

SLUH enters as favorite in District 2

CROSS COUNTRY

By Chris Murphy
Correspondent

Jim Linhares has good reason to gush about his St. Louis University High cross country team. "It's the best season we've had in more than 30 years," Linhares said. "The first two meets of the season, we were groping. But not long after that, we really jelled."

"SLUH has been one of the top teams in St. Louis this fall and is favored in Saturday's Class 4A District 2 meet, which will be held at Eureka High School.

Varsity boys will race at 11:30 a.m., preceded by varsity girls at 10:30 a.m.

At least five strong boys teams will make a pitch for the top four spots. Each of the top four teams will advance to the Jefferson Barracks sectional on Oct. 30 to meet advancers from District 1 (at Jackson).

In addition to SLUH, Webster Groves, Kirkwood, Parkway South, CBC, Eureka, Lindbergh, Marquette, Vianney and DuBourg will compete in the boys field.

SLUH, Webster, Kirkwood, South and CBC form a strong top-five on paper. At least one will be left home.

"It's the strongest district in the state," Linhares said. "I think Webster Groves and Kirkwood are real solid teams. I would not make us a shoo-in."

"Parkway South apparently has pulled its team together. A lot with CBC will depend on (injured star) Paul Fitzpatrick."

Fitzpatrick, a sophomore, has been sidelined with shin splints but returned to action last weekend.

No one from SLUH qualified for state last year after the team placed eighth in the Class 4A field in 1991. Linhares has a deep squad this year.

"Once you get past the first few kids, we've got a lot of competition," Linhares said. "We've got 17 or 18 kids doing good jobs."

Junior Pat Hamel leads the

Off and running



way for SLUH and should be a contender for an individual district title. Other top boys runners in District 2 include senior Nate Terpstra of Kirkwood, seniors Ron Wagner and Steve Johnson and junior Gary Grow of Webster Groves, freshman Adam McDowell and junior John Haugen of Parkway South and junior Owen Donahue of CBC.

Senior Ray Griner, junior Kevin Myers, sophomore Tim Chik and senior Jack Kennebeck round out SLUH's top five. Other teams in the district field may be hard-pressed to match that depth.

The girls field will be interesting to watch since no team seems a clear-cut favorite.

At least four teams could vie for the top spot, including Lindbergh, Kirkwood, Parkway South

and Eureka.

"You probably couldn't fit a piece of paper between those four," South coach Lew Smith said.

Both Lindbergh and Kirkwood have beaten South this fall. South placed second to Oakville at last weekend's Suburban South conference meet where Eureka was third.

"We certainly have the horses, but we haven't been running anywhere near our capability," Smith said.

Other girls teams in District 2 are Webster Groves, Marquette, Nerinx Hall, Cor Jesu and DuBourg.

Top girls in the field include Cassie Moss of Lindbergh, Meschele Darden of Kirkwood and Jenny Desmond of Parkway South.