



Cross Country takes first meet of the year; to host 14th annual FPXC Saturday

BY PETER LABARGE AND MITCHELL BOOHER REPORTERS

The St. Louis U. High cross country team trekked across the river on Saturday for its opening meet: the Granite City Invitational. The varsity team defeated Illinois competition by scoring only 45 points and winning by a 22-point margin to defend its title as reigning meet champions.

Right from the gun, the Jr. Bills took control on the extremely flat three-mile course. Coming into the race, the runners knew they had to get out in front from the start as the course narrows through a clearing after the first 400 meters, so that they would not get boxed in behind other team's runners.

The team met this challenge as seniors Lucas Rackers, Noah Scott, and Adam Mittendorf and junior Daniel Hogan took control of the race, with the four of them making up half of the lead pack that went out with a 5:11 first mile.

The front pack of SLUH runners stayed together through the two-mile mark, with a second mile split of 5:17 and 5:18 but broke apart in the third mile with Rackers and Scott pulling forward from the pack.

Rackers (third place, 15:19) and Scott (fourth place, 15:21) ran the full race together, with the only separation coming in the final stretch, and Mittendorf (11th, 15:40), Hogan (14th, 15:53), and sophomore Grant Brawley (16th, 15:58) rounded out the scoring five to make the all-important one to five gap an extremely low 39 seconds.

Senior Peter Dillion (32nd, 16:28) and junior Hayden Zenor (49th, 16:49), who stepped up in place of an injured senior Joe Callahan, rounded out the varsity runners for the day.

"I was really impressed with how our varsity packed together and responded to the difficulties of the course," said Scott. "We responded very well when the pace picked up in the last mile, and we were able to keep the gaps close."

Up next, the rest of the almost 75 runners took the line in the combined freshman/sophomore open race. This being the first year the two races were combined, the beginning of the race was extremely packed, and the runners knew they would have to go out hard to get out of traffic. Through one mile, the Jr. Bills had seven guys within ten seconds of the leader, with sophomores Baker Pashea and Justin Glass leading the way in 5:36. Since the races were combined, the scoring, which is normally just the team's top five runners' places added up, was changed to be the top five freshmen and sophomores' places (juniors and seniors' races did not count), so the two sophomores leading the team was a good sign. Glass and Pashea continued to run together through the end, with Pashea (12th place) kicking away in the end to finish in 17:19 and Glass (15th place) coming in at 17:23.

Sophomore Joe LaBarge (21st, 17:43) and freshman Wyatt Seal (22nd, 17:44) rounded out the four medalists for the freshman/sophomore race. Graham Sanfilippo (39th, 18:05) closed out the scoring for the underclassmen, whose 100 points was good for third place behind Illinois teams Chatham (Glenwood) and Springfield.

Notable upperclassman finishers, though their places didn't count for a score, were junior Sandy Legrand (29th overall, 17:39) and seniors Mitchell Booher (39th, 17:48) and Sirius Song (44th, 17:53).

"Baker and I got out early

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Big plays and simple mistakes plague Football; SLUH falls to Ladue in home opener

BY BLAKE OBERT AND LUKE ALTIER SPORTS EDITOR, STAFF

The freshmen of St. Louis University High received their baptism in blue last Friday at the annual Running of the Bills. While the Freshman Fun Day activities were a success, the fans of SLUH football could not help but leave just as blue as the freshmen, as SLUH fell 48-36 in their first home game of the season to drop to 1-1.

Ladue received the first kickoff of the game at the 1-yard line, and a swift return set them up on their 30-yard line. Their offensive possession did not last long though, as SLUH came up with a sack followed by an interception from sophomore defensive back/wide receiver Isaac Thompson to put them on Ladue's 20-yard line.

Despite being in the red zone, SLUH was unable to capitalize on their opportunities. Senior running back Kellen Porter drove the ball to the 1-yard line with a screen pass and two rushes for gain, but fumbled the ball on SLUH's first fourth down conversion attempt of the game. Following a three and out from Ladue, SLUH decided against going for another fourth down conversion, and settled for a field goal from the 10-yard line.

The defense was hot early, forcing a fumble from Ladue's quarterback and recovering the ball on Ladue's 21. A 20-yard gain from junior receiver Luke Ratterman set up Porter to punch the ball in from the one yard line and led SLUH 9-0 after the extra point was blocked.

The Jr. Bills defense continued to impress on the next possession, forcing yet another three and out, but the offense was once again unable to come up with points, after their second failed fourth down conversion attempt of the game nearing the red zone.

Ladue earned their first first down of the game just as the second quarter began, and subsequently earned their first points of the game off of a 63-yard touchdown pass.

While SLUH squandered another offensive possession following the touchdown, Ladue showed no intention of slowing down. They completed another deep pass, this one from the 50-yard line for a touchdown to

push their lead to 14-9.

"What was subconsciously going through all of our minds was 'those two plays should not have happened,'" said senior linebacker Dashiell Waller. "I don't think Ladue even had a good drive, we would stop them and one big play would ruin it for us."

The Jr. Bills offense was unable to string plays together,

safety's head and into a receiver's hands, making the score 34-9 in favor of the Rams.

The Jr. Billikens, while off to a rough start, still had fight left in them. Porter, who had struggled to get anything going in the first half, led a big push upfield. After three smash mouth runs up the middle, Porter carried SLUH down to Ladue's 20-yard line.

their jobs on offense as the game went on. When everybody starts doing their job, our offense starts pushing downfield and we just start to succeed," said Ratterman. "I think if we all do our jobs against tougher teams like Ladue and De Smet, we can really contend."

SLUH's secondary continued to struggle, and Ladue converted another third down off of



Senior Kellen Porter against Ladue on Friday.

photo | Mrs. Kathy Chott

and the defense was once again called upon. They managed to stop a fourth and 5 conversion, but the offense once again was forced to punt following the turnover. The punt was blocked and returned for a touchdown. Ladue began to run away with the lead going up 20-9 after a missed extra point attempt.

The following possessions did not affect the scoreboard, as both SLUH's and Ladue's defenses were controlling the game. That is, until an interception from Hannah on SLUH's 40-yard line set up another deep pass for a touchdown from the Rams only two plays after the turnover. The Rams deepened the game's divide once again, making the score 22-9, which held up until the end of the half.

"The main thing we talked about was everyone trying to overdo and overthink everything," said Hannah. "We just kept telling everyone 'do your job, focus on yourself,' and I think when we started thinking like that we played a lot better."

SLUH started the second half on a sour note when they fumbled and gave Ladue great field position. Within two plays, Ladue scored in an odd fashion. The ball bounced off of a SLUH

Porter then came up big with a run on third down, putting the Jr. Billikens within five yards of the goal line.

On the next play, the team ran a quarterback option, and senior quarterback Brendan Hannah jogged into the end zone untouched to close the score to 34-16.

When Ladue got the ball back, they were determined to establish the run game. SLUH's defense had other plans. Once again though, the defense was unable to hold back Ladue's pass game, as they converted on third and 24, and with the help of another long pass, scored off of a 3-yard rush. Ladue's lead grew to 41-16.

"That was a theme throughout the whole game," said senior Aidan Lundergan. "We'd push them to third down and then they'd hit a home run. It just sucked because we worked so hard for three downs and we'd fall asleep on fourth."

SLUH responded by generating their own pass game with three deep passes in a row from Hannah, the third ending in the end zone. With the extra point, SLUH had cut the lead to 41-23.

"Everybody started doing

a deep pass. The pass was taken to the end zone for Ladue's fifth passing touchdown of the game.

SLUH scored two more touchdowns, and Ladue added one more, but SLUH's attempt to come back fell short. The game ended 48-36 in favor of Ladue.

"When they kept scoring, every time we would get the ball, we'd get into the huddle and I just told the O-line, 'we have all these fans here watching, they're going to remember what they see at the end of the game,'" said Hannah. "If people see that we didn't roll over, they'll understand we are not the same team as we were last year."

Tonight the Jr. Bills will take on Jesuit rival De Smet. The game is at De Smet at 7:00.

"We're really just focusing on taking care of the ball and scoring points in the red zone. Last week against Ladue, we got down the field and were in range about five or six times and only came away with nine points," said head coach Mike Jones. "In order to be successful this week, we just need to come away with points every time, whether that be touchdown or field goals, and make sure we take good care of the ball."

Soccer loses to toughest opponent yet, but redeems with 4-0 win against Gibault

BY JIMMY STANLEY AND MICHAEL TROWER SPORTS EDITOR, REPORTER

After winning two of its first three games, the St. Louis U. High varsity soccer team travelled to Columbia, Mo., where it lost a close match that ended in a demoralizing defeat. But their next game, on Wednesday, proved that

they weren't going to slump, as the Jr. Bills defeated Gibault High School 4-0 in a dominant effort.

SLUH visited Rock Bridge High School on Saturday in Columbia. Rock Bridge came into the game ranked third in the state and would prove to be SLUH's greatest challenge to date.

"After Chaminade, we

were actually pretty confident because we had only lost by one. It could've went our way if we'd've tweaked a few things, so we were all confident and ready for this game," said captain Ethan Joly.

The game kicked off at 11:45 and SLUH came out ready to play. Sophomore Evan Yalavarthi scored 10

minutes in to give SLUH the early lead on his first goal of the year.

"The first half started well, in the sense that we got a goal for a start. We weren't that dangerous really in creating a whole lot for the rest of the match," said head coach Bob O'Connell.

Once the second half

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photo | courtesy of FPXC.com

Swimming pulls off a pair of wins; divers qualify for state

BY NICHOLAS DALAVIRAS AND JACK FIGGE
NEWS EDITOR, REPORTER

The St. Louis U. High Swim and Dive team had a successful week, racking up a duo of dual meet wins against a formidable pair of St. Charles teams in Francis Howell Central and Fort Zumwalt West. The underclassman SwimBills also brought home a victory at the Ladue Invitational against a few of the area's best varsity squads.

Last Friday, as the newly baptized freshmen prepared to storm the football stadium for Running of the Bills, the sophomores, juniors, and seniors of the swim team went up against Francis Howell Central and won in blowout fashion, 133-37. Even without the help of the deep freshman group and the dive team, who could not compete at the meet since it was held at the Jr. Bills' home of Forest Park Community College, where the diving board is still broken, the swimmers snatched the top two spots in every event except for the 200 medley relay, where they placed first, third, and fourth.

The meet was also the first opportunity for team members to qualify for the state meet, and SLUH took advantage. The 200 medley relay of sophomores Cooper Scharff and Jonas Hostetter, junior Eli Butters, and senior Evan Lu led off the cuts in the first event of the night with a 1:43.27.

Scharff followed that with two individual state cuts in the 200 IM, (2:03.48), and the 100 back, (55.65). Butters got his first individual out of the sea-

son in the 50 freestyle, (22.63), and Hostetter clinched his individual state spot in the 100 fly, (55.05).

The next morning at Ladue Horton Watkins High School, the freshmen got to prove themselves in their first ever SLUH meet. Fresh off a tough 48-36 Jr. Bill loss to Ladue the previous night at the Running of the Bills football game, the freshmen, the sophomores, and two seniors were ready to avenge their spoiled night back on Ladue's home turf.

The dive team started off the day with an invaluable finish in the 6 Dive competition. Senior captain Gabe Manalang, sophomore Sebastian Lawrence, and senior Max Manalang finished second, third, and fourth respectively.

The swimming portion of the meet then kicked off quickly, with the medley relay squad of Scharff, Hostetter, sophomore Ned Mehmeti, and freshman Jason Cabra leading off the scoring with a second place finish behind the MICDS team.

The next event, the 200 freestyle, contained two of the more notable swims, with two large time drops from freshman Brendan Schroeder, 2:04.26, and sophomore Dennis McDaniel. McDaniel dropped a big chunk of time to go 2:21.04, a bit more than a three second drop from last year.

In the 200 IM, Mehmeti took third with a time of 2:09.19. Going into the break after the 50 freestyle, the Jr. Bills held a slight lead. The underclassmen had to be

motivated to retain the lead, though, since the older varsity teams from CBC and MICDS were close behind.

Following the break, Scharff came out charging in the 100 fly, taking first by over a body length in a state qualifying time of 52.76. The Jr. Bills remained strong in the 100 free and were bolstered by a 3-4 finish for senior captain Sean Santoni (5:11.56), and Mehmeti (5:16.20) in the 500 freestyle.

The 200 freestyle relay was highlighted by freshman Michael Baur, who dropped an astonishing 8.92 seconds on his 34.12 second leadoff leg.

"I was a bit surprised," said Baur. "I didn't think I would do that good."

Scharff took home another victory in the 100 back, dropping just over two seconds from the night before, (53.41).

Going into the 100 breast, the point situation was not looking good. The Jr. Bills were down by over 20 points to CBC and were running out of time to play catch up. The team never quit.

After the 100 breaststroke, the Jr. Bills were within striking distance of CBC. All the A and B SLUH 400 freestyle relays had to do was beat the respective CBC relays to win the meet. The SwimBills pulled it off and avenged the previous night's loss to Ladue, who took fourth this time around.

However, the victory was a close call. It came down to the final relay, reminding many of last year's close call at the state championship when SLUH needed to finish top three in order to win.

This time was different though. The relays were just racing for an invite victory instead of a state title, but the relay team was also made up entirely of sophomore and freshman swimmers, racing against veteran varsity swimmers from other schools.

With the whole swim and dive team gathered at one end of the pool screaming at their teammates in the water, the 400 free relay team of Hostetter, Mehmeti, Cabra, and Scharff landed in second place in 3:23.51, a new state cut, while CBC finished third in the event.

The B relay of sophomore Brody Nester, Schroeder, Shelton, and sophomore Connor Buehring took seventh to the CBC B relay's eighth place effort, securing the team victory by four points.

The seventh place win-securing relay capped off a stellar weekend for Buehring, who was named the 'Swimmer of the Meets' for his relay efforts and his back-to-back 1:04 100 backstrokes on Friday and Saturday, both four seconds faster than he was last season.

"I think Ladue is a great meet because we were able to see what the underclassmen with the help of two seniors and the divers could do," said Ehret. "Since our first meet occurred on Freshmen Fun day, this was their first opportunity to compete. We saw some substantial improvements since time trials, but we have some polishing to do."

Hill echoed Ehret's sentiments.

"Our strokes look great, but we have some technical is-

sues we need to work on," said Hill. "There's a lot of time we can take off on our swims by having that down."

On Wednesday, the varsity team trekked to the Rec Plex for a dual meet against the Fort Zumwalt West Jaguars, which they won handily. The 200 freestyle relay team of senior Andrew Zimmerman, Hostetter, Butters, and Scharff qualified the final state relay for the Jr. Bills, 1:31.29, while the swimmer of the meet, senior Evan Lu, monstereed to a lifetime best and state cut in the 100 breast, 1:02.50.

Also notable about the Fort Zumwalt West meet was that the divers were able to compete, and they took advantage of the competition. Gabe Manalang and Lawrence qualified for state in their efforts on the night, and the squad is hopeful that Max Manalang will join them in the coming weeks.

The broken board has obviously not stopped the hot streak for the dive team, but it has created an inconvenience and has separated them from the rest of the team at practice.

"Coach (Ehret) said that hopefully a diving board will be ordered and installed by next week, but I am a little skeptical," said Gabe Manalang. "The team is looking good. Everyone is learning new dives and mastering others."

The team will try to earn another achievement on the road to the team goal of a completely perfect season at Marquette Relays on Saturday and in a dual meet against CBC on Tuesday.

XC sets goals on podium place at festival

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and worked off each other well throughout the race," said Glass. "I thought we did this really well as a team and especially in the freshman."

The XC Bills race the biggest regular season meet of the year tomorrow: the 14th Annual Forest Park Cross Country Festival. The meet draws teams from eight different states and brings top tier programs such as Nequa Valley, Rockhurst, and Rock Bridge. The course, although still reeling from the effects of last year's mudfest, is expected to yield fast times and a very competitive finish.

Coming off a second place finish in FPXC last year, the Jr. Bills have their eyes on top of the podium. The team wants to continue focusing on limiting its gaps rather than any other teams.

"The only team that can beat us right now is us, so that's who we're going to focus on," said head coach Joe Porter. "We are going to try and keep our gaps close and work well together in a more congested race with a faster first mile."

Yet again, the XC Bills are zoned in on a team mentality, one that they hope will continue to bring strong results across the board on Saturday.

Soccer crushes Gibault with dominant midfield



art | Nick Koenig

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kicked off, Rock Bridge came out swinging and scored a goal three minutes into the half from outside the SLUH 18-yard box. SLUH was completely dominated in the midfield and gave up another long-range goal with 27 minutes left in the half. The Jr. Bills couldn't get anything going

for the rest of the game and lost 2-1.

"I just think the second half, there was about a 20-minute period there that we were sitting. I thought our midfielders sat back and it allowed their midfield to really control the play for about 20 minutes," said O'Connell.

After a disappointing loss at Rock Bridge, SLUH headed home and got to work for their next match, against Gibault High School at 6:45 on Tuesday. Junior goalie Johnny Barr got his first start of the season and his first ever start on varsity. The Jr. Bills were locked in from the start, and to prove it forward Maks Juric put a shot past the keeper for a 1-0 lead only ten minutes in.

"The game against Rock Bridge was sort of a wake-up call for our team," said senior Andy Mujezinovic. "There's no way we were going to drop this game."

Five minutes later, Charles Neuwirth added to the lead with a strike assisted by John Marshall along the left wing to make the game 2-0. SLUH's midfield was absolutely dominant, where a rush would happen every few minutes. The Jr. Billikens hit multiple posts and one crossbar later in the first half, but Neuwirth scored his second goal of the game with an 18-yard missile to make the score 3-0 with about five minutes to go in the half. Neuwirth now leads the team in goals with three.

"This game was all about us and the way we performed tonight," said O'Connell. "We knew we

were the better team, we just had to prove it tonight."

At the start of the second half, senior goalkeeper John Mungenast got his first action of the season. He didn't have to make a save, because SLUH's defense prevented any possible push from Gibault.

Forward Fetra Randrianasolo scored his first goal of the season with a pretty poke past the goalie while fighting off a defender, and the game ended with a final score of 4-0.

Although the result was great, O'Connell still thinks there's much more room for improvement.

"We had some issues with giving the ball away," said O'Connell. "But again, we've got to be better if we're going to beat teams like Webster later in the week and Jeff City on Friday."

SLUH played Webster Groves last night and lost 2-0, and will face Helias on Saturday.

Underclassmen Briefs

JV Soccer

9/6-John Burroughs

SLUH	1	1	2
Burroughs	1	1	2
Goals:	Jack Rudder, Henry Handley		

9/10-Gibault

SLUH	4	4	8
Gibault	0	0	0
Goals:	Jack Rudder (2), Dominic Ponciroli (2), Theodore Stephens, Will Coovert, Brendan Byrne, Michael Hiblovic		

9/11-CBC

SLUH	0	0	0
CBC	0	0	0

B Soccer

9/5-De Smet

SLUH	0	0	0
De Smet	1	1	2
Goals:	Will Broun		

9/7-Rock Bridge

SLUH	1	0	1
Rock Bridge	0	0	0
Goals:	Will Broun		

9/9-Collinsville

SLUH	1	0	1
Collinsville	0	0	0
Goals:	Henry Dowd		

9/12-Webster Groves

SLUH	0	0	0
Webster	0	0	0

C Soccer

9/9-Fort Zumwalt

South			
SLUH	0	6	6
FZS	0	1	1
Goals:	George Keyrouz (2), Keller Anderson (2), Miguel Ituarte, Joseph Oslascoaga		

9/10-Vianney

SLUH	1	3	4
Vianney	2	0	2
Goals:	Miguel Ituarte, David Garcia		

B Football

9/9-Ladue

SLUH	0	6	0	0	12
Ladue	0	0	8	8	16
Zachary Ortwerth:					
65-yard TD reception					
Craig Ortwerth:					
8-yard TD reception					
Thomas Etling:					
7 tackles					

-Compiled by Louis Cornett