

Boys Cross Country Capsules

AFFTON COUGARS

COACH: Paul Breuer

LAST YEAR: No state qualifiers.

KEY RUNNERS: Seniors — Tom Kornberger, Rick Moll, Ron Blackmon; Junior — Andrew Krusemark.

OUTLOOK: Krusemark returns after being the team front-runner last season.

"I've got some guys with a good attitude," Breuer said. "We made a small improvement last season and we are shooting for another improvement this season. As long as they do that I will be happy. I want to keep the program going in the right direction."

DUBOURG CAVALIERS

COACH: Steve Radomski

LAST YEAR: Second in conference and had one state qualifier.

KEY RUNNERS: Seniors — Anthony Lampe, Robert Houska; Juniors — Mike Lampe, Brad Ellebrecht; Sophomores — Jacob Miklovic, Erik Wolfslau.

OUTLOOK: DuBourg is thin with just eight out for the team. Anthony Lampe is a returning state runner.

"The guys worked hard over the summer and that is usually an indication of a good season," Radomski said. "I am hoping that we can compete for a conference title this season."

GATEWAY TECH JAGUARS

COACH: Chief Thomas Williams

LAST YEAR: Finished in top four of conference.

KEY RUNNERS: Juniors — James Blackman, Donnell Irving, T. Pham; Sophomore — Larry Tucker.

OUTLOOK: The Jaguars have a very young team, but are looking to place higher in the conference.

"We're in the growing stage, but we'll definitely be competitive," Williams said. "We're putting a lot of emphasis on conditioning and motivation. We have to make the kids feel that they can win."

HANCOCK TIGERS

COACH: Jerry Moser

LAST YEAR: One state qualifier.

KEY RUNNERS: Juniors — Jose Ochoa, Mike Huber; Sophomores — Joe McMahon, Mike Murphy.

OUTLOOK: This is a very untested team with virtually no varsity experience.

"We had seven boys on the team last year," Moser said. "Five of them graduated, one of them is academically ineligible and Jose is a couple of weeks away from being able to run. It's going to be another rebuilding year although it seems like we are always rebuilding."

KENNEDY CELTS

COACH: Stephanie Kinnison

LAST YEAR: No state qualifiers.

KEY RUNNERS: Seniors — Andy Ruzicka, Mark Durst, Denny Russell; Junior — Mike Slane; Sophomore — Jon Rehling.

OUTLOOK: Rehling and freshman Mike Larson make for a promising young 1-2 punch for the Celtics. Rehling was a sectional track qualifier in the 4x800 last spring; Larson could be even better. Durst, a co-captain along with Ruzicka, has a longer stride this season and has already shaved plenty off his top time of a year ago. Freshmen Tim Busken and Kevin Ruzicka round out the roster. "We're optimistic this season," Kinnison said. "Four of our runners are already ahead of last year's times. If Mike Larson accomplishes the goals he's set for himself, I think we'll see him at state. As a team, I think we could be pretty solid throughout."

LINDBERGH FLYERS

COACH: Jim Wilder

LAST YEAR: Team qualified for sectionals; one state qualifier.

KEY RUNNERS: Seniors — Dan Langford, Dan Koller, Scott Schmieder, Mike Dresner; Juniors — Paul Koehler, Matt Crull; Sophomore — Alan Hoyt.

OUTLOOK: After qualifying for sectionals for the first time in more than a dozen years, the Flyers hope to take the next step this season. Koehler qualified for state last year and is poised for a big season.

"Our varsity seven are a lot stronger than we were last year," Wilder said. "Cracking in as a state qualifier as a team will be tough, if we start really gelling we can do something. Anything can happen this year."

LUTHERAN SOUTH LANCERS

COACH: Don Prahlow

LAST YEAR: Third in state in Class 2A.

KEY RUNNERS: Senior — Earl Colvin; Juniors — Chris Wieschen, Charlie Hubbus, Andrew Smart, Ryan Glowczewski, Andy Stegmann, Eric Burle; Sophomores — Greg Schroll, Matt Vivian; Freshman — Matt Mullin.

OUTLOOK: Lutheran South has won three state titles in the last six years and finished third last year. With Colvin, a state medalist, and Wieschen, a state qualifier, return-

back from state in 1999.

"Our goal is always to get back to state and finish in the top four," Prahlow said. "We moved to (Class) 2A last year and that's tougher than 3A. But we have six trophies from state in the '90s and want to keep that going."

MEHLVILLE PANTHERS

COACH: Don Kinnison

LAST YEAR: Two state qualifiers.

KEY RUNNERS: Senior — Scott Reeves; Junior — Kyle Johns.

OUTLOOK: Even though Reeves finished 10th overall at the state meet last year, Mehlville is rebuilding. The Panthers lost three seniors from a squad that qualified as a team for sectionals.

"It'll be trial by fire for us," Kinnison said. "We have some young kids out and they're working hard, but they have some big shoes to fill. We'll get a wake up call in our first meet at Webster. Webster returns a lot and they're very strong this year."

NJROTC COMMANDERS

COACH: Ken DeNeal

LAST YEAR: No state qualifiers.

KEY RUNNERS: Juniors — Quinton Green, Sam Thomas, Chris Thomas; Sophomores — Steven Evans.

OUTLOOK: The Commanders have a core of returning runners and some newcomers with some potential including sophomore Terry Towner, who ran track last spring. They will look to compete for the conference title, but with a young team there are many questions.

"It's difficult to say," DeNeal said. "As always as a coach you're cautiously optimistic but practice doesn't mean a thing. We'd like to win the league and we want to save our best for October."

ST. JOHN'S LIONS

COACH: Rick Koettler

LAST YEAR: No state qualifiers.

KEY RUNNERS: Junior — Mike Amoroso; Sophomore — Brian Mann.

OUTLOOK: Newcomer Eric Meyer, a sophomore who transferred from Kirkwood High, could prove to be the top Lion before long. At press time, he was still fulfilling the required number of practices. Mann is trying to shake off an ankle injury; freshman Andrew Montgomery rounds out the roster. St. John's opened Saturday in the Lutheran South meet at Jefferson Barracks.

"With our numbers so low, it's hard for us to have many team goals," Koettler said. "But I think the kids will work hard and have fun."

SLUH JUNIOR BILLIKENS

COACH: Jim Linhares

LAST YEAR: Lost in districts.

KEY RUNNERS: Seniors — Ted Snodgrass, Murphy O'Brien, Mark Monda, Nathan Tower; Juniors — Matt Brice, Tim Huegerich, Ryan Hatch.

OUTLOOK: SLUH figures to be in the conference title hunt with CBC and DeSmet. The Jr. Bills will have strong leadership from their senior captains, Snodgrass, O'Brien, Monda and Tower.

"We want to be very competitive with CBC and DeSmet," Linhares said. "We're deeper in the top half of the team this year and through the first 14 we're more talented than last year."

ST. MARY'S DRAGONS

COACH: Bob Bante

LAST YEAR: The Dragons won the Archdiocesan Athletic Association and had one state qualifier.

KEY RUNNERS: Seniors — Clayton Nichols, Joe Schuette; Juniors — Jon Carl Rosario, Tim Harre, Jake Robben, Jeff Behms; Sophomore — Dan Zwilling.

OUTLOOK: Mike Bellanca, the lone state qualifier last season, has graduated. But the Dragons certainly appear to have enough depth to repeat as conference champions. Rosario is the front-runner with Nichols, Harre and Zwilling close behind.

"The top four guys are going to run well," Bante said. "The fifth spot will determine how we do as a team. This is the deepest team we've had in a few years and thus we are stronger as a team. Our goal is to win conference again and to finish in the top three in most of the meets we run."

VIANNEY GOLDEN GRIFFINS

COACH: John Mohr

LAST YEAR: One state qualifier.

KEY RUNNERS: Seniors — John Smith, Matt Smith, Glenn Freil; Junior — Ryan Durban; Sophomores — Tom Gordon, Nick Tobias.

OUTLOOK: The Griffins hope that the return of the experienced seniors and Gordon, who made it to the state meet last season, will get them out of the basement of the traditionally strong Metro Catholic Conference.

"I'd like to see the team do better in conference this year," Mohr said. "I think we have a good corps of about seven runners. If we can avoid the injury bug we will be competitive. I think we have a good chance of sending several guys to the sectional meet."



Pam Doepeke-Hurd photo

The St. Louis U. High cross country team returns a wealth of experience this season, led by, front row from left: Murphy O'Brien, Ted Snodgrass, Ryan Hatch; back row: Mark Monda, Nathan Tower, Tim Huegerich and Matt Brice.

Captains looking to guide SLUH ship in MCC waters

Foursome leads the way for Junior Bills in '99

By Joey Cavato
Staff Writer

After losing just two seniors to graduation last May, the St. Louis University High cross country team looks to regain the form that carried it to a third-place finish at the state meet two years ago.

Head coach Jim Linhares brings back plenty of leadership and experience to make an impact this season.

"We're bringing back a lot of guys who at one point or another during the year had varsity experience last year," Linhares said. "We have a lot of guys that made a significant commitment to running over the summer and did a lot of the right things leading up to the season. Now we're going to find out where that experience can take us. We're looking forward to it."

Pacing the Jr. Bills will be senior captains Ted Snodgrass, Murphy O'Brien, Mark Monda and Nathan Tower.

Along with their individual talents and experience, each one of the captains brings something unique to the table for SLUH.

"They're captains because each one of them in their own way brings a leadership style," Linhares said.

Snodgrass and O'Brien ran with the varsity team their sophomore years when the squad

finished third in state.

"Snodgrass is a fierce competitor on race day," Linhares said. "Tower has a tremendous training discipline and he goes all the way to the wall on workouts. He's a model of good habits."

Monda and Tower competed on the varsity last year and Linhares expects big things from them in their final campaigns.

"Murphy is the guy you count on for being poised," Linhares said. "He's a good thinker and shows a lot of intelligence and savvy out there."

"I would describe Mark Monda as the running expert," he continued. "He's got a lot of information and has studied running quite a bit."

Linhares hopes the potpourri of leadership abilities and styles of his captains helps the younger runners achieve their potential and helps the team gel.

"It's one of those things where we have experience and talent coming together," Linhares said. "You end up with something more than the sum of the parts. If that can kind of infect the rest of the team down the ranks, we should be able to put a really good season together."

Although the Jr. Bills are deeper than last year, wrestling away the Metro Catholic Conference title won't be an easy task. "We'd like to win our conference again and we'd like to be competitive with the best teams in the state," Linhares said. "Our conference is so tough in cross country. We have a great deal of respect for CBC and DeSmet. Sometimes winning the conference turns out to be as tough as winning the sectional meet."