

# Deja-vu: Harrierbills win First Capitol again

## *Varsity 7 post better times than 1999 champs*

**Brian Gilmore**  
Reporter

Entering the First Capitol Invitational last Friday, the Jr. Bills wanted to accomplish two things. First, they wanted to see how they would stack up with some of the top teams in the area. Second, they wanted to see how some of the newly-christened varsity runners would handle their transition to the brutal intensity of a varsity race. If the results are any indication of how the Harrierbills' season will go, then expect nothing but brilliance from this team all year long.

Boosted by a powerful second half of the race from all seven varsity runners, SLUH won first place in the 16-team field, narrowly edging out rivals Parkway South and DeSmet. Led by John Parr (9th place, 16:59), the team placed four runners in the top 20 overall Pat Leinauer (11th, 17:05), junior Peter Schaefer (15th, 17:21), and junior Drew Noblot (18th, 17:28) all earned individual trophies of recognition.

Narrowly missing a trophy, but more importantly rounding out the scoring five, was junior Kevin Crean (24th, 17:40). Junior Kyle Gonnerman (17:55) and senior Andy Skosky (17:56) ran excellent first races as well.

"Winning feels pretty good," said team philosopher Leinauer, "and I'm sure it feels better than losing, so I'm glad that we won."

This was the second time that SLUH has gone to this invitational, and the second time that SLUH has taken home first. In 1999, en route to the state championship, the Junior Bills edged out conference rival CBC for the title.

Head coach Jim Linhares was quick to point out that "all seven varsity times, from top to bottom, were better this year than the times run by the eventual state champions in '99."

"It was great to get the win, since nothing higher than second was expected from us," continued Linhares, "However,

only a few points separated South, DeSmet, and us, so it really was a virtual tie."

"We also had all seven varsity runners under 18 minutes, with two of them already at the 17-minute mark. That's unbelievable, and we're stronger than I expected us to be at the beginning of the year. It's really a credit to all the hard work the guys have been doing. Drew (Noblot) and Kevin (Crean) really stepped it up, and that's what won the meet for us."

Indeed, Noblot and Crean were the biggest bright spots of the day. Parr said, "I'm so happy to see them run well, they deserve it."

Crean, running nearly three minutes faster than a year ago, summed the experience up saying that, "It's completely different in a varsity race. There's no stringing out in the pack, and everyone can kick like the bejesus at the end of the race. I definitely felt the pressure, because I knew I had to come through if the team was to win, but I proved that the desire to succeed can overcome all obstacles. It was a great race, but I could have run even faster if it wasn't for all of Coach Flanagan's pre-calc homework."

Noblot commented, "As a team, it was a big win for us, since we were definitely the underdogs. Personally, I fed off the intensity of the race, and ran the best race of my career. I knew Coach wanted me to close the gap between Schaefer and myself, and I did that pretty

well. I'd been mentally preparing for that meet for weeks, and I was utterly focused throughout the race and never broke form."

The JV squad also opened their season on Friday, and won the race in dominating fashion, easily outdistancing the huge 30-team field. Led by sophomores Andrew Linhares (4th, 18:22) and Brennan Connor (5th, 18:26), the team placed five runners in the top 12 and had great individual races from top to bottom. "It's great to get the season off and going like this, and I'm proud of the way we ran today," said Linhares.

On the JV team's impressive unity, Parr commented, "They looked awesome today. They were together in huge groups on their warm-up and cool-down runs. I could almost feel the mystique that they radiated."

With the first meet under its belt, the team ventures north to the McCluer North Invitational held tomorrow at McCluer North High School. With the top seven getting a week off to train, the top seven JV runners will be competing in the varsity division tomorrow.

Senior Richard Spicer, obviously pumped up about his first ever varsity race, claims that, "The power of my headband will get me through the race and propel me to greatness."

With all the buzz surrounding this year's cross-country team, check out a meet and see what it's like. You might be pleasantly surprised. For more, log on to

[www.geocities.com/sluecrosscountry](http://www.geocities.com/sluecrosscountry).

## PN Nightbeat — Soccer

The FutbolBills defeated the CBC Cadets 1-0 last night in a thrilling battle. Thirteen seconds into the first half, senior captain Dan Hartwig took a pass in midfield and slotted it past the CBC goalie for the first and only notch of the game. Though both teams battled for the remaining time, the speed and intensity of the Martelbills from quick substitutions proved too much for the Cadets. The SoccerBills move to 3-1-0 on the season.

