

# 6 Cross country wins sectionals, anticipates state showdown with Lee's Summit West tomorrow

**Brandon Thornberry**  
Reporter

After dominating districts and winning sectionals last Saturday by 23 points, the St. Louis U. High cross country team anticipates capturing its second consecutive state title tomorrow morning at Forest Park.

SLUH is currently ranked 19th in the nation. Recently, another Missouri team has cracked the U.S. top 25: Lee's Summit West, who placed fourth at the 2007 4A State Final and has returned an extremely strong squad.

"Basically, it is a two team race," said Linhares. "If one team has a good day and another a moderate day, the team with the good day will win. If both have bad days, the team with the worse day will take second."

SLUH athletes have kept a close eye on Lee's Summit West since the conference meet and believe a state victory is very possible. With senior stars John Clohisy and Austin Cookson and junior phenom Caleb Ford leading an extremely talented team, SLUH races tomorrow morning for a second 4A state title.

The team claimed sectionals last Saturday at Central Fields in Forest Park and took advantage of its depth to further its state title aspirations.

"We were given an opportunity that very few teams are given," said head coach Jim Linhares.

The opportunity Linhares referred to was to rest five of the team's top seven runners

for state. Only senior Cliff David and junior Emmett Cookson from the top seven raced in the sectional final, while the other five spots were filled by senior Ben Carron and juniors Tim McLaughlin, Tony Minnick, David Fleming, and Tyler Jennings.

"Another reason we raced these five individuals in the sectional final, besides letting the top seven rest, was to decide who the two racing alternates for our state team would be," said Linhares.

With the chance to race against top state runners and prove themselves as top varsity caliber runners, the five members of the second seven, along with Cookson and David, ran to dominate the competition.

The top pack of runners, composed of Chaminade's Matt Estlund and Francis Howell North's Nick Happe, came through the first mile at a blazing 4:46. David and Cookson crossed the marker closely behind at 4:58 and 5:00, respectively. SLUH's remaining five runners came through in a pack at 5:07.

The field began to slow after the quick first mile and SLUH took complete advantage, as they continued to gain places and move into the top 25 runners.

Happe and Estlund led the field and fought hard through the last mile; Happe

second and third places, respectively.

SLUH's 200 medley relay, consisting of junior Luke Chellis and sophomores Mitch Kramer, Bill Luhmann, and Tim Rackers, broke the JV MCC meet record with a 1:54.65.

The 400 free relay team, made up of junior Chad Carson and Pat Archer and sophomores Nick Piening and Joe Kabance, also broke a meet record with a 3:45.62.

Including those relays, the Jr. Bills finished first in six of the races.

- Kevin Casey

captured the sectional win with an incredible time of 15:28, nearly setting a course record.

SLUH's first runner on the day was Cookson at 16:32, good

for sixth place, followed by McLaughlin (16:44, ninth place). Placing third for SLUH and 12th overall was Carron at 16:50, then David (16:51, 13th), Minnick (17:03, 16th), and Fleming (17:14, 22nd).

Junior Tyler Jennings hung with the pack through the first mile but suffered a fall into the second mile and dropped out with an injured foot.

With six runners in the top 25, SLUH captured the sectional victory by 23 points over a strong Ft. Zumwalt South team. Out of the five second seven SLUH runners who competed in the race,

four posted times good enough to qualify for tomorrow's state meet.

"Runners like Ben Carron really got to prove themselves today as some of the top runners in the state," said Linhares. "Ben and Tim (McLaughlin) also earned themselves positions as alternates on our state racing squad."

The state meet will be held tomorrow at 10:45 am.



Junior Emmett Cookson (right) sports the rarest of XC facial expressions. Senior Cliff David (back) follows.

## Chess tourney Monday!

The Chess Club will hold its second annual chess tournament after school on Monday, Nov. 10. The tournament is open to all students, faculty, and staff. No experience or expertise is required. The entry fee is \$2.00, with prizes going to the top three players. Registration and play will begin at 3:15 p.m. in the Ignatian Conference Room, at the western end of the Art Wing (on the second floor of the Jesuit Wing). Any questions? Contact Mr. Kovarik at kovarik@sluh.org or junior Peter Harris at chessman2010@hotmail.com.

## Swimming Update

Last night, the varsity swimming and diving MCCs commenced, also at Chaminade. Jr. Bill divers took first, third, fifth, and tenth places. SLUH was the only school to qualify in the top 12 of each race. These qualifiers, who swam 32 separate swims, will all compete in the finals tomorrow. The meet begins at 4 p.m. at Chaminade.

Chaminade once again hosted the JV swimming MCCs last Saturday. SLUH won, and DeSmet and Chaminade followed at