

XC wins at MCC meet, takes second at out-of-town Borgia Invitational

photo | Leo Heinz



From left to right: senior Brendan Keuss, junior Ryan Blechle, and sophomore Nolen Doorack run at a recent cross country meet.

BY MICHAEL SIT
REPORTER

The XC Bills left the conference in the dust on Thursday, Oct. 10, at Forest Park's Central Fields at the Metro Catholic Conference (MCC) meet sweeping, the conference by winning all three divi-

sions: varsity, junior varsity, and freshman.

Six of the top eight finishers in the varsity race were SLUH athletes. With a time of 16:39, junior Shayn Jackson took second place overall, tailing the MCC varsity champion from DeSmet,

senior Austin Del Rosso.

Although DeSmet's top runner was leading the race, SLUH's varsity team stayed together throughout the race. Junior Jack Sullivan (third), sophomore Joe Butler (fifth), senior captain Tom Rubio (sixth), junior Thomas

Hogan (seventh), senior captain John Esswein (eighth), and junior Garrett Fox (13th) also competed for SLUH in the varsity race. The average time of the SLUH varsity squad rounded out to be 16:50; DeSmet's was 17:13.

"Our main competition for MCCs was Austin Del Rosso from DeSmet," said top-seven varsity runner Sullivan. "Our plan was to work on running as a pack, so we were going to try to run the first two miles as a group of seven SLUH guys. The plan was to then just run the last mile as fast as possible. I felt like we followed the race plan pretty well, but it was just different running with that strategy because normally the first mile of a race is really fast, but this time we were focused more on consistency for the first two miles."

With victories on all three levels, Porter kept his promise, and he cancelled practice the following day. Another added bonus was the Jamba Juice waiting for the runners at SLUH's hospitality table after the race.

At the end of the day, assistant coach Chris Scott said, "We left it all on the course. And we're ready to win some more."

It was a chilly morning last Saturday, Oct. 19, when the team trekked to Washington, Mo. for

the Borgia Cross Country Invitational. The meet's terrain challenged the team's skills at striding uphill since the course was located on a golf course. The top seven varsity runners were held back for districts, and the second seven ran in the varsity race. The rest of the team competed in the junior varsity race and the freshman race.

The varsity team had a number of issues throughout the race. Senior Peter Charles faced hip stresses due to the drawn-out hills and consequently dropped out of the race. Senior captain Michael Swan (60th) had been injured and not raced for the past three weeks. Swan experienced more pain in the varsity race at Borgia due to a lack of recovery time.

Success sprouted from juniors Jack Gallagher (twelfth) and Garrett Fox (thirteenth), freshman Xavier Ludwig (16th), senior captain Jerry Amsler (19th), and junior Jacob Marty (25th).

Overall, the second-string varsity squad managed to scrape a solid second place trailing a strong team from Potosi High School.

The XC Bills have the Clay-ton meet on Oct. 25 at Shaw Park where only seniors race. The seniors are looking to paint the first place podium in blue.

With last minute field goals from Cox, football wins two in a row

MAR LONSWAY
REPORTER

Despite their injury-ridden squad and losses to every Metro Catholic Conference rival, the SLUH varsity football team rebounded the past two Fridays, picking up two consecutive wins on the road.

Two weeks ago, the Football-Bills traveled to the home of the Lancers of Lafayette High School. The odds were not on SLUH's side prior to the game. The Lancers stood at 5-1 and SLUH had dropped four consecutive games after winning against Parkway North in the first game of the season.

Lafayette also had a bustling student section for their homecoming game, taking up the majority of bleachers. SLUH's sidelines were spotted with the few parents who made the hike westward and an underwhelming SLUH student section, which

was composed of a group of five juniors.

"When they scored, it was a lot more exciting for them," said junior offensive lineman Max Kavy. "Our parents are always really good fans though. They weren't even close to the Lafayette fans, but they're always good and bring support."

When the Lancers came to SLUH last year, Lafayette stormed the Jr. Bills with a 50-20 win. One year later, SLUH, missing star running backs Raymond Wingo and Andre Colvin, thwarted the Lancers 17-14, marking a turning point in the 2013 football season.

SLUH and Lafayette exchanged touchdowns up until the fourth quarter. Putting SLUH on the scoreboard in the third, running back Michael Hall ran for an 81-yard touchdown, the longest scoring play of the evening.

Due to Colvin's and Wingo's injuries, Hall has taken a much

bigger role as an every down back. He rushed for 184 yards against the Lancers on just 18 carries for a monstrous 10.2 yards per attempt.

"I think we've found different ways of moving the ball," said offensive coordinator Rob Chura. "We've asked Michael Hall to step up and be that guy that can carry the offense and he responded. He's been unbelievable with the way we've been able to run the ball downfield with him."

Hall's dominant play continued into the following week when he scored two rushing touchdowns against Mehville High School in SLUH's 30-28 victory. Hall's success is sure to compliment the return of Wingo and Colvin, who look to return in the coming weeks.

"We have more than one threat," said Hall. "We have Raymond who can run outside, and Andre and I who are power backs."

Hall isn't the only player who's been asked to step up. Although SLUH's running game has proven prosperous, SLUH's passing game, led by senior quarterback Sam Sykora, has also been vital. In the Lafayette and Mehville games, SLUH scored six touchdowns total—three of which have been thrown by Sykora, showing that the aerial attack is just as crucial as the rush.

SLUH's squad has now balanced itself with dynamic aspects on both sides of the ball—the overhauled offense and the defense, which has stayed consistently aggressive throughout the season. With the coming returns of Wingo and Colvin, SLUH's offense looks to take on another dimension of speed and endurance.

Jake Cox, junior placekicker on special teams, has scored the two game-winning field goals in the last two meetings. On SLUH's final drive against the Lancers,

Cox put the ball through the uprights for a 22-yard score.

At Mehville, the Jr. Bills were down 28-27 with seconds left in the fourth quarter. With the last play of the game, Cox once again kicked the game-winning field goal, this one from 30 yards, which put SLUH on top 30-27.

"The win, most importantly, was a team win," said Cox. "I only get out there for one kick. I really got to hand it to the guys who busted their butts for a full four quarters. We've grown so much as a team, and I think it's really shown on the field with our wins."

SLUH is building momentum that they hope will carry them through Friday's matchup against Oakville. Although the status of Colvin and Wingo is still questionable, the team's revamped style of game play is still one to reckon with.

The next game will take place on SLUH's turf tonight at 7 p.m., against the 5-3 Oakville Tigers.

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