

Soccer continues to roll, moves to #2 in the nation



PHOTO | BRENDAN VOIGT

Senior Matt Lesko (middle) after scoring the first goal of the game against Webster on Friday.

BY KEITH THOMAS
SPORTS EDITOR

Although the St. Louis U. High soccer team has proved dominant in every game it has played this year, last week's games against MCC rival De Smet and a threatening Webster Groves squad put the Jr. Bills through their toughest defensive tests yet.

SLUH's recent success has come upon the heels of its defense, but De Smet was the first real threat to tarnish the Jr. Bills' perfect record thus far.

The game was a battle, with both teams fighting for possession throughout the match. The first half was stagnant as each team struggled to escape midfield ter-

ritory.

Despite the slow start, SLUH gained an advantage in the second half, sticking to its strategy of getting the ball to the corners and crossing into the 18-yard box.

Later in the half, the ball found senior Matt Jansen's foot in midair, and Jansen struck the ball into the back of the net with roughly eight minutes left in the game. With the 1-0 lead, SLUH's tactic for the rest of the match was to retain possession.

However, De Smet was not ready to give in quite yet. The Spartans kept attacking deep in SLUH's zone, figuring out the maze of SLUH's defense. Senior keeper Ty Frederking saved a shot

from a De Smet player with about 1:20 left in the match to keep the score at 1-0.

De Smet wasn't done threatening with scoring chances yet, however.

In the final minute of the game, De Smet was awarded a corner kick. With De Smet's impressive performances from set pieces this year, Frederking had to make sure he was ready. Luckily for SLUH, he was, blocking the De Smet shot to secure the 1-0 win.

De Smet proved to be SLUH's toughest matchup to date.

"We were in a hole and couldn't score, but we kept fighting and fighting and we found a way to put the ball in the back of

the net," said senior captain Peter Simon.

The tough matchups continued for the Jr. Billikens, who faced the fourth-best team in St. Louis—Webster Groves—on Tuesday.

Prior to the game, Webster's only loss had been to the Lindbergh Flyers in penalty kicks. Webster's reputation as a top-tier soccer team has risen in the past few seasons, and that level of competitiveness showed against SLUH.

Similar to the De Smet game, SLUH and Webster fought for possession, often clearing balls out of the defensive zone and setting up quick attacks for each of the team's forwards. Webster's best player, Sheridan Smith, was shut down by the SLUH backline. The Jr. Bills' defense was nearly impenetrable for the duration of the game.

Webster's defense was just as good, but the Statesmen had a few defensive mishaps that SLUH took advantage of.

The first person to break Webster's defensive mold was senior midfielder Matt Lesko, who scored his first career goal off of a deflection of his shot midway through the first half. All it took was one goal to provide the momentum for the Jr. Bills.

"Once we scored the first goal...we just were more energized to close the game out," said Lesko.

SLUH saw another stellar performance from senior Jack Dempster on the wing against Webster Groves. Dempster generated several scoring chances for SLUH's forwards until he got one of his own, burying the ball into

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Varsity football falls to Chaminade 41-27

BY CHRIS KREIENKAMP
REPORTER

The St. Louis U. High football team, with three consecutive wins to begin the season, was having its best start in at least a decade. The Red Devils of Chaminade, however, ended that streak by defeating the Jr. Bills 41-27 last Friday.

Both SLUH and Chaminade were anticipating a hard-fought game. SLUH came ready to play, and scored the first touchdown in an unconventional style.

With SLUH on the Chaminade 10-yard line, junior quarterback Mitch Batschelett received the snap and pitched the football backwards to junior wide receiver Tony Adams. Instead of running towards the line of scrimmage, however, Adams rolled to the left and threw the ball to senior wide receiver David Jackson, who was running towards the end zone. With no one around to interrupt the play, Jackson came down with the ball to put up the Jr. Bills' only score of the half.

"Tony executed it well and David did a great job of coming out like he's going to block the corner and force the corner up," said head coach Gary Kornfeld. "As soon as the corner bit and thought it was a run, Tony just dinked it over the top."

Later in the half, junior running back Andrew Clair ran the ball 72 yards for what seemed to be a touchdown, and the SLUH Pep Band struck up "Oh When



Junior Andrew Clair (with ball) ran for 77 yards against Chaminade on Friday.

PHOTO | DOMINIK SKROSKA

the Bills." However, the referee on Chaminade's sideline called a holding penalty, so the Jr. Bills lost a valuable 6 points as the ball was moved back behind the original line of scrimmage.

From that point until the third quarter, the game was all Red Devils. Chaminade scored one touchdown in the first quarter and added two more in the second quarter. They also made a 30-yard field goal.

On defense, the Red Devils consistently broke through the

offensive line to contain SLUH's biggest offensive threat in Clair, who was held to his first sub-100-yard game of the season, with 77 yards. In addition, SLUH had to start one of its drives at its own 1-yard line due to a muffed punt, and Batschelett threw for more incompletions than completions by the end of the half.

The Jr. Bills were losing at the end of a quarter for the first time all season, down 24-7.

"We just had some stuff go wrong, but we could pull out of

(the hole) by getting each other fired up and getting some momentum swinging our way," said captain David Jackson. "We knew we were beating ourselves up, and we just needed to fix our own mistakes."

Kornfeld said, "All I told the kids was, we know we didn't play our best first half, we know that. You know, the turnovers really hurt us, I mean really hurt us big time. And they capitalized on it."

But, SLUH would not give

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Varsity XC places 10th out of 31 in Festival

BY JOSEPH REZNIKOV
STAFF

The St. Louis U. High varsity cross country team opened up its season this past Saturday at the annual Forest Park Cross Country Festival. SLUH placed 10th at the Festival, with 257 points; Lafayette, the defending state champion, won the Festival with 46 points.

Senior Dustan Davidson finished first for SLUH with a 5K time of 16:32.0.

Junior Joe Laughlin (17:15.5) stepped up for SLUH and made a big move through the pack in the fourth kilometer of the race, eventually finishing second on the team. The fourth kilometer proved deadly for some of the state's top runners, but Laughlin used the team's strenuous hill training to power through the toughest stretch of the race.

Though he is happy with the way he raced, he still knows that there is room for improvement within the team as the season progresses.

"This was the first race, so we still have some time to figure things out. We need to work on working as a team," said Laughlin.

SLUH's results were directly affected by the crowdedness of the course, with multiple SLUH runners falling or coming close to falling over the course of the race.

"It's a crowded race with lots of good runners, so it isn't spread out as much as other races," said coach Joe Porter.

But, even with the struggles with space, many coaches told Porter that they like the style of the new course compared to the old course. But SLUH still isn't sure where the event will be hosted in years to come.

In the past, SLUH has run a season-opening race before the Festival, but this year the team decided to skip it and train through it instead.

"The race was more about remembering what racing's like and kicking the dust off from the offseason," said Porter of this year's festival.

One highlight for the SLUH team was freshman Patrick Hetlage, who raced in his first varsity race. While most varsity races only allow seven runners per team, nine racers are allowed at the Festival, allowing Hetlage to participate.

"I was expecting to run in the freshman race, so it was a little surprising," said Hetlage. "(My race) felt good, but I still definitely feel like I can get better throughout the season."

Porter was very proud of the way Hetlage competed at the varsity level so early in his SLUH running career. Hetlage ran the race at 18:23, and to get a varsity letter you need to run it at 18:15, so he's basically already there in his first race.

"To throw him in the fire like that and for him to do (as well as he did) is pretty impressive," said Porter.

"The top seven will always fluctuate, and it's always nice to have that competitiveness within the team. We like to just wait and see how guys develop over the course of the season," said Porter.

Though SLUH didn't race as well as they had hoped, Porter is not worried about the rest of the season.

"We got our first one out of the way, and we're still eight weeks away from where we want to be at the end of the season, so we never try to put a lot

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Swimming faces old coach, beats De Smet by 100+ points

BY PATRICK SCHULER
REPORTER

The SLUH swim and dive team faced De Smet at home for a Jesuit showdown last Friday. This year's version featured two new highlights: a sibling rivalry between senior Mark Franz and his brother Michael, and SLUH ex-head coach Joe Esposito now leading the Spartans. The Jr. Billikens won the meet by over 100 points.

The Franz family has always been a swimming family, and the rivalry between Mark and Michael pushed both of them to their fastest times. The two raced in two events: the 100-meter butterfly and 100 breaststroke.

"Former SLUH coach Joe Esposito had requested a matchup and I readily agreed," head coach Lindsay Ehret said. "The De Smet Franz (Michael) might have had the advantage as his mom is serving as an assistant coach for De Smet, but both races were fun to see brother challenge brother."

Michael, the better butterfly, won the fly, while Mark won the breaststroke, his specialty. Both have already qualified for State in their specialty events.

"It was fun to race against my brother," Mark said after.

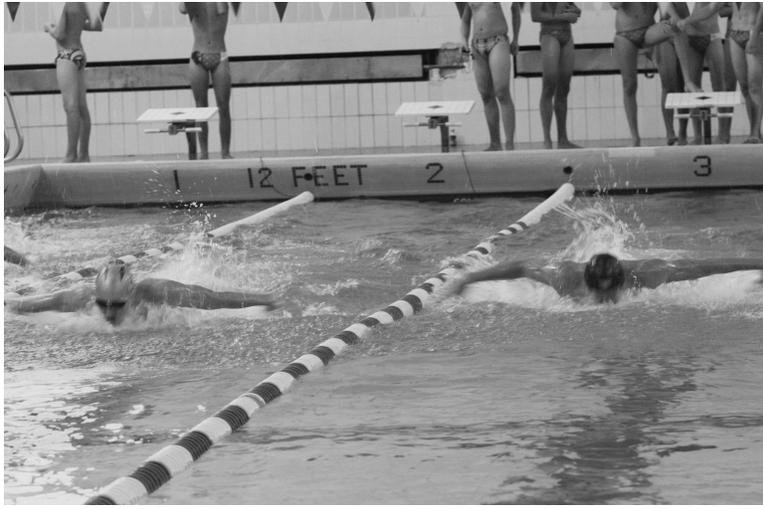


PHOTO | BRENDAN VOIGT

Senior Mark Franz (right) faced his brother, Michael (left), a junior at De Smet, last Friday in the 100 butterfly.

"It made it more competitive, and it pushed me to try to beat him. It was also fun to push him in the 100 breaststroke."

The SLUH swimming community was also very excited for the appearance of Esposito, who despite being on the other side of the pool deck now, was a huge part of the team the last two years helping many swimmers improve.

"It was good to see him," Mark said. "He's a good guy."

"It felt really good to beat them by over 100 points," sophomore Joe Jellinek commented.

Moving forward from the dual meet against De Smet, the Jr. Bills had a meet last night at Forest Park against big rival Parkway West. The team will then finish the week at the De Smet Invite at St. Peters Rec Plex Saturday.

The Jr. Bills are hoping for a great meet Saturday, as

the Rec Plex is not only the site of the State meet, but also will also for some very fast times and hopefully more state cuts. There will also be very good competition to push the Jr. Bills.

Franz says he hopes to go below a 22-second 50-meter free, to swim a 59-second 100 breaststroke, and for the relay team to win as well.

According to Ehret, the coming weekend should bring

excitement with the De Smet Invitational. While top state teams like Rockhurst and Rock Bridge will be attending, the biggest local competition will be Chaminade.

"As a team we'll be looking to improve on our relay times due to the high quality of competition and speed of the Rec Plex pool, and hopefully gain a few more individual State qualifying times," said Ehret.

Soccer still undefeated

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the netting in the second half to put the Bills up 2-0.

The rest of the game tested SLUH's defense. Webster had two open-net chances after getting past Frederking in one-on-ones, but the defense—led by senior Al Solv'erud—was there to knock the ball off of the goal line twice.

The Jr. Bills have a tough schedule ahead, including the CYC Tournament next week. SLUH comes into the tournament as reigning champions, having defeated Webster Groves in the final last year by a score of 2-0.

The tournament pits some of the best teams in St. Louis in a 16-team format, including MCC rivals such as CBC and Chaminade participating and strong Illinois squads like the Collinsville Kahoks, who are ranked third in the area behind SLUH and De Smet. SLUH looks to use its depth in the tournament.

"Every game has been a battle," said Simon. "We are very fortunate to have different players step up every game and play their part."

SLUH faces St. Dominic tomorrow, and will turn around on Monday for the first game of the CYC Tournament at Soccer Park against Duchesne.

SLUH thrives at festival



PHOTO | ANDREW PLUFF

Freshman Patrick Hetlage in his first varsity race on Saturday. He ran the 5K in 18:23.

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of emphasis on the result of meet," said Porter. "We know where we're at, and now it's time to improve over the next eight weeks."

SLUH has hosted the Forest Park Cross Country Festival for 10 years. While it has been held on Central Fields for the last nine, the race was held on Aviation Field this year because of a dispute with Loufest over the land permit.

On Friday afternoon, the day before the race, a ten-foot deep sinkhole popped up on the new course, which SLUH had to scramble to deal with before the race the next morning.

SLUH called Alan Jankowski, the park maintenance manager for the city of St. Louis, who met with SLUH at 6:30 on Friday night. They

were able to come up with a plan and by 7:30 the next morning the hole was filled with rock and mulch.

Though the cause of the sinkhole is unknown, Jankowski guesses it was caused by a sewer line.

Because the course changed location from previous years, the SLUH team practiced the new course on Thursday and Friday, but the course was foreign to the team.

"In my opinion, it was a little harder (than the old course) and it felt kind of crowded," said junior Joe Laughlin. "Every course is different and this one was just a little tougher."

SLUH's next race is the Varsity II Paul Enke Invitational tomorrow at Sioux Passage Park at 9:00 a.m.

Football suffers first loss, plays De Smet tonight

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up. Batschelett went on a tear, throwing eight consecutive complete passes, two of which went for third quarter touchdowns to David Jackson, while the SLUH defense kept the Red Devils scoreless.

The Jr. Bills had made the most of its halftime predicament, gaining the momentum and the energy ready to make a comeback in the fourth quarter.

Clair found the end zone three minutes into the fourth quarter, and the SLUH sideline erupted in madness. For the first time since the first quarter, SLUH was winning, 27-24.

The excitement would be short-lived, however, for Chaminade would score a touchdown just 90 seconds later.

"We had to dig ourselves

out of a big hole. The thing that really hurt us is that as soon as we dug ourselves out of the hole we put ourselves in a precarious situation again," Kornfeld said.

The SLUH offense and defense seemed unable to respond to the Chaminade touchdown, as Chaminade scored another touchdown and added a 20-yard field goal kick before the game expired.

The offense could not conjure anything, ending its final possession on an interception. Batschelett finished 17 for 29 passing for 210 yards, and for two touchdowns and two interceptions. David Jackson finished with a team-high 92 yards receiving, 5 receptions, and 3 touchdowns.

On defense, SLUH recorded just one sack, by junior Ryan Hebenstreit.

The game ended on a

playoff spot. Kornfeld believes Chaminade did that in order to improve its point differential to get a better playoff seeding.

"A lot of coaches worry about trying to max out (their point differential). I have never been one to do that and never will. To me relationships with the other ball club and the other schools are more important than worrying about a few points that percentage-wise probably won't even matter," said Kornfeld.

The Jr. Bills face their Jesuit counterparts, the De Smet Spartans, at the Palace on Balas tonight at 7:00 p.m. The Spartans have had a rough season, and are still searching for their first win. Both SLUH and De Smet have played Chaminade; De Smet lost to the Red Devils by a score of 66-7.

Soccer Nightbeat

The St. Louis U. High varsity soccer team defeated the Vianney Golden Griffens last night 2-1, capturing the MCC title in a span of just ten games. SLUH (10-0-0) was led by seniors Peter Simon and Sam Rudder, who scored the team's two goals. The Jr. Bills face St. Dominic tomorrow at 1:00 p.m.

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