

SPORTS

▼ CROSS COUNTRY

SLUH, Big River Running pull off Cross Country Fest

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Cross country isn't a celebrated sport here in America. Few, if any, kids grow up dreaming about turning in the masterful three miles of a cross country race.

Well, some folks here in town are trying to change that. St. Louis University High and Big River Running put on the St. Louis Cross Country Festival in Forest Park on Saturday and all indications are it went swimmingly.

"It was great," Marquette cross country coach Mike Ebert said. "We really enjoyed it. They

did a great job with it."

The event included a freshman, junior varsity and varsity race for boys and girls. There was even a fun run for parents and friends of the high school runners.

There were all kinds of extras you don't normally find at an event. The course was set up in loops that were, for the most part, in plain view of the fans. They had an announcer reading the results as the participants crossed the finish line.

"As coaches, they did a lot of little things to make it easier (for us)," Ebert said. "They had numbers for the kids and the course

was well marked. You could tell whoever put it together knew something about racing."

SLUH coach Jim Linhares and an army of volunteers and assistants put the event together. It's the first big invitational SLUH has hosted. Linhares said the plan was to make a splash and do the event big.

"We went for a lot of extras," he said. "It was a stressful week. We had lots of people doing lots of different things."

Linhares hopes the event becomes an annual occurrence. The festival hosted almost 1,100 runners from 46 programs from around the area.

"It was nice to have a big invi-

tational at Forest Park," Ebert said.

Marquette took second in the girls race with 108 points, as Hilary Orf won the event in a time of 19 minutes and seven seconds. Maddie Harrigan was 10th in a time of 20:39 and Laura Gosen was 13th in 20:47. Paige Hicks was 18th.

Kirkwood finished fourth with a team score of 151. Ashley Lane was 12th for the Pioneers and Caitlin Schuessler was 21st.

Ladue was eighth at 229 points. Kelly Stromsdorfer finished 24th for the Rams, while Becca Bayham was 26th.

St. Joseph's was 10th, as Gena Bleyer was 23rd and Ashley

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Jim Linhares
SLUH cross country coach

Greenwell was 25th.

Nerinx Hall was 13th with Katie O'Brien taking 14th place.

Michelle Gronemeyer was 22nd for Parkway North.

On the boys side, SLUH was

third with 102 points. Potosi was first with 30 points and four runners finishing in the top 10 and fifth runner taking 12th.

Matt Lawder was SLUH top runner with a fifth place finish in 15:35. John Clohisey was 18th and Mike McCafferty was 22nd.

Marquette's boys team took fifth with 190 points. Came Aly was 15th and Jason Lump was 19th.

DeSmet was sixth with points. The Spartans top finisher was Tom Albes in 16:03.

Ladue was 13th and Parkway North was 15th.

Christian Brothers College High's Phil Bascio was 11th.