

## XC takes Parkway Invitational, looks to claim MCC title today

BY MICHAEL SIT  
REPORTER

St. Louis U. High's XC bills summited to victory last Saturday, Oct. 5, at the Parkway West Invitational.

The varsity squad dealt with three tough teams in its race: Lafayette, Rock Bridge, and O'Fallon Township.

"There were a lot of turns on this course," said junior Matt Thomas. "Coach Porter advised us to roll the hills and lengthen our strides, especially on the uphill."

One of the main strategies the team tried to employ was accelerating on the turns.

"Coach told us to keep ahead of Lafayette's two and three guy, but we let them get away," Hogan said. "We did great with staying as a tight pack. Our first guy and our fifth guy were only 26 seconds apart."

Overall, the varsity squad captured fourth place, behind Rock Bridge, O'Fallon Township, and Lafayette.

Juniors Matthew Hennessey (11th) and Shayn Jackson (17th) earned medals, and senior captain Tom Rubio kicked in the home stretch to earn a 19th place medal.

Other medal recipients from SLUH were sophomore Joe Butler (24th), senior captain John Eswein (26th), and junior Thomas Hogan (30th).

The seventh finisher for

SLUH, Jack Sullivan, suffered stomach issues and slowed down, but he still completed the race in under 19 minutes.

As usual, the junior varsity runners raced themselves to another first place overall finish.

"Our only real competition was Lafayette, and we had a fantastic race despite the rain," said junior Jacob Marty.

Out of the ten SLUH JV victors, eight of them received medals. The medal recipients were junior Garrett Fox (fourth), freshman Xavier Ludwig (sixth), junior Jacob Marty (seventh), senior Peter Charles (eighth), senior captain Jerry Amsler (eleventh), junior Jack Gallagher (12th), sophomore Cade Dernlan (24th), and senior Brendan Keuss (25th).

The sophomore squad fought its way to third place overall last Saturday. Notable performances came from Nolen Doorack (13th), Peter Genovese (18th), and Ethan McIntyre (30th).

Like the sophomores, the freshman squad also yanked a third place title at the meet. The freshmen were led by Danny Meissner (12th), Thomas Leeker (19th), and William Kelly (24th), who all received medals for their effort.

Finally, the rest of the team pushed its way to the top in the open race. A torrential downpour prefaced the open race, and in turn the SLUH runners gained

strength.

Top finishers from SLUH in the open race included senior Michael Sit and junior Matt Fleming, who both finished in the top five. Had the open race been scored, SLUH would have swept the race considering 12 out of the top 25 finishers were from SLUH.

The other ten finishers were junior Peter Volmert (sixth), senior Peter Mungenast (seventh), senior Anthony Vienhage (eighth), junior Ryan Blechle (ninth), junior Thomas Blackwell (tenth), senior Greg Murphy (13th), junior Nicholas Perryman (14th), senior captain Alex Peraud (17th), senior Luke Carron (20th), and senior Patrick Oster (22nd).

A memorable speech prior to the open race's starting gunshot came from senior Anthony Vienhage.

"There once was a soccer player at SLUH, but then he was cut. And that soccer player found something new, something better. It was XC," preached Vienhage as SLUH's open racers huddled around taking a knee.

The combination of the spirited torrential downpour and Vienhage's inspiring sermon lit the fires in SLUH's open racer's hearts.

With the success from the Parkway West Invitational on the back burner, the XCBills are ready to dominate the MCCs tomorrow in Forest Park.

photo | Bill Lepak



From left to right: juniors Jack Sullivan, Matt Hennessey, and Shayn Jackson run at the Parkway West Invitational.

### XC Quote of the Week

"The real purpose of running isn't to win a race; it's to test the limits of the human heart." - Bill Bowermand

## Conversation of the Week Bates, Lally discuss upcoming Rifle season

Nick Gillan: What new things have you been doing this year to promote publicity?

Thomas Lally: We have been working on a new video that will hopefully attract new members. We put more work into our table at the activities fair and attracted many more people in comparison to last year.

Matt Bates: We also redesigned the team and club logos as a part of our plan to build the team's brand. We hope to change the school's perception of the team and club as isolated. We want to remind the students that we are still here.

NG: How many students signed up at the activities fair?

TL: We had around 92 sign up at the table at the activities fair. We expect a little less than 60 to show up to the range the first day and around 15 to actually be consistent members of the club that get close to earning their letter.

MB: Six new members, at the most, will make the team.

NG: Did you have experience before coming to SLUH?

MB: I had absolutely no experience before SLUH. Didn't even know the back half of the sight was a sight. Just thought it was blocking my way.

TL: I had prior shooting experience but it was nothing like being on a rifle team. I had been hunting, but that doesn't require nearly as much accuracy.

NG: How did the season finish last year?

TL: Nationals went really well. One of our top seniors last year, Matt Rudolf, placed fifth overall the first day of the three-day competition with a 590 overall. The team did fairly well. We were one of 12 teams to go the national competition, and overall we were around the middle of that group each day, and having two of our seniors out for the meet, it was quite impressive that we could pull that off.

MB: We had the bottom seat in nationals from the state Junior Olympic Qualifiers and ended up finishing 23rd, 27th, and 24th out of 34 teams on each day respectively. It was so bad we didn't even think we'd make it for the first time after making it for 11 straight years. I'd also be bragging about my counterpart here, Lally. He shot a 565/600 every day of the tournament. That is a ridiculously high score for a sophomore. My mentor Ian Stroube, Illinois State Champ '12, was shooting that for most of his junior year.

NG: How do you think the

season will go without any seniors?

MB: There have been previous seasons without any seniors that have gone reasonably well. We just need to be able to step up in order to compete with the better shooters.

TL: We also need to step it up as leaders. Before this year, we could always lean on the seniors for guidance, but this year, we, along with the other varsity shooters, will be the ones helping the freshman, picking up the ones that get the farthest as mentees.

NG: Who is your biggest rival?

MB: Montgomery Bell Academy, I just heard one of their seniors posted a 589/600 as a new range high score.

TL: Don't forget about Quincy. They do have a very strong team.

MB: But honestly, if I wanted to be corny, it is ourselves, because rifle is a sport where you have to overcome your own personal limitations to improve and to win.

NG: How are inter-team relationships?

MB: There is really no actual tension regarding teams, no rivalries or anything like that. We're all really friendly with each other.



The SLUH Rifle Team's new logo for the 2013-2014 season.

er. Like I'm very friendly with a Highland Club shooter as well as a few Pekin Central High School JROTC shooters.

TL: And then at nationals, we'll eat with Quincy for dinner, and it's just a really cool experience. Not hating the other team, but instead celebrating with them.

NG: What do you think Fr. Hagan would feel about the publicizing you've done in the pre-season?

TL: Considering that he is the man who made rifle what it is

today in SLUH, I think he would be proud of us.

MB: I'm not sure he'd be happy that we changed his logo. But I do think he appreciates that we're trying to bring Rifle back to being a legitimate part of the school. No more of one than racquetball, no less of one than football. Honestly, this year, Lally and I do hope to honor him by renaming the range, "The Father Marty Hagan Memorial Rifle Range."