

XC state champs place third in regional meet in S. Dakota

Stephen Kuehner
Reporter

Every year, the St. Louis U. High cross country team chooses a quote related to place on the back of their team T-shirts. With the team anticipating a phenomenal season and a very good chance at the state title, you might expect them to have chosen a quote about the glory of victory or exactly what makes a champion. The choice of the SLUH runners, then, would surprise you.

“Our greatest glory consists not in never falling, but rising every time we fall,” —Confucius” reads the back of their shirts. It provided encouragement to those on the team dealing with injuries and disappointing races, but, throughout the season, the team as a whole did not seem to need it, after all, they are the state champions.

This past weekend, however, the U. High team (reconstituted, due to MSHSAA regulations, as St. Louis XC) fell just short of their goal. In the Nike Team Nationals

Heartland Regional race, held in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, St. Louis XC (151 points) finished in third place, behind the Wayzata XC Club (100) from Shawnee, Kansas and Team Swanson (141) of Plymouth, Minnesota.

While finishing third in such a competitive region is nothing to be ashamed of, the U. High boys had to deal with the fact that only the top two in the regional race would advance to Nike Team Nationals in Portland, Oregon. The disappointment at the fact that only 10 points separated St. Louis XC and Team Swanson was only compounded by knowing SLUH was not running at full strength. Dan Warner and sophomore Caleb Ford, both consistently scoring on the team’s top five, were unable to race in this post-season meet due to previous commitments.

Head coach Jim Linhares, however refused to dwell on what they might have done. He instead focused on the outstanding performances by the guys who were there.

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Swimmers finish 11th at State

Tim Dale
Reporter

Last Friday and Saturday, the silky smooth members of the St. Louis U. High swim and dive team headed to the St. Peter’s Rec Plex for an exciting state meet.

Going into the meet, the team was looking to improve on last year’s 22nd place finish.

“We were all really pumped and ready for this meet. We had been tapering all week to stay rested, and then we were just ready to explode,” said senior Co-captain Mike Sizemore.

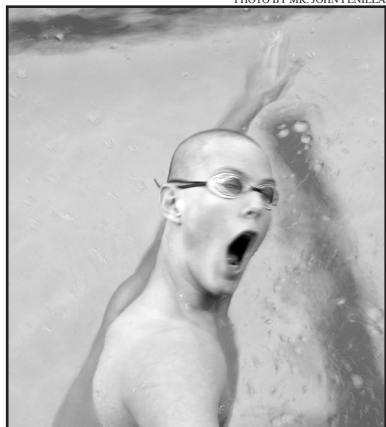
Friday was a crucial day for the swim team because in order to score

points Saturday, swimmers first needed to qualify in the top 16 during Friday preliminaries. After a healthy breakfast courtesy of

Mr. Wehner and Chris’s Pancake house, the Jr. Bills began their journey up to St. Peter’s. When they arrived at the Rec Plex, they were greeted by hundreds of other hopeful high school athletes ready to swim their fastest.

Friday’s meet started off well, with a

PHOTO BY MR. JOHN PENILLA



Junior Matt Hohenberger prepares to do a flip-turn in warm-ups for the State finals.

7th place finish overall in the 200 medley relay. The relay team consisted of Tim Dale and juniors Trent Going, Pat Nugent, and Will Derdeyn. The 7th place finish ensured SLUH of placing no lower than 8th and receiving much needed points and medals.

The next event was the 200 freestyle. Juniors John Heafner and John Savio had fine showings as “The Prez” (Heafner)

swam his fastest time of the year. Sophomore Dan Schmidt also sparked high expectations

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High-octane offense leads hockey to 2-0

Matt Beezley
Reporter

One could say, after watching the third periods of the Puckbills’ first two games of the season, that the Jr. Bills have finally found their offense. The No. 5 Icebills kicked off their season with a 4-1 win over Priory last Friday night and an 8-1 dismantling of Parkway West Monday.

The Jr. Bills were scoreless for the first two periods of their opening game, although they were not lacking in scoring chances. With fifteen minutes left in regulation, the Jr. Bill offense had already mustered over thirty shots on the yellow-padded Priory goaltender, yet still remained scoreless, giving SLUH its sixth straight scoreless period.

Late in the second period, assistant coach Ray Knapp made a key adjustment on the offensive front. Junior Joe Cella switched lines to play with junior Colin FitzGerald and senior Matt Beezley. Sophomore sniper Greg Place replaced him. The adjustment rejuvenated the offense, and minutes later Place scored the first St. Louis U. High goal of the regular season.

On a flawless breakout, junior Kevin Corby slid the puck to fellow junior Jack Berger, who raced down the left boards and past a diving Priory defenseman to dish the puck to Place, who let loose with a one-timer that found the lower right portion of the net. SLUH led 1-0.

The lead was short-lived, however. A few minutes later a puck found the gap between senior goaltender Alex Effinger’s pads, leveling the score.

In years past, adjustment to adversity has been a disease plaguing many SLUH hockey teams. Yet the experienced club handled the pressure brilliantly. Just moments after the equalizer, junior Joe Stratton found the net on a rebound, giving the Puckbills the lead and the eventual game-winner.

The Busiebills finished the game with another rebound goal from Berger and a one-timer from Beezley, giving them their

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CONFUSE-US

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“We really had a good team day... on an honest 5k,” he said. “Some 5k’s are short or long, but this was a very honest 5k.”

And the team did indeed race very well. Juniors John Clohisy (13th, 16:21) and Austin Cookson (15th, 16:25) led the team across the mogul hills and hay bales of the regional course. Team captain Chris Murphy (32nd, 16:42) finished third for St. Louis XC, serving as the bridge between SLUH’s lead runners and the rest of their pack. Sophomore Bill Gabler (45th, 16:57), junior David Kuciejczyk-Kernan (46th, 16:58), and sophomore Tony Minnick (48th, 16:59) came in one on top of the other, in typical 2007 SLUH fashion. Team captain Mike McCafferty dropped out of the race after an accident involving another runner caused him to fall and tumble down the moguls with about a mile left in the race.

“It was disappointing, but we still had a really good day,” said Cookson, outlining the general attitude of the team.

They do not deny that it is hard to miss going to nationals by only ten points, but they are not going to let that be the focus of their running careers. The guys on the SLUH XC team are moving on, training for the 2008 track season and talking about the races they plan to compete in this winter. Many plan to run over 500 miles over the next few months, as well as participating in the Frostbite races held in Forest Park.

So, while last weekend’s third place finish brings SLUH’s 2007 cross country season to a close, the team is not allowing the Wayzata XC Club and Team Sampson to defeat them. They are back on their feet, and they plan to bring an elite team to both the 2008 track and cross country seasons.

WorldQuest Nightbeat

Four seniors—Josh Dunn, Ken Dusold, Mike Mulligan, and Steve Schumacher, under the auspices of social studies teacher Paul Michaelson—came in second place last night in the High School WorldQuest International Knowledge Competition at Saint Louis University, falling to Westminster Christian Academy with 57 points. Still, the team secured some nifty trophies, and \$500 dollars to be split among the team members. Congratulations, seniors!

DELL’VE IN

(from 6)

the future of SLUH swimming as he swam fluidly. However, while all three swimmers exemplified SLUH’s depth, none were able to make it into the top 16.

The 50 freestyle once again proved to be SLUH’s strongest individual event as Sizemore and Dale, along with juniors Will Derdeyn and Mike O’Neill swam competitive races. Derdeyn, Sizemore, and Dale were able to achieve personal best times in the fickle race. Though Sizemore and O’Neill had blazing times, only Derdeyn and Dale made it back into the top 16. Their times of 22.35 seconds and 22.40 seconds, respectively, were enough to get Derdeyn and Dale seeded in the bottom 8 of the top 16.

Derdeyn was at it again in the 100 butterfly. His preliminary time of 53.70 seconds was able to get him into the top 16, and put him in a position to score points.

Following the butterfly, the 100 freestyle included three Jr. Bills. Dale, Sizemore, and Schmidt did their best to make the top 16, but failed after some freakishly fast heats.

The 500 freestyle showed promise for the future as well as the talent to be lost next year. Co-captain Kip Tandler had a season-best time of 5:02.35. Freshman Mike Haggarty also proved a force to be reckoned with as he posted a time just over 5:10. Though they had great swims, neither swimmer qualified for the top 16.

The 200 relay proved to be a strong point yet again for SLUH as they received 5th place over all in preliminaries. The team consisted of Derdeyn, O’Neill, Sizemore, and Dale.

The 100 backstroke was swum solely by Going for the Jr. Bills. He also swam a great race but was not able to crack the top 16.

The 100 breaststroke was dominated by juniors as Heafner, Nugent, and Matt Hohenberger gave it their best shots. Even though the future of SLUH breaststroke looks bright, no U. High swimmer made top 16 in this event.

Finally, the 400 relay team gave it their best shot. The team was made up of Zak Ancel, Nick Dwyer, Sizemore and Schmidt. The team barely missed returning back the next day as they placed 17th overall.

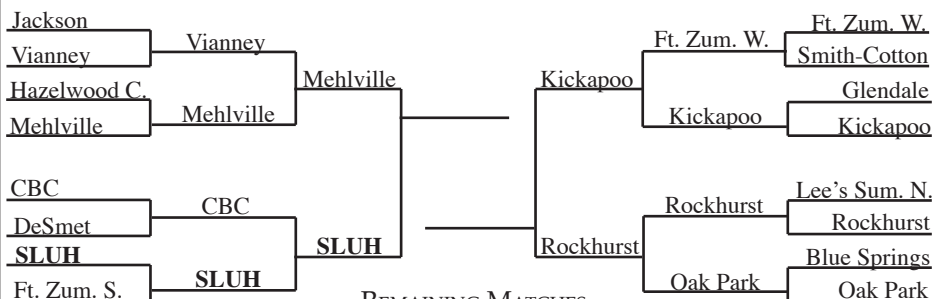
Saturday’s meet was where points were won. It started off as junior Mick Dell’Orco battled through 3 hours and more than 40 competitors in diving to receive 5th place in state. His score was an astounding 398.05.

The medley relay team came back and got 7th place with a time of 1:41.46. Derdeyn and Dale finished 15th and 16th respectively in the 50 freestyle, Derdeyn finished 12th in the 100 butterfly, and came in 5th place in the 200 relay with a time of 1:30.07.

“Mick did a great job today. The competition was up this year, and he did what he had to do to get his spot. He deserved this, and I’m happy for him,” commented head coach Fritz Long after the state meet Saturday. “Friday was huge for us. We got great times and were able to bring some people back Saturday. Overall, I am happy with the result of this meet and this season.”

SLUH received 11th place overall with 74 points. Rockhurst was the winner this year with 313 points.

STATE SOCCER TOURNNEY



REMAINING MATCHES
 SLUH v. Mehlville, 6 p.m. TONIGHT
 Rockhurst v. Kickapoo, 8 p.m. tonight
 3rd-place Match: 12 noon tomorrow
State Final: 2 p.m. tomorrow
 All games at A-B Center in Fenton.

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