

XC hopes summer conditioning will pay off

Henry Samson
Reporter

It's September again, and to many disheartened youngsters who can now only remember the lazy months of the summer past, the beginning of school means quizzes, tests, teachers, and winter. But for the few, the proud, the cross country runners, September also means the beginning of racing season.

While head coach Jim Linhares always brims with sheer excitement at this time of year, he has even more reason to be excited these days. If you see him in the hall smiling or walking with a little more spring in this step, he'll tell you it's because, "as a coach, sometimes I can just

feel it. We're lined up physically and spiritually to have a spectacular year."

If the cosmos haven't already lined up for the seniors, they will soon. This year's team, seniors especially, personify the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson: "Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm."

A man of few words, captain Charlie Samson, had his two cents to put in on the season: "There's no group in the state that will have as much fun as we have already had before the season even started."

However, the usual questions have to be answered. Who will be the top seven? How will the team fare against state powerhouses West Plains and Liberty? What does November hold for the Jr. Bills?

Some questions will remain unanswered until race day. But the four senior captains hope to quell the expectations right from the get go. Alex Muntges, who has struggled with injury in the past, is healthy and potentially the premiere runner in the area. Samson is returning from a successful track season with a 1:58 800-meter to his credit. Danny Meier, who finished 52nd in the state meet last year, is back in form, and Joe Carlson also returns with a wealth of varsity and state experience.

Luckily for them, five more upperclassmen are fighting for the other three varsity spots. Seniors John Kelly and Matt Dirnbeck, and juniors Ben

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Soccer starts with 5-0 defeat of St. Mary's

Andrew Schroeder
Reporter

Picking up right where they left off last season, the 2004 edition of the Martelbills kicked off the season Tuesday with a 5-0 win over St. Mary's.

St. Mary's never really had much of a chance, struggling all night to get the ball into the SLUH end of the field. The Jr. Bill defense lived up to its expectations by dominating the St. Mary's forwards and keeping the ball in St. Mary's zone almost the entire game. St. Mary's finally got their first and only shot off with only six minutes remaining in the second half; goalkeeper Wyatt Woods made the save with no trouble.

The U. High offense, on the other hand, was relentless. They pounded seven shots on goal in the first half before they finally put one away. With 6:20 left, sophomore Matt Leinauer poked SLUH's first goal of the year over the sliding St. Mary's goalie and into the top of the net. Going into the halftime break, the Jr. Bills were up only 1-0 after missing a couple of other scoring

opportunities.

Head coach Charlie Martel attributed the lack of goals in the first half to the inexperienced front line, which starts a

ward Tom Irvin scored the first of his two goals in his varsity debut; his second came just three minutes after the first, making it 3-0 in favor of the Jr. Bills.

Martel described Irvin as a great fit for the team because he is "big, active, and talented" at the forward position.

Senior Luke Schlafly and sophomore Rusty Brooks each added a goal to finish off the scoring onslaught. Cruising to their first win of the year, the Jr. Bills ended up dominating St. Mary's in the shot column, 15-1.

Tomorrow, the Futbolbills will be on the road again as they journey out west to face an improved Jefferson City team from last year's young squad. Also, come out and cheer on the defending state champs at the CBC Tournament next week, where the Soccerbills are matched up against MCC rivals Vianney on Tuesday and #1 nationally-ranked CBC on Thursday.

But tonight, the team travels to the east side to take on a tough Gibault team in a game that Martel believes "will be decided by one goal." Come support your Jr. Bills at Oerter Park at 7:00 p.m.



Junior forward Tom Irvin makes a run on the goal in Tuesday's game vs. St. Mary's. Irvin scored two goals in the 5-0 win.

senior and two juniors.

At half time, "We made a couple of adjustments, just to make things simpler," said Martel, a move that paid off early in the second half as the offense came alive. Five minutes into the period, junior for-

PHOTO BY ALEX SCOTTIO

H₂O polo tops Parkway Central

**Zack Berndsen and Jon Dombek
Reporters**

On Tuesday, the 2004 Jr. Bill water polo team had its season opener at Forest Park Community College against Parkway Central, emerging victorious, 13-6. Not expecting a hard game, the team still knew they had to play their best, seeing this game as a great opportunity to test their skills and come together as a team for the first time this year.

The Jr. Bills took an early lead with opening goals from seniors Tim Heafner and Eric Appelbaum.

The juniors made their presence on the team known by scoring 5 of the 13 goals of the game, with Ben Favier, Mark Abram, and Matt Ampleman scor-

ing two goals, one goal, and one goal, respectively. Senior Adam Trafton had a great comeback after being injured for a substantial chunk of the preseason practices. The Jr. Bills' momentum was broken sporadically by the Colts' six scattered goals, but the superb goaltending of senior Rick Bettger (saved 7 of the 10 shots he faced) ended their attempt at a comeback.

Even though the team looked good overall, coach Paul Baudendistel felt there were still areas of weakness in which the team needs to improve before they face some of their tougher competition later on in the season.

Junior Wes Going agreed, saying, "There are a few things we still need to work on before we play more challenging teams like MICDS."

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Murphy-Baum (who, at 40th place, was the Bills top finisher at state last year), Drew Kaiser, and Mike Jonagan can all run together at the front of a race and will provide a bulk of strength all season long.

An elite group of runners from the team showed their dedication by going to a week-long cross country camp in Madison, Wis., in July. With a week of intense training before the season started, the Jr. Bills were able to get right into the routine at practice.

"We ran 12 miles on the first day!" remarked an exhausted Samson.

Despite such talent and depth, Linhares cautioned, "Even though this is the most talent I've ever seen, talent and potential don't add up to much until the races."

Echoed Muntges, "We're definitely able to compete for the state title, but we'll have to keep working."

A team is much more than top members, though. The junior varsity team is once again loaded with uncontrollable potential. Senior Pat Mannhard, who is in the scoring bunch on the JV team, has been repeating sometimes to himself for the past two weeks, "We're gonna sweep, we're gonna sweep."

Sweeping in cross country is a perfect score of 15 points, where a single team places runners 1-5 in the race, a goal not out of reach for the JV team.

Now to the newbies. Twenty-four freshmen have joined the tradition and are hopeful that they will continue in the winning footsteps of their forebears. With the likes of Chris Murphy and Matt McBride, the freshman are already shaping into a formidable team.

Enough talk, though, it's time to race! The season officially opens this afternoon over the hallowed streets of St. Charles. The First Capitol Invitational at McNair park is the first stop on the Billikens' march to state. The varsity team runs at 4:30 p.m. with the JV team following at 5:30 p.m. today. If you can, come and cheer like the wild Bills you are, and feel free to checkout the team's web site, which turned three years old this past August, www.sluh.org/xc/

PN Nightbeat

Football beats No. 6 Parkway South, 20-17



PHOTO BY SVAN SCOTT

In what looks to be a good omen for the rest of the year, the Junior Bills beat the No. 6 ranked Parkway South Patriots last night, 20-17. Their win was manufactured by the offensive fireworks of junior running back Stephen Simmons (23, above) who had 245 yards on 24 carries. Senior linebacker Will Holleman led the defense with 8 tackles. The defense also came up with two turnovers, as junior free safety Eric Hunt had one interception and senior linebacker Phil Spakowski recovered a fumble. SLUH came back