



Final Four Soccer Team Eyes State Championship with Win over Oakville

It was a crisp and cold November night last Saturday when the Varsity Soccerbills took on the Oakville Tigers in the Missouri State Soccer Championship Quarterfinal round. But the game itself was full of heated emotion as the Bills' intensity carried them to a thrilling 2-1 overtime victory.

Emotions were running high before the game as seniors on both teams realized that it could be their last varsity soccer game. But goalie Steve Sprengnether was especially optimistic: "I thought we had a very good chance going in, since we tied them earlier this year. It was just a matter of who scored first."

It did not take long for SLUH to get going. Fifteen minutes into the game, junior forward Brian Flanagan scored off

a "perfect headball," according to Sprengnether. Flanagan was surrounded by Tiger defensive players, but he was able to direct the ball into the upper right corner, giving the Bills a 1-0 lead. Oakville goalkeeper Doug Fox ran into the goal post on the play but stayed in the game. "Once we got on top, I thought we had them," commented Junior Jeremy Moore, who played another outstanding game with his dribbling and passing ability.

The Bills kept Doug Fox busy for a while, but Oakville connected with a goal of its own with 17:17 remaining in the first half. Tiger Sweeper Jason Himpert had plenty of time on the upper left side of the penalty area to set up and blast his shot in the right corner, tying the game at one.

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Successful Season Overshadows Harriers' Post-Season Disappointment

Ultimately, the goal which Coach Jim Linhares instills at the beginning of each Cross Country season is for the varsity to qualify for the State meet. This year's squad fell short of qualifying, but its success cannot be measured by an appearance at State. In fact, Coach Linhares called this season "the best in many years."

For a team with only one Varsity runner returning (Jim Spies), competing with the local powers appeared tough early in the season. But the first meet at the Southpaw Invitational reflected good things to come. At the meet, Sean

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15 Varsity Footbills Selected for All-Independent Team

"The season was a constant emotional high," according to senior football player Rod Harkey; indeed, the 1990 Jr. Bill Varsity Football team combined intense emotion with impressive talent to post a 6-4 record in a challenging season which saw 15 Jr. Bills grab post-season All-Independent honors.

A sweep of arch-rivals Vianney, DeSmet, and CBC highlighted a thrilling season in which the V-Footbills won six of seven regular season games. Despite tough losses in district competition to formidable Riverview, McCluer North, and Hazelwood East squads,

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Overtime Win Against Parkway West Tires Polobills for District Finals

The 1990 Varsity Polobills finished their season last Saturday night with 20 wins and 3 losses, falling just short of another state championship. Coach Charlie Busenhardt reflected, "We played the whole season to get to the finals and came up a few goals short, but that doesn't detract from a truly outstanding season."

In last Friday's tournament play, the Polobills won a thrilling semifinal contest, defeating Parkway West 7-6 in the second sudden death. Parkway West jumped to a 2-0 lead after one period, but the Polobills responded with two 6 on 5 conversions. Co-captain Paul Navarro was the first to strike, scoring from the outside on a crossing pass from the other co-captain John Sampson. Minutes later, on a second power play, Navarro hit Jeff

Smith inside for an impressive strength shot. Parkway West, however, added another goal of their own and led 3-2 at half time.

SLUH's Water Warriors scored only once during the third period, still trailing 5-3. Brad Downs spun free of his defender and blasted the ball by a helpless West goalie from the 2 meter mark.

The Polobills then picked up the pace in the fourth period, fearing an early exit from the tournament. The always active Erick Weber pushed in a loose ball to bring the Bills to within one. Seconds later on a counterattack, Downs fed Navarro the ball for a goal on a nifty 360 degree move, tying the game at 5 and sending it into an overtime.

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Cross Country

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Lock ran a 16:49 for his first race ever, and the Harriers took the first place trophy. "That race established a strong rivalry with Kirkwood and Webster that would last all year," stated Coach Linhares. With that victory, the Harriers next looked to the Eureka Invitational to try to recapture the title they won in 1988.

At Eureka, the Harriers would clash with Fox and Lafayette, the former an eventual state qualifier. The Harriers, in establishing a pack of runners under 18:00, dismantled both teams to take the championship. "This was a race where we showed a lot of strength in the last mile and that is what won it for us," commented Coach Linhares. The Harriers and Lock were now 2-0, Lock taking first place once again.

The Harriers now looked to what was the second biggest race of the year - the Hazelwood Invitational. The Varsity hoped, at best, to finish around fourth place, but because of a strategy flaw, finished seventh out of eighteen teams. Going into the race, the varsity wanted to get into good position early, but not attack the first mile. Unfortunately they found themselves out of position and courageously battled back, but it was not enough. To make things worse, it would turn out to be third man senior Mark Fagan's last race due to nagging shin splints. Sean Lock, however, supplied Coach Linhares with something to be happy about when he crossed the finish line in 16:14, finishing first and beating two Jefferson City runners.

After a mediocre finish at Hazelwood, the Harriers got their acts together, and ran their best team race at the Hancock Invitational. Hancock consisted of 28 teams, by far the largest meet, which included Kirkwood, Fox, McCluer North, Hazelwood West, and DeSmet. "At best, we hoped to finish sixth or seventh, but the guys weren't afraid to go out and compete with the best," said Coach Linhares. Indeed, the pack delivered, giving the Harriers a third place trophy, following perennial powers Parkway West and

West Plains. Coach Linhares continued, "That was probably our best finish there ever, and it happened because of our pack."

Unfortunately, at the Parkway West Invitational, the pack was sleeping, and the Harriers took sixth out of eight teams. But the meet was not without its bright spots. Sean Lock beat Ron Cross for first place in 16:50. Matt Heebner ran an 18:03 for second position on the varsity squad. Coach Linhares commented that "Matt's performance showed us that any one of the guys from positions two to seven could hold the number two position." If the Harriers believed this, the hope was that they would all compete for the number two position and thus establish a competitive pack.

This definitely was not the case when the Bills raced against Parkway South at Forest Park. Parkway South finished its top three ahead of the Harriers' second man. "This race symbolized the complications we experienced as a team during that time," stated Linhares. He went on to point out that, at the time, Sean Lock was questioning his ability to run with the best, and on the whole, team morale was at its lowest. Coming out of the race, the Harriers knew that they needed focus. DeSmet was definitely the place to regain their focus on competitive racing.

The DeSmet Invitational is essentially the All-Catholic Meet, and the Harriers were hungry for the first place title after it had eluded them for the last few years. The Harriers were even more psyched when they headed that DeSmet was ranked ahead of them in the Coaches' State Poll. First place was SLUH's, as the pack battled back into the race in the last half mile to trounce DeSmet. The victory also made SLUH the best Catholic team in the area. Eventually, though, DeSmet would qualify for State in another Sectional.

The final regular meet of the season and the last hurrah for the Harriers was the Metro Invitational, held at Jefferson Barricks. The meet was held on the same day as the Stadium football game, so some of

the Harriers had their minds elsewhere. But they managed to run in a competitive pack against rivals Kirkwood, Parkway South, Fox, and Hazelwood West, and take third place behind Lincoln and Northwest-House Springs. "Looking on that race," Coach Linhares commented, "we probably peaked then while Parkway South, Fox, and Kirkwood peaked at District and Sectionals. But, at the time, we felt pretty confident after Metro, and that was why we took Districts for granted."

Definitely, the Harriers were not focused on the District race, as seen in the results. Parkway South and Kirkwood rebounded from their weak performances at Metro to finish their packs ahead of SLUH's. When the scores were tabulated, the Bills found themselves in fourth place, just qualifying for Sectionals. "After our performance at Metro, we seemed to have been looking past our rivals at Districts," commented Jim Spies. The whole season came down to the Sectional meet. Fox, Parkway South, Kirkwood, and Cape Girardeau Central were all present and all looking for state berths. The Harriers had prepared themselves mentally all week long, and the squad seemed focused. But a good frame of mind isn't the only thing needed to perform well. Physically, the Harriers didn't peak. "We had good races; our top five were under 18:00, but they weren't peak races like Fox and Parkway South had." The Harriers finished fifth. "After performing consistently and strong all year long, this was hard to accept," commented Spies. "We were a state caliber team," said Coach Linhares, "but in the future, we won't be able to wait for a break in the sectional assignments."

"We really had a great season though," said Coach Linhares, "and we have a big group with a lot of experience coming back next year." Surely, with so many guys who ran Varsity in their first year returning, the Jr. Bills Harriers will definitely be in the hunt for a spot at next year's state meet.

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