

Soccer gets shutout against CBC, rebounds and beats Webster in PKs



The Jr. Bills celebrate after junior Kurt Schumacher (3) scores to tie the game in the win against Webster. photo | Brendan Voigt

JACK WATERS
REPORTER

The St. Louis U. High varsity soccer team has had a roller coaster of a week. SLUH lost to rival CBC last Saturday in a painful 1-0 match, only to rebound with an emotional 2-1 win over Webster Groves in penalty kicks on Tuesday.

SLUH traveled to CBC last Saturday to play in their final game of the CBC tournament. After losing their first two matches in the tournament to De Smet and Vianney, the Jr. Bills were looking to prove themselves in the game.

The U. High had a scare early, as junior goalkeeper Alec Meissner botched a punt and the ball landed on the foot of a Cadet, only to be saved by Meissner on the point blank chance.

However, SLUH continued to grind out opportunities as play from seniors Luke Marcouiller and Donovan

Ditto developed into chances, but to no avail as the Jr. Bills' offense could not capitalize.

"It takes a huge toll on the players. I think part of it is that they feel like they're letting their defenders down," said head coach Charlie Martel. "We play so well defensively, but when we get into the top third, we have trouble putting the ball in the net."

The Jr. Billiken defense remained strong however, stifling CBC's chances. Meissner made back-to-back saves off Cadet shots with ten minutes left in the half to keep the score at 0-0.

As the first half was coming to an end, junior Kurt Schumacher lined up and ripped a shot off the top of the crossbar, resulting in the Jr. Bills' best scoring chance in the first half. The back and forth first half ended 0-0.

Early in the second half, a CBC forward and senior right back Jeff Walter both

went up for a header. A scary moment followed, as the two clipped heads, sending both directly to the ground. Both players' heads hit the ground as they fell.

"They hit right in front of me, I was a couple feet away. I thought he (Walter) was hurt really bad," said Martel.

Walter stayed down for about a minute, ultimately getting back up under his own power. The opposing CBC player, however, laid motionless for upwards of 10 minutes. An ambulance was called and he was stretchered off the field and taken to a hospital.

The game resumed after a 15-minute delay, still tied 0-0. Just minutes after the collision, Walter subbed back into the match, drawing a huge reaction from the U. High crowd. With 22 minutes left in the half, right after being subbed back on, Walter made a goal-saving tackle to

keep the game scoreless.

After many game-saving stops from Meissner, the Jr. Billiken defense finally cracked. A speedy cross was played onto the foot of a Cadet who buried the shot to give CBC a 1-0 lead with 18 minutes left in the match.

The Jr. Bills had no trouble finding chances in the half, but struggled to finish them.

"We know they're trying hard, that's the bottom line. They're serious about what they're doing," said Martel. "We get the ball in positions to score, but we don't hammer it, we don't hit it with authority. It's something we need to work on."

"Our top three, we just haven't gotten the finishing down, but our whole build-up has been amazing. Our defense is so solid, but they can't keep up for a whole 80 minutes," said junior Ray Godeker. "Our top three needs

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Lightning strikes: Jr. Bills' offense puts up 54 against De Smet

NICK PRAINITO AND BRIAN PRICE
REPORTERS

a 40-yard touchdown pass to senior Tony Adams to put the Jr. Bills back on top, 14-7.

Minutes later, the Jr. Bills defense forced the Spartans to punt, but just a few plays into their offensive drive, lightning began flashing just south of SLUH. The field was evacuated of all players and fans, and an hour later, the game was postponed until Saturday evening.

There may have been some fear of the delay slowing down the Jr. Bills' game, but if anything, the lightning sparked the explosive power of the offense. The Spartans started off the evening with a quick score after a Jr. Bills turnover, evening the score at 14 points and hyping up the De Smet squad.

The Spartans' hopes fell quite a bit in the first few minutes of the game. After taking the opening kickoff, the Jr. Bills ran just two plays on offense, the second of them a 67-yard dash straight through the defense by senior running back Andrew Clair. After a punt by each side, the Spartans' offense came onto the field ready to go. Mixing up runs and passes, they slowly pushed up the field, then made a breakout play of their own as quarterback Nate Martens launched a 53-yard pass to receiver Bryant Perry to even the score, firing the Spartan bench up once more.

As always, the Jr. Bills' offense had an answer of its own. Taking the field as cheers thundered down from the freshmen, the offense wasted little time once again, pushing the ball down the field play after play to rack up yards and first downs. The drive ended when senior quarterback Mitchell Batschelett launched

quickly faded, just as it had at the beginning of the game. After a long SLUH drive that stalled within the De Smet 20-yard line, senior kicker Joe Rogan nailed his first field goal of the season to give the Jr. Bills a three-point lead. Then, after a strong defensive stand forcing De Smet to punt, Adams returned the punt 49 yards to the end zone to increase the lead to 10.

For the rest of the game, the Spartans had absolutely no answer on either side of the ball for the overpowering Jr. Bills team. The touchdowns quickly began to pile up for SLUH, as they led 31-14 at halftime, and finished the game with a score of 54-14, scoring 40 unanswered points.

"You have to be concerned about whether the guys would get fired up the next day," said head coach Gary Kornfeld. "But they did

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XC tramps through mud to 12th place finish

ANDREW MODDER
SPORTS EDITOR

The St. Louis U. High varsity cross country team powered through muddy conditions to claim 12th place in last Saturday's Forest Park Cross Country Festival with a total of 330 points. St. Thomas Aquinas of Overland Park, Kan. won the Festival with a score of 81 points.

This was the 11th running of the SLUH-hosted Festival, and it certainly proved to be interesting as the course was soaked with mud from heavy rain over the previous two days.

"As soon as I got there, I surveyed the course and looked at all the mud and I was a little bit worried," said junior Paul Burka. "But then I adopted

the thinking that it's just going to be fun and doesn't really matter the time because you're not going to PR but (instead) just go out there and see if you can't be with the leaders for a while."

In addition to the atrocious conditions, the Festival featured a loud and fun atmosphere. Besides the race, there were merchandise tents, concessions, and an expansive athlete village with sponsor giveaways.

"It's loud and it's crazy and we do our best to try and create that atmosphere," said head coach Joe Porter. "We have a meet announcer with a live play of the race, a lead vehicle radioing in who's in the lead, crowd going the whole time, music blaring near the finish line, and we try to create that

carnival atmosphere as much as we can."

The Festival is the biggest meet in the Midwest, with 126 different high schools participating from eight different states. Twenty-eight other teams raced against SLUH's varsity team in the Green division.

Senior Joe Laughlin ran very well for the Jr. Bills, notching the team's best time at 17:59, putting him in 39th place overall in the division.

"He kind of shot out the back early on, and had to cut through some of the worst mud to get caught back up," said Porter. "He pulled our pack along through the middle of the race and was able to pull away from our group over the last 800 meters or so."

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Senior Tony Adams goes up for a catch against De Smet.

photo | Dominik Skroksa

XC hosts 126 schools from eight states, over 4,500 runners



Senior Joe Laughlin in the Forest Park Festival last Saturday.

photo | Andrew Pluff

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Burka followed closely behind Laughlin, grabbing 57th place with a time of 18:17. One of Burka's shoes fell off due to the mud on the course, but he was still able to post a solid time for the team despite this issue.

Sophomores Patrick Hetlage and Reed Milnor delivered solid performances, as Hetlage placed 67th with a time of 18:28, and Milnor snatched 87th with 18:43. Milnor's run was especially

impressive considering he is not usually one of the top four finishers for the team.

Seniors Will Kelly and Thomas Leeker, the fifth and sixth finishers for SLUH, had trouble finding their footing in the mud, as Kelly took 94th with 18:48 and Leeker 114th with 19:06.

Senior Roman Lipinski, normally a top five runner, found lots of trouble in the mud due to his physical stature. He ran the race in 19:29 and placed 129th.

"I went into that race feeling great. I was ready to go. I felt like I could charge through (the mud) and have no problem," said Lipinski. "When it came to the actual race, the mud got me down, when you're heavier it's actually harder going through the mud and you sink in more and use more energy to pull yourself out."

Senior Matt Northcott, SLUH's eighth finisher, experienced a first at the Festival: he ran his first ever race on Varsity-1. Usually, he is one of the top runners for the second team.

"There was definitely a different way of approaching it, I had to focus on staying focused and not letting my mind wander and there's an extra bit of pressure when you're the main event," said Northcott, who finished in 164th with a 20:02. "With all the tents in that one area and you're running around those tents and you just see everybody lined up to cheer you on, it's a feeling like no other."

Junior Matt Gunn rounded out the SLUH varsity squad, struggling like others

to tame the mud, leading to a 20:13 and 172nd place.

The team competition was very tight, as SLUH finished just 21 points out of seventh place, displaying the very high level of competition at these big meets.

"Putting us in these tough races will set us up good as we get ready for postseason stuff. (it is important) that we get in these big meets and learn from every race we run," said Porter.

Overall, despite a close finish, the Jr. Bills took positives out of the race but also know what improvements they need to make to prepare for the rest of the season.

"We knew that we could have done better, we kind of got sucked back early with tons of runners," said Northcott. "We thought that we could have had a better day placewise but we're definitely not counting ourselves out for the rest of the year."

In order to be able to compete on the big stages later in the season, improvements in game plan, strategy, and execution need to be made to produce higher finishes in the

postseason.

"We'll focus on trying to get our top four running a little more together; they got lost off the start and couldn't really find each other," said Porter, who also emphasized the need to close the gap between the fourth and fifth runners to ensure more consistent finishes for the team.

SLUH also had highlights in the freshman race, as Noah Scott and Mitchell Booher led the team to fifth place in the team competition. Scott placed fourth individually and Booher came in 12th.

The varsity-1 team will adjust its focus to the Palatine Invitational just outside of Chicago, Ill. on Saturday, Sept. 24. The field will be just as competitive as the Festival, with at least one top 25 team in the nation participating.

This weekend, the varsity-2 team heads to the Sioux Enke Invitational at Sioux Passage Park at 9 a.m. on Saturday while the top team enjoys a weekend of rest and prepares for Palatine.

Swim dominates De Smet

KYLE IRVINE
REPORTER

The St. Louis U. High swimmers took on the De Smet Spartans in their third dual meet of the season this past Friday. The Bills won decisively, 127-53. The Bills saw a lot of exceptional swims, including three more state qualifying times to add to their collection.

State qualifiers included sophomore Joe Feder in the 200 free with a time of 1:50.7, and junior Barclay Dale in the 100 freestyle at 49.39. The Bills also managed to qualify in the 200 free relay, consisting of Dale, Feder, senior Kyle Irvine, and junior Nick Mattingly, with a time of 1:33.73.

"De Smet went pretty well," said junior Jack Laux. "We added to our undefeated dual meet record; hopefully we can keep that up."

Head coach Lindsey Ehret deemed the swimmer of the meet to be Russian exchange student Egor Blokhin for swimming in his first races in this hemisphere. Blokhin has been swimming with the Bills since the beginning of the semester, contributing his breaststroke and freestyle abilities.

"The meet looked really great," said senior spectator Roman Visintine. "It was the first swim meet I have been to and I will hopefully be coming back for more, maybe with some of the spirit squad to support."

Looking ahead, the Jr. Bills have a busy weekend ahead of them, highlighted by a very tough invitational on Saturday, the De Smet Invitational at the Saint Peters Rec Plex. This exceptionally large meet includes teams from Saint Louis, Cape Girardeau, and Kansas City.

"It's fast water up there," said Mattingly. "We should hopefully see a lot of time drops and some new state times."

The meet this Saturday starts at 3 p.m.

Soccer breaks losing streak, moves on to St. Dominic



The Jr. Bills celebrate after defeating Webster this past Tuesday.

photo | Brendan Voigt

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to make that click." The Jr. Billikens lost to CBC 1-0, their third loss in a row (all to conference opponents).

After the loss, the squad had to rebound quickly and prepare for Webster Groves, the reigning Missouri Class Three State Champions.

Days after the head to head collision with a CBC player, Walter started to experience headaches and nausea on Tuesday morning, causing him to sit out the match due to concussion protocol.

The Jr. Bills were shocked early. Just seven minutes into the game, a Webster midfielder played a through-ball into the box, where a Webster forward settled the ball, shot with his left foot and beat Meissner to give Webster an early 1-0 lead.

After the goal, SLUH played with a new intensity. The Jr. Billikens began to dominate the Statesmen, creating chance after chance, and possessing the ball the major-

ity of the first half.

Martel decided to use some new faces, resulting in a new spark for the team. Seniors Nic Delgado and Carson Berry saw major minutes in the game against Webster and provided SLUH with good scoring chances.

"I thought Carson played really well," said Martel. "Nic was very courageous the other night, he was out for a while and isn't in top shape, but he gave everything he had."

The SLUH offense continued to pressure Webster Groves, most notably on a beautiful cross from sophomore Alex Lehmann into the 18-yard box, but the Webster goalie shut down the chance. The first half ended 1-0, with Webster's early goal remaining the deciding factor.

Junior Will Rudder had a great chance to start off the second half, but the Webster goalkeeper again made a decisive save.

Marcouiller also had an impressive shot from about ten yards above the center

circle. He struck the ball with his left foot, resulting in a highly lofted shot that barely went over the crossbar in what would've been the goal of the season for the U. High.

After the Webster goalie received a yellow card with less than 20 minutes to play, SLUH had a corner kick opportunity, only to be headed just over the net by senior Brandon Trusler.

However, with a minute and a half left, SLUH was fouled right outside of the box, giving Schumacher a legitimate chance to tie the game.

"He (Schumacher) really hammers the ball. He does it in practice and guys just shake their heads," said Martel.

Schumacher lined up for the free kick, as SLUH's last hope to finally break open the game. Schumacher ran in and hit an absolute bullet into the left side of the net, giving the keeper no chance to save it.

As the Jr. Bills' student section went crazy, the team had finally broken its four game

scoreless streak at a crucial time.

"We were in desperate need of a goal. I knew Kurt was going to put that in," said Ditto.

"It was a great shot. He put it off the left side corner of the wall and just laced it right in, he hit that hard," said Martel. "That's what we needed. That may turn out to be the biggest goal of the year, in terms of confidence and getting going."

Overtime began with strong play from both sides. The first half of overtime was a back and forth effort as Delgado continued to provide a spark for the Jr. Bills, with multiple scoring chances. However, Meissner also saved his team with a clutch one-handed save with only minutes left in the first overtime period.

The second overtime period saw SLUH start to dominate the pitch again with big chances from forwards Rudder and Goedeker. With a minute left, Webster commit-

ted a foul right outside the 18-yard box, giving Schumacher a chance to single-handedly end the game.

Schumacher stepped up and bent the ball around the wall of Webster Groves, missing the top right corner by a matter of inches, as the match headed into penalty kicks.

In the first round, Schumacher shot first, converting his shot and giving the Jr. Bills a 1-0 lead. Webster's shooter ran in and hit a bullet, only to be stopped with a spectacular save from Meissner.

Junior Cam Verzino shot second. Verzino buried the ball and gave SLUH a comfortable 2-0 lead in PKs. The Statesmen player ran up in an attempt to stay in the game, but again Meissner made a remarkable save, keeping SLUH up 2-0 after two rounds.

Goedeker shot third and bulleted his kick into the net, setting up a "must make" shot for Webster. The player converted, finally beating Meissner, and leaving the score at 3-1.