always try to move up and pass people when I am in a race."

As the team flew down the last down hill, about two and a half miles into the

race, Snodgrass was in clear all-state position (top 25 finishers) with the other four scorers packed tightly behind him in about fortieth position. Even with these seemingly high places, the team title was not secure as both Liberty and CBC were having excellent races.

Throughout the day, countless runners weakened and folded on the final uphill to the finish, but it was here that the Jr. Bills would make their stand and bring home the State Championship. Snodgrass ended an excellent season and an extraordinary career as the most decorated SLUH runner ever with a nineteenth-place finish in the time of 17:00. Following him was Tower, who moved past an amazing forty runners in the

last half mile to claim thirtieth place in a time of 17:17. Murphy O'Brien, one of very few SLUH runners in history to run in the state meet three times, closed his season with a thirty-sixth place finish in 17:23. Dan Westlund, a true example of strength and courage, overcame a fairly serious cold to run one of the best races of his season and finish thirty-seventh in 17:24. The scoring was rounded out by Huegerich, who literally fell across the line in fiftieth place, totally spent from a combination of dehydration and exhaustion. Minutes after finishing, he had to receive medical attention and was hooked up to an IV for almost a half hour.

Huegerich admits, "As I crossed the finish line, the only thing that I could think was that cross-country was a really dumb sport."

Although the coaches of the team knew that the places for the team were excellent, they did not know if they would be enough to win due to the close nature of the race. Linhares said, "As they came up the finish, I thought we had the places to take third, but I was concentrating so much on our team, that I did not know how the other teams were doing."

Coach Pat Hamel said, "as I saw our runners come through the chute, I was excited because I knew that our fourth and fifth places were so much better than the other teams' finishers."

The race is scored by adding up the finishing places of each team's first five runners, but the official score has to be adjusted to take out the places of the runners who qualified for the State Meet as individuals (and therefore do not figure into the team score). The announcement of the winner was delayed until twenty minutes after the race. When the scores were finally posted, the results were truly extraordinary as the Junior Bills had eked out a one-point victory over Liberty. This score is the second highest total for a champion in the history of the State cross-country championship.

The team is just starting to look forward to next year when it will be led by Juniors Leinauer and Hatch who finished in eighty-third and ninety-fourth places, respectively. These two, plus a strong core of sophomores and freshmen, will provide a healthy pool from which the varsity squad will be selected.

In the words of Linhares, "Next year is not going to be a rebuilding year. Once you win the State Championship, your goal is to go back next year to win again".

SNEAKY

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ment. The event will be hosted by guest auctioneer Terry Murray.

"I'm not an auctioneer, but I play one on TV," said Murray. "This is my second year hosting this event, and it's a great way to have some fun and raise some money for the school as well as some excitement about Cashbah."

As for The Old Kids on the Block, Murray is a big fan, and he plans to demonstrate more than just his auctioneering skills when they take the stage.

"They're awesome," said Murray. "Easy to dance to, so I figure to bust some moves."