

XC prepares for another State run

BY GREG FISTER
REPORTER

The St. Louis U. High cross country team, defending State champions, gears up for the start of the competitive season after many weeks of practices in 90-plus degree weather and more than a bit of Wehnerade. With new head coach Joe Porter at the helm for the first time and three seniors returning from the victorious State squad, the team believes that it has a shot at snagging another State title in 2010.

Last November the team, under the direction of veteran head coach Jim Linhares, won a close but well-deserved victory at the State meet. Linhares ended his career as head coach on a high note, before passing on his impressive mantle to assistant coach Porter. Porter is calling upon the team's age-old tradition of excellence and impressive recent hard work to pull together a team that has a good chance for victory at State.

"There's a lot of time between now and State, and a lot of things could happen," said Porter. He said that SLUH is "definitely one of the top four teams in the State on paper," but added that "paper does not mean much."

Coming along to help SLUH XC on its uphill journey are some new coaches who are joining the expanding staff. Coach Chris Scott, formerly a track & field coach at CBC and track coach for SLUH last spring, adds his lighthearted enthusiasm and fatherly wisdom to the team this season. Theology teacher Diego Navarro, who joined

the SLUH faculty last year, also lends his experience to the team as a part-time coach. Along side Porter, Scott, and Navarro, are returning coaches Brian Gilmore and Tom Flanagan.

SLUH's top competitor this year is Lee Summit North, which finished second at State and returns many of its state runners. Columbia's Rock Bridge and Liberty are also looking to give SLUH some trouble. Parkway West and Lindbergh, though they didn't place very highly at State, are returning almost all of their top sevens as well.

But more important is the way SLUH's team is shaping up.

Some of SLUH's runners that any XC fan should look out for this season are definitely the three returning State champs: seniors Joe Meier, Alan Raterman, and Tim Rackers. Senior Dan Raterman also should contribute high finishes this year. Rackers is currently the fastest runner on the team, having trained with and almost beaten cross country legend Caleb Ford. Rackers says being a senior is a little different because he can no longer simply follow Ford's pace for races.

"I'm figuring out my own pace," said an enthusiastic Rackers while stretching after practice. Well, it seems to be working out just fine—Rackers is making incredible progress so far, and he will race today with the rest of the varsity and JV squads at the First Capitol Invitational at 4:00 p.m. in St. Charles.

When asked about State, Rackers said he



PHOTO BY MR. MATT SCIUTO
From left: Sophomores Matt Nicholson, Alex Groesch, Joe Archer, and Brian Curran train for the XC season.

"definitely (has) a place in the top 10," and maybe even a shot at winning. When asked what drives him to run, Rackers replied with a laugh, "fear of Adam Boehm."

Porter also mentioned seniors Nathan Rubbelke and Michael McLaughlin as rising varsity stars on the SLUH cross country scene.

How the rest of the season plays out begins with what takes place today at the First Capitol Invitational. Though the team lost many great runners to graduation, the 2010 SLUH cross country team is already showing many signs of championship potential for the second time in as many years.

As Porter said, "A lot could happen between now and November, but we still can make it out on top."

Swimming trains under new coach

BY CULLIN TRIPP
REPORTER

After finishing second in the Metro Catholic Conference (MCC) and 19th in the State meet last year, the St. Louis U. High Swimbills hope to bounce back this year with strong swimmers, experience, and high expectations. The Junior Bills hope to improve last year's record of 8-4.

"We're going to have a great year," said senior Kevin Kleinschmidt after practice on Tuesday. "We have lot of new strong swimmers, and I think this year's team has a lot of potential."

Kleinschmidt is one of four senior captains for the Swimbills this season, along with John Lewis, Michael Hagerty, and Jake Chisholm.

This year SLUH has an entirely new coaching staff, with a new coach at almost every coaching position except diving. Head

coach Rachel Graczak will be coaching the Jr. Bills, along with Spanish teacher Kevin Moore.

Graczak is the former head coach of Cor Jesu and current summer coach of Cool Dell Swim Club. She has high expectations for the team in her first year.

"I really want the guys to have team unity, reach their personal bests, and try new strokes," she said.

When asked how she felt about being a new coach, Graczak laughed and said, "I love it! I love getting back into high school coaching and I enjoy working with the boys. I have had some challenges in creating workouts for the boys because coaching an all-boy swim team is different than coaching an all-girl swim team, but I think the change has been good."

The strong swim team hopes to reach the goals its coach has set for them.

Senior Steve Hoerr is especially excited

about the upcoming season.

"I'm working hard this year because my goal is to get to State in the 100-yard breast stroke. They've lowered the qualifying time since last year so it's going to be a challenge to make the cut this year, but I'm ready for it and I hope to make State," he said. "I'm having a lot of fun working hard and improving my times."

Sophomore Nick Koors also has high expectations for the season. "This is my first year on varsity so it's been a big adjustment for me, but I think it gives me a better chance to make State, particularly in the 50-yard freestyle," said Koors.

Overall, the outlook is bright for the varsity swimmers.

"I think that the new swimmers, combined with the veterans, will give us a great season, and we expect to do well," said Hoerr.

Underclassman sports updates

Friday, August 27

C Football (0-1)

MICDS 45, SLUH 29

Key player: freshman quarterback Raymond Wingo, 1 passing TD

The Jr. Bills came back at the end of the first half to come within three. In the second half, MICDS continued to score on the SLUH defense, and SLUH ended up losing its first game of the season.

—Robert Braddock

JV Soccer (1-0)

SLUH 4, Gibault 0

Key Player: sophomore forward Joey Coulson, 1 goal, 4 shots on goal

Coulson scored the second goal of the game right before halftime to give the Jr. Bills a push into the second half. With other goals by Logan Welge, Luke Gilsinger, and Will Bruns, the Jr. Bills win their opener.

—Jacob Born

Monday, August 30

JV Football (0-1)

Parkway North 18, SLUH 14

Key player: sophomore linebacker Alex Mackin, 68-yard fumble recovery, TD

North dominated with its size on both sides of the ball for most of the game, holding an 18-0 lead at the end of three quarters. SLUH wound up with minus-16 yards of total offense on 29 plays in the first half. Touchdowns from sophomore receiver Ryan Kennedy and Mackin cut it to 18-14 North with under three minutes to play. But with the ball at the North 2 and under a minute left, SLUH ran the ball up the middle and fumbled.

—Drew Brunts

Wednesday, September 1

C Football (0-2)

Webster Groves 25, SLUH 19

Key Player: freshman wide receiver Joshua Kiehl, 2 receiving TDs

The Jr. Bills' defense got off to a great start on Thursday, shutting down the Webster offense. But late in the second half, Webster scored a touchdown on fourth down to tie the game, 19-19. SLUH quickly drove down the field but threw an interception to end the drive. Webster moved the ball downfield and scored the winning touchdown with a few seconds left.

—Robert Braddock

Becker to teach English

BY MITCH MACKOWIAK
REPORTER

For the 2010-2011 school year, St. Louis U. High welcomes Robert Becker to the English department. Becker was born and raised in St. Louis, and attended De Smet High School.

"The fact that they are both Jesuit schools, they are similar in that regard," said Becker. Becker also commented that the academic rigors of the schools are similar. "It is very familiar hearing about the homework loads," he said.



PHOTO BY TED WIGHT
Robert Becker

Becker then moved on to Truman State University in Kirksville, Mo., where he earned his Bachelor's degree in English and Master's Degree in Education. Before graduating from Truman, Becker worked at Lindbergh as a student teacher.

"As with all teaching, teaching at Lindbergh gave me experience in the classroom, and basically got me ready for all of the things I'm doing this year teaching English," said Becker.

After graduating from Truman, Becker

was looking to use his teaching ability in a positive way, and he thought joining the Alum Service Corps (ASC) program would be a good opportunity to do so. He didn't hesitate accepting a spot at SLUH, knowing it was a reputable school.

Currently, Becker is teaching two sections of junior English. While at SLUH, Becker works closely with fellow English teacher Jim Raterman.

"I enjoy it. Mr. Raterman is brilliant," said Becker. "He helps me because the SLUH curriculum is new to me. He shows me what junior English teachers have been doing for awhile. He also lets me experiment and try different teaching styles."

"I've really enjoyed working with him on the timing and sequencing of the days and the classes," said Raterman. "He pays close attention to details and he prepares really well for classes."

Though Becker isn't involved in any clubs or extra-curriculars yet, he is open to joining those that interest him, and would also like to help on student retreats. Becker is looking forward to teaching and working with the faculty and students here at SLUH.

O'Brien comes to SLUH from St. Joe's

BY JOHN WEBB AND JUSTIN SINAY
REPORTERS

Sean O'Brien has joined the English department at St. Louis U. High, where he is teaching three sections of sophomore English and one senior elective, the Alienated Hero.

O'Brien graduated from SLUH in 1998 and then went on to receive undergraduate and graduate degrees from Truman State University.

After teaching composition courses at Jefferson Community College, O'Brien taught at St. Joseph's Academy for five years before arriving at SLUH. He has also coached wrestling since college, having volunteered for several years. He became the C-team coach at SLUH a year after he began teaching at St. Joe's and has coached at the JV level for the last two years.

O'Brien was a counselor at Upward Bound, SLUH's summer program for rising eighth graders for six years and then as a teacher for five. At Upward Bound, he

worked with members of the English department and now looks forward to working with them full-time.

"It is interesting that every English teacher that I had at SLUH is still here," said O'Brien, adding that it is "a challenge to be in this larger tradition." O'Brien also said that he is looking forward to the year and that one of his goals for this year is "getting the feel of the school."

In addition to teaching English, O'Brien will continue coaching the JV wrestling squad, but will also fill in coaching wrestling wherever needed.

O'Brien said that he benefits from the move because he can now communicate with students he has taught at Upward Bound and wrestlers at SLUH, and will no longer have to make long drives to wrestling practices and meets.

"It's a combination of convenience and being more plugged in," he said.

"He is a very friendly and approachable teacher," said sophomore Joe Walsh.

"He's an experienced teacher, and I'm impressed that he still wants to learn more," said English teacher Rich Moran.



PHOTO BY TED WIGHT
Sean O'Brien