

Footballbills drop opener to Riverview, 26-9

Greg Fox
Core Staff

Much to the delight of high school football fans everywhere, the Friday night festivities started one night early, as the 2003 Jr. Bills football team took the field last night against Riverview Gardens. Hoping for last year's strong defense to carry over, and to improve on an offense that has almost entirely left for college, the Footballbills took the field to high expectations and hopes.

Put in an 8-0 hole early in the game after a Riverview touchdown and safety, junior quarterback Matt Behr took command of the offense in the second quarter. Exploiting the mismatch between 6'5" junior receiver John Warner and the Riverview cornerbacks, Behr led the offense to three second quarter field goals, connecting with Warner four times for 104 yards in the second quarter alone. Behr ended the night with 8 completions

for 133 yards.

The Bills' defense suffocated the Riverview offense in the first half, prompting junior defensive back Ryan Morgan to comment that "the whole first half was bright for us."

Coming into the second half with a 9-8 lead, however, things began to unravel. Riverview started the half by driving 69 yards, including 43 yards on three passing plays, one of which was a 15-yard touchdown pass. Riverview added another touchdown before the quarter was up, and less than six minutes into the fourth quarter, added another. All three two-point conversions failed, leaving the score at 26-9.



The SLUH football team lines up against Riverview last night.

Commented junior Dave Klug, "We forced a lot of fumbles... And our passing game was pretty good."

Warner, who finished with 104 yards receiving, pointed out the team's need to execute better, while defensive coordinator Mark Tychonievich observed that the offensive

line has "a lot of work to do."

"(During the) second half, it might not have looked like we played that well, but we still played our hearts out. We can only get better from this," said Morgan.

The team has a long week to prepare for next Friday's game against Parkway West, away from the friendly confines of Oakland Avenue.

Harrierbills hope to dominate rivals this season

Henry Samson
Reporter

The Let'sgorunbills are back! In what could be considered a new era of SLUH cross country, the 2003 team is looking to make a name for itself as it races for the state title.

Although the team graduated five senior varsity runners from last year's squad, including all-state runner Peter Schaefer, the team is ready to assert itself as one of the area's and state's finest.

"What distinguishes this year's group is depth," says head coach Jim Linhares. He is amazed that "this many guys (are) capable of going this fast."

Headed by captains Andrew Linhares, John Oliver, Dan Flanagan, and Chris Arb, the team appears to be as strong as ever. Aiding these four seniors will be juniors Alex Muntges, Charlie Samson, and Joe Carlson, along with sophomore sensation Ben Murphy-Baum. Not far behind is a group of guys competing for spots on the competitive top seven. Among

this group is the summer mileage champion, Joe Marincel, who ran the rather large amount of 727 miles. Dedication? Definitely. Insanity? Partly. But that kind of leadership shines on a team of 90 runners. The team, which makes up nearly 10 percent of the student body, makes daily jaunts to Forest Park after school to run in the heat.

A tight-knit core of runners is needed to succeed in such a grueling sport. This team has already shown, through its endless off-season training and hard work, especially during the exhausting summer heat, the unity that binds teams together.

That type of togetherness is tough to find on other area cross country teams, and it is recognized when the Junior Bills go to large meets, such as the Hancock Invitational on Sept. 27 at Jefferson Barracks.

The JV unit, hoping to match last year's undefeated season, is also gaining many new faces in its scoring seven. Even with this daunting task ahead, most are optimistic about the season and about

having fun with their buddies. Learning how to enjoy the sport is just as important as any strategy given on race day. Linhares also thinks that "one of the great things about this team is just how much fun they have."

Be it romping around in the mud on a rainy day or trying to talk to each other on the long runs, the JV athletes bring a special sense of lightheartedness and community to the team that will undeniably help in the long run.

Rounding out the squad are the freshmen. Eager to join the tradition, 35 freshmen have decided to run. Peter Heagney, Andrew Vatterott, and Neil Salsich are a few of the many new harriers who look to continue dominating other area freshmen squads.

The 2003 cross country team starts its season tomorrow in Jefferson City at the First Capitol City Invitational. The freshmen kick off their cross country careers next Saturday at the McCluer North Invitational. For more information about the Harrierbills visit www.sluh.org/xc/xc.htm