



## XC dominates Districts, Laughlin places first



Senior Joe Laughlin in the District tournament last weekend.  
photo | Courtesy of Mr. James Hetlage

ANDREW MODDER  
SPORTS EDITOR

The St. Louis U. High varsity cross country squad dashed past the competition to claim the Class 4 District 3 tournament crown this past weekend with a total team score of 23 points, beating second place Webster Groves by a decisive 58 points.

SLUH came into the race expecting tough competition from Webster and Ladue, who each had runners capable of giving the Jr. Bills a good run for first place. But, despite these threats, the team still exuded confidence in its strategy and race plan.

"We felt like the second best team in the meet was Webster, and we faced them head-to-head at Parkway West," said head coach Joe Porter. "We felt like we should win since we already had that head-to-head battle."

Senior Joe Laughlin sparked the Jr. Bills intensity, taking first place in the individual race. Laughlin raced with the front pack behind McCluer North's Clinton Hefner for the first two miles of the race, then made his move on a sharp turn near the third mile mark. He took the turn wide and accelerated past Hefner into the final mile.

"We were kind of letting him lead the race, and I just noticed he wasn't really accelerating around the turns," said Laughlin. "There was this real sharp turn where I just got a burst of energy and decided to accelerate really hard off of that turn and leave him and I was hoping he wouldn't respond."

Hefner did not respond, and Laughlin stayed focused on keeping a solid pace for the final mile, pushing hard and crossing the finish line in 16:26, nearly 14 seconds before Hefner, who came in second.

"I pretty much (had) the same mindset I had going into every race," said Laughlin. "(Winning) didn't really hit me right away, but then once my mind cleared, then it was exciting."

Sophomore Patrick Hetlage finished in third in 16:42

and junior Paul Burka in fourth in 16:44. The duo ran a very solid race together, staying with the front pack and aiding Laughlin in making his move.

"It was much easier to go through the race because I wasn't really killing myself on the first (mile) and it felt really smooth throughout the whole race and I wasn't really tired at the end," said Burka. "We were just trying to run with two guys from Ladue and one guy from McCluer North, and I think we definitely exceeded our expectations."

Senior William Kelly (16:53) ran a very solid and consistent race, and was rewarded with a sixth place finish.

Senior Thomas Leeker and sophomore Reed Milnor stuck together the whole race, as they battled with Webster's top runner and Ladue's second runner. Leeker placed eighth in 17:09, a new personal best for him, and Milnor came in ninth in 17:11.

"(Thomas) was our fifth guy, which he hasn't always been, and he did a fantastic job of working with the pack and trying to help other guys in the race too. He had a great race," said Laughlin.

"Leeker and Milnor ran together and were up with Ladue's one and ahead of Webster's one, so it was a really great race out of those two," said Porter.

Freshman Noah Scott began the race, but after the first two miles pulled out with a calf strain. Due to the seriousness of the injury, he will be sitting out at Sectionals this weekend.

All six SLUH runners received medals and All-District honors, as Laughlin, Hetlage, Burka, and Kelly made up first team. Leeker and Milnor represented the second team. All of them finished in the top ten.

"I definitely think it shows we have a lot of depth, it's a good sign of where we're at, we have good depth with four guys under (17 minutes) and two guys right on the verge," said Burka.

In addition, Laughlin

## Football paves way to District semifinals, matches up against Hazelwood Central

BRIAN PRICE  
REPORTER

The past two weeks, the St. Louis U. High varsity football team has beat both Jackson High School and Ritenour High School to earn a game against Hazelwood Central tomorrow.

The team followed up its blowout win over Rock Bridge High School with a road trip south to Jackson, Mo. on Oct. 14 to take on the 7-1 powerhouse Jackson Indians.

The Indians had dominated every Missouri opponent they played, with their only loss coming at the hands of the Marion Wildcats, a strong team from Illinois. The small-town team brought out nearly the entire town of Jackson to watch the game, as thousands of students and parents crowded the stands on both sides of stadium to celebrate their Senior Night and the last game of the regular season.

The game had major implications for the Jr. Bills. Going into the game, they were 4-4 on the season, and heading into the playoffs with a winning record was extremely important for everyone on the team.

"We didn't want to go out four and five," said senior defensive end Davion Nash. "With how crazy the playoff rankings are, we knew we had to win (the Jackson game) at all costs."

Facing a strong opponent, a hostile crowd, and wet field conditions due to a long day of rain leading up to the game, the Jr. Bills had plenty of factors working against them in the game.

"We were all pumped up to be in such an exciting atmosphere like that," said senior linebacker Henry Herzberg. "We knew that we could shut down their run game,

and we were ready to capitalize on that."

The Jr. Bills struggled early on, as the offense was slowed by short runs and dropped passes. The defense was unable to slow down the versatile Jackson offense and went down 14-0 early.

Starting off the second quarter, the Jr. Bills finally got some momentum going in their direction, leaning primarily on the running backs to march down the field before junior Jared Scott dove into the end zone from a yard out for his tenth touchdown of the season to close the gap to seven points.

This began a quick back-and-forth series of scores. The Indians completed their next drive in just three plays, the last of them a 60-yard pass for a touchdown. The Jr. Bills answered right back, with senior quarterback Mitchell Batschelett connecting with junior receiver A.J. Hardin for a 39-

yard touchdown. However, the defense faltered once more as the Indians capped off their drive just four minutes later with a 17-yard touchdown to raise the deficit to 14.

Fortunately, the Jr. Bills' offense had one more answer before the half. After receiving the ball with just a minute and 43 seconds on the clock, Batschelett led the offense in a push down the field to set up a field goal attempt with ten seconds on the clock. Senior kicker Joe Rogan split the uprights, and set the halftime score at 28-17.

"We were only down 11 and we were very displeased with how we played the first half," said Batschelett. "We knew that we had to cut down on our mistakes, and we'd be in a good position to win."

The defense focused on slowing down Jackson's explosive passing game in the second half.

"We knew how explo-

sive they were offensively, and they really showed that in the first half," said head coach Gary Kornfeld. "But we went into halftime and made some changes, and our guys responded really well by putting points up and keeping them off of the board."

On fourth down and 16 yards to go, Batschelett recovered a bad snap, dodged a tackle, then shovel-passed the ball to senior running back Andrew Clair, who maneuvered past the Jackson linebackers for a 30-yard touchdown. SLUH converted on a two-point conversion to cut the lead to three.

This began an incredible run of scoring for the Jr. Bills, fueled mostly by Clair, who dominated the field with 153 rushing yards in the second half alone. Just a minute after his receiving touchdown, Clair ran it in from ten yards out to put SLUH in the lead

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Senior Mitch Batschelett in last Friday's game against Ritenour. photo | Dominik Skroska

was recognized by the St. Louis Post-Dispatch as one of the Athletes of the Week for his spectacular performance in the meet.

Porter continued to emphasize the importance of running in packs at practice throughout the week leading up to the race. "We always try to keep as many people as long as possible together, it just makes our score less and is just easier for everyone to get motivated and to stay with each other," said Burka.

The Jr. Bills travel this weekend to Warrenton High School to compete in the Sectional Championship. The top four teams from each sectional advance to the State meet.

In addition to SLUH the following teams will be racing at sectionals: Webster, Rock Bridge, Fort Zumwalt West, Fort Zumwalt North, Ladue, Francis Howell North, and Jefferson City will be racing. Rock Bridge is the overall fa-

vorite.

"Rock Bridge is very good, probably the favorite to win State or in the hunt, and they've beaten us multiple times so we kind of know what they have," said Porter.

The Jr. Bills hope to continue to build their confidence at Sectionals and take good momentum into the State meet if they qualify.

"The whole name of the game at this point is survive and advance," said Porter. "We're hoping to ride our momentum and continuing to get better as we get ready to peak for the State meet."

Rock Bridge and Jefferson City will be the main competition for SLUH this Saturday morning at 10:30. This Class 4 race begins at 10:30 a.m. The same District squad will run, with the exception of senior Roman Lipinski replacing Scott as the seventh man.

## Hockey trounces Lindbergh, downs CBC in gritty, penalty-filled game

WILL FARROLL  
SPORTS EDITOR

The St. Louis U. High hockey team handily beat Lindbergh 10-3 in the quarterfinals of the Top Hat Classic last week, and then beat rival CBC 2-0 in the semifinals on Tuesday.

The IceBills took on Lindbergh on Oct. 16 and pulled off a stunning 10-3 quarterfinal win over the Flyers.

Only ten seconds into the game, senior Luke Gassetto skated the puck down the ice and buried it to put the Jr. Bills up 1-0. A few minutes later, junior Nick Corker slipped one past the Lindbergh goaltender off a rebound, extending the lead to 2-0. Midway through

the period, sophomore Henry Wagner stretched the lead to three for the Jr. Bills.

The Flyers looked to come back in the second period, scoring a goal against sophomore goalie Brendan Rasch three minutes in, and adding another one two minutes after that to cut the SLUH lead down to 3-2.

But that was as close as Lindbergh would get, as senior Erik Floyd floated an awkward shot over the goalie with 10:13 left in the second. Gassetto later added another, while sophomore Christian Berger scored two goals 20 seconds apart with three minutes left to send the Jr. Bills

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