

XC shines at First Capital Inv., wins by 95

Brandon Thornberry
Reporter

“Don’t be afraid to give up the good to go for the great,” legendary American runner Steve Prefontaine once said. This quote perfectly describes the St. Louis U. High varsity cross country team’s efforts at the First Capital Invitational on Friday.

“It was a historic day in SLUH cross country,” said head coach Jim Linhares.

The varsity and second varsity squads left school early on Friday to arrive at McNair Park with enough time to warm up and view the course’s conditions, especially areas rendered potentially treacherous by the recent rain. After analyzing the course, the Jr. Bills were ready to kick off their 2008 season.

The seven SLUH runners sped off at the sound of the gun to get in good position before the narrow first turn. At the one-mile mark, the seven varsity runners were all within eight seconds of one another, with the first runner coming through at 5:20.

“I told the guys beforehand to go out at a conservative pace and then continue to push toward the leader,” said Linhares.

As other teams in the race began to spread out from the fast pace, the Prefontainebills stuck in their packs and continued their push toward the finish. As the second mile passed, the seven varsity Jr. Bills were only separated by a margin of twenty seconds and continued to reel in runner after runner. The Werunbecauseitsfunbills continued to grab places all the way until the finish line.

In the end, the Jr. Bills finished with an unprecedented 22 points, including second, third, fourth, seventh, and 11th-place finishes with the sixth and seventh runners coming in 13th and 14th, respectively. The next closest team finished with 117 points, giving SLUH a 95-point margin of victory.

Not only did SLUH place all seven varsity runners in the top fifteen, but they also had eight runners (the top seven and junior Tim McLaughlin, who won the junior

varsity race) break the seventeen-minute barrier. Chris Murphy, ’08, was the only SLUH finisher to break seventeen minutes at last year’s First Capital Invitational.

Senior captain Cliff David, the third place finisher in the varsity division, had this to say about the race: “There were some moments in the race where we had four SLUH runners taking up the entire racing lane because our pack was so strong.”

The varsity victory at First Capital was not the only highlight of the day for SLUH. The JV team, led by juniors McLaughlin and Emmett Cookson and senior Ben Carron, swept the top five places. Each cleared the 17:30 mark. In fact, the junior varsity posted times on Friday that rivaled last year’s top seven runners who went on to win First Capital and eventually the 2007 Class 4 state title. “We have remarkable depth on this team,” said Linhares.

With an impressive victory under its
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Jr. Bills tame Colts, 28-20 Host No. 6 DeSmet tonight

Adam Cruz
Reporter

“Just win, baby!” said legendary Oakland Raiders owner Al Davis. Despite having to survive a few scary moments, the St. Louis U. High Jr. Bills followed Davis’ simple yet vital advice with a 28-20 away victory over the Parkway Central Colts Friday night. The No. 5 Bills are now 2-0 heading into their key conference opener with the No. 6 DeSmet Spartans.

Despite rain all week, the Jr. Bills lost no practice time, and the game took place at Central’s grass field as scheduled.

“It’s great to have a place like the Armory to go to,” said coach Gary Kornfeld. “We can do our regular practice without changing a thing no matter what the weather, and a lot of teams can’t do

that.”

The Jr. Bills wasted no time getting off to a hot start against the Colts. After Central kicker Cameron Berra drove the opening kickoff into the end zone, the Jr. Bill offense, led by senior quarterback John Swanston, took the field. The four-play drive was short-lived in the best possible way, ending on a 49-yard touchdown run by senior running back Ronnie Wingo.

After senior kicker Joe Shrick knocked home the extra point (he was 4 for 4 in the game and is 6 of 6 so far this year), Cdav-bills were up 7-0 with 10:30 left in the opening quarter.

Still fired up, the defense, led by captain senior linebacker Morgan “Viktor Krum” Cole, held the Colts to a three-and-out and
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Junior running back Griffin Lowry outraces two Colts.

From the field: all-access at football practice

Peter Mackowiak
Sports Editor

Editor’s Note: Coach Gary Kornfeld allowed the Prep News access to Wednesday afternoon’s football practice. Senior corner Malik Brown, sidelined with a partial ACL tear, showed us the ropes.

The first-team defense was scrimmaging the scout team offense, whose task is to simulate DeSmet’s offense. The scout team wore blue caps except for one red-capped wide receiver.

“That’s the other team’s primary target, their best player,” said senior cornerback Malik Brown. Marking the primary target, according to Brown, exposes tendencies about where a star player lines up in formation and increases the defense’s comfort level with the opposing offense. “Last year, Alex Brooks was (standout DeSmet receiver) Wes

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Kemp for three days.”

This year, defensive coordinator Mark Tychonievich has marked wide receiver and kick returner Ricky Dansill as DeSmet’s primary target after viewing film of DeSmet’s games against Mehlville and Hazelwood East.

“We just want to get our guys used to where he’s going to be on the field, and what (DeSmet) is trying to do,” said Tychonievich.

The team generally sticks to the same routine every week: Monday is for viewing film and learning new plays; Tuesday and Wednesday are full-pad practices; and Thursday is a light practice (no pads) for reviewing plays.

There are now fewer players scrimmaging, and the first team offense has entered. “That’s skelly, short for skeleton. It’s basically the offense without the linemen,” said Brown. In the skeleton offense drill, the first-team offense runs all passing plays against the scout team secondary.

“This week, we put in a few new passing plays for DeSmet,” said Brown.

I watch the two signal callers, who relay play calls to the offense via body gestures. One raises his right forearm, and another makes a flapping motion with his arms.

“There’s one ‘hot’ signal caller, the one who signals the real play,” said Brown. “The

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defense, but with a man-mark on Vianney forward.

A scuffed shot went well wide of the right post, meandering toward the med kit near the corner flag. Clark then paused the action again, this time to show how to make a proper near post run and finish. Unfortunately, his point-blank volley off a skipping cross caught Corby in the face, drawing laughter and sparse applause from the JV team, who were watching from the bleachers during a short break in their practice on the far side of the field.

Martel and Clark convened. Martel had noticed a lack of communication between the target men taking the crosses, and Clark addressed the team: “You’ve got to be better; I’ve got to be better, too,” he said. “Don’t take

others are decoys.”

Later, senior quarterback John Swanston lobs a deep ball, and senior running back Ronnie Wingo falls just short on a diving bid, his shoulder pads’ impact spraying small bits of rubber that hop like jumping beans around my shoes.

I make out coach Rob Chura shouting, “Hustle out there! Hustle out there!” over the noise of a passing helicopter. “You’ll hear Coach Chura’s voice 90 percent of the time,” said Brown. “He does the scout team and first team offenses, the scout team defense, and (coaches) the kicker and punter.”

We decide to visit Coach Tychonievich and the offensive linemen, who had set up camp in the scoreboard corner of the end zone. “Coach T takes them all the way in the corner, like a resort,” said Brown. It doesn’t look too relaxing, though—three linemen were doing what looked like a rolling version of leapfrog in the trenches.

On our way, we watch senior kicker Joe Shrick boot a punt from the other 45. It drops at the 5. “‘Shricker’ is kicking the whole practice,” said Brown. “He just finds an empty space and does kickoffs and punts, and Thursdays he kicks field goals.”

I ask Brown if he prefers the newly neon-painted goal posts to the old yellow ones. “Yeah, it goes better with the turf,” he said. “And I don’t like yellow. It makes me

it personally. It’s just part of being a mature soccer player. Mr. Martel and I played 300 years ago, and it was the same way.”

“He has a way of putting things so that they make sense to our guys,” said Martel about Clark.

Apparently, another part of being a soccer player is putting one’s head in constant danger. Innocent senior forward Kyle Grelle became the second casualty of practice when a blistering shot from senior midfielder Nick Maglasang sizzled past the far post and thwacked him in the head. Grelle went down and stayed down, momentarily freezing the drill’s clockwork, but got up seconds later.

“Well, I wouldn’t have had to call an ambulance,” joked Clark, as an ambulance siren blared from Hampton Ave.

think of slowing down.”

The first team offensive linemen are practicing blocking against the scout team defensive line and linebackers, who blitz differently every play. Coach Tychonievich calls the offense’s plays: “Swing green,” then “Cig 27.” Brown says the team uses color coding and other key phrases to determine the play called and whether the play runs left or right.

The linemen break their circle and jog to the other end of the field to join the offense, and we follow. I notice sunflower seeds scattered in one patch of turf. “Coach Kornfeld enjoys his sunflower seeds,” said Brown. “There’s a good chance those are his.”

We watch the offense start running through plays. “Right now, the two’s are in,” said Brown, referring to the second team offense. Junior quarterback Mike Riddering throws a deep ball just out of reach of senior Darrin Young. “If we mess up, we will go over it again,” said Brown. They do go over it again, and this time the pass is complete.

Brown and I walk onto the field and join players lined up on the 50, behind the offense’s line of scrimmage at the 35. After a few plays, Shrick runs over to me. “Hey, no offense, but coach says you have to leave.”

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belt, the SLUH cross-country team turns its focus on the soon-approaching Forest Park Invitational. “I am really excited about (tomorrow),” said Linhares. “We get to see what the guys can do when we set them loose.”

The Forest Park Invitational hosts top teams from all across Missouri and the Midwest. Races take place at the Central Fields in Forest Park and begin at 8:00 a.m. SLUH JV races at 8:45 a.m., varsity starts at 11:00 a.m., and the freshman squad kicks off their season at 12:40 p.m.

The SLUH Chinese Foreign Exchange Program needs you to host a family! Any student can participate. See Dr. Tai for details in the Foreign Language Office or the Chinese Room (M221).