



T-minus one week: Swimming begins final countdown to state meet



Swimming celebrating their MCC win Tuesday.

photo | Mr. Michael Slatin

JOE FEDER AND NICHOLAS DALAVIRAS
STAFF REPORTER

The St. Louis U. High swim and dive team entered the home stretch of the 2018 season this past week with both the JV and varsity squads showcasing incredible amounts of improvement at the MICDS Invitational, the JV Conference Championships, and the MCC Championships.

Every season, the MICDS Invitational serves as the final opportunity for swimmers who are close to qualifying for state to swim in a nice facility and try to achieve their goal times. Although conference is the final meet of the regular season for the JV and varsity teams, MICDS was a great opportunity for JV to swim some different events, but it also gave varsity's state hopefuls another opportunity to qualify.

After the warmup break, which took place in between the 50 freestyle and the 100 butterfly, junior Carson Massie dropped four seconds, sophomore Charlie Wills dropped

over five seconds, and senior Jack Bodnar dropped a second in the 100 butterfly.

The 100 fly started a streak of significant time drops for the Jr. Bills, and in the next event, sophomore Eli Butters qualified for state in the 100 freestyle, shaving nearly two seconds from his previous best with a 49.84. Sophomore Joe McArthur also dropped a second from his best time in the 100 free.

Junior Patrick Moehn then dropped four seconds in his specialty event, the 500 freestyle, and put himself in good position to be consolated into the state meet. The top 32 entrants in each event swim at state, including those who have not achieved an automatic qualifying time, if there are not 32 entrants with the automatic cut. Moehn's 500 time is currently ranked 43rd in the state, and freshman Ned Mehmeti is ranked 42nd.

Next, Butters led off the 200 freestyle relay, and in his second 50 free of the night, after swimming it previously in the individual event, he got his second state cut in the 50 free-

style, 22.66, which counts as an individual qualifying time because he led off the relay. Senior captain Jarrett Schneider got his first individual state cut of the season in the 100 backstroke, swimming a 57.48, after qualifying for state for the first time at the MICDS meet last year as well.

"Having gotten (the state qualifying time) last year, I was really confident that I'd get it again, but I was thinking it'd be earlier in the season, like at COMO," said Schneider. "Actually having the expectation of being able to get the cut made it that much more of a relief that I got it before the very last chance. It was liberating."

The final individual event of the night, the 100 breaststroke, sparked mild controversy as sophomore Mikhail Shulepov swam to a new state qualifying time that would have won the event, but was disqualified for swimming in the wrong heat. The DQ was not overturned even after coach Lindsey Ehret talked to the officials. Junior Jordan Smith then swam to a best

time in the 100 breaststroke, dropping over three seconds.

The dive team continued its streak of wins as the trio of juniors Gabe and Max Manalang and freshman Sebastian Lawrence swept the top three, scoring first, third, and second respectively. Sophomore Owen Cooney finished sixth.

"We were second (in the meet), which was a good showing for JV because they had a lot of races," said head coach Lindsey Ehret.

Just around 14 hours after the conclusion of the MICDS Invite, the Jr. Bills took to the water once again at the Forest Park Community College natatorium for JV MCCs. The meet was the final competition of the season for the JV squad and a few varsity team members.

Freshman Alex Wentz dropped a second in the 200 IM and placed fourth, and McArthur followed in the 50 freestyle and dropped nearly a second to get third place. Freshman Nick Figge saw a significant time drop of more than four seconds in the 100 butterfly, and freshmen Adam Fennewald and Sam French swam the 500 freestyle for the first time, placing third and fourth, respectively, in the event.

"Both meets were a lot of fun," said French. "The pool at MICDS was really nice, and it was a lot of fun being with the whole team."

The Jr. Bills accomplished yet another season team goal as they swam to victory at JV MCCs, beating the second place team, De Smet Jesuit, by nearly 100 points.

"It was great," Ehret said of the win. "I think the future is pretty solid for SLUH swimming based on what we've seen from the freshmen."

On Monday, the varsity **continued on page 7**

Rackers takes second; propels XC through do-or-die sectionals to state

PETER LABARGE, JOSEPH CALLAHAN
REPORTERS

In the hills of Washington, Mo., the St. Louis U. High cross country team raced in sectionals in a do-or-die race. They needed to finish in the top four teams to advance state, and they did just that. As a team, they finished third, behind only Lafayette and Kirkwood and advanced to race this Saturday at the State Championship in Jefferson City.

Junior Lucas Rackers, finishing first for the Jr. Bills for the second straight week, improving on his third place district. Racing near the front of the pack from the start, Rackers finished second behind only Kirkwood's Christian Baker, who has not lost to a Missourian this season.

Once again, senior Patrick Hetlage and junior Noah Scott were the second and third SLUH runners to cross the line. Finishing just 20 seconds behind Rackers, Het-

gram certainly has a chance of bringing home the state title. Hopefully, the atmosphere of the state meet will enable the boys to maintain the mental intensity required to close the final mile of the state meet, the final SLUH cross country race for all senior runners.

"This last week I've been thinking about how this is my last cross country race ever, and I can't help but reminisce on my early freshman year races like O'Fallon and Forest Park 3K," said Staley. "Saturday, we're gonna go out, run our race, and feast on the competition."

On Saturday, the team hopes to complete one of its season goals: to be a trophy team by placing in the top four. SLUH hasn't trophied at state since 2014, so this goal is important for the program to end a drought.

"It was actually a goal Coach Porter told me after state last year," said Staley. "For the past three years I've been here, we've gotten 11th,



The varsity team before the race.

photo | Mr. Jim Hetlage

lage (13th) and Scott (14th) earned Second-Team All-Sectional honors.

Although racing in a more competitive field, seniors Reed Milnor and Chris Staley both improved from their finishes at districts. Milnor placed 33rd at sectionals after placing 34th at districts, and Staley improved over 40 places from districts.

"I think this is really what both Reed and I need," said Staley. "Coming off an injury I've had for about a month and a half, I think I did really well. Reed was right in front of me for almost the whole race and he kind of pulled me along, which was nice."

Finally, juniors Adam Mittendorf (39th) and Joe Callahan (41st) finished within half of a second of each other after racing alongside each other for most of the race.

Although the Jr. Bills ended up losing to Lafayette by 25 points, two miles into the race, they were within seven places of first place. This stat shows that the pro-

10th, and 10th at state, which is pretty bad considering we won back to back in 2012 and 2013 and got second in 2014. I think top four is easily attainable, but we really want to get first."

They will once again be in competition against Kirkwood and Lafayette and will be racing against Rockchur for the second time this season. The team will also be racing against Hickman and Raymond-Peculiar, both of which are threats to their hope of being a trophy team.

Still, the runners are staying positive and hope to have the best race of their season on Saturday. As they have continuously stressed the past few weeks, members of the team hope that they can build off their previous races to set them up for state.

"Our goal for Saturday is to get out and make sure to attack the hills. We need to continue to build off of districts and sectionals and need to race to our full potential to have a big day," said Rackers.

Controversial goal sends soccer into district final; season ends at 3-0 loss to Oakville

BY CHRIS STALEY AND BLAKE OBERT
SPORTS EDITOR, STAFF

The SLUH soccer season ended this week after a 3-0 playoff loss against Oakville, whom the team faced after an overtime first round win against Mehlville. The up and down season ended as many games this year have, with a strong performance from the Jr. Bills, but an inability to take control on the scoreboard.

The first game of the playoffs took place at SLUH against Mehlville High School. The game started off slow with the ball switching possession frequently. It continued on with few chances from both squads until the Mehlville offense managed to slip one

past junior goalkeeper Peter Herrmann, taking the lead with 16 minutes left in the first half.



Sophomore Jaylen Sinclair against Oakville.

photo | Mrs. Kathy Chott

Mehlville did not hold the lead for long though, as junior Ethan Joly knocked the ball in off a bounce with

six minutes left to tie the score at 1-1 to finish the half.

"We had a really good idea of the system Mehlville played and knew that we were going to have plenty of opportunities to score," said senior captain Alex Lehmann.

"The thing that set us apart wasn't our touch or our passing, but it was who wanted it more," said senior captain Brian Lyberopoulos. "I truly believe that we wanted that game more and that's why we came out with the win."

After the half, the Jr. Bills began to apply pressure and seemed to be more in control of the game. Despite this, they were unable to put any shots in the net

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