

Swimming snags second at Mizzou Invitational in Columbia

BY ALEX WENTZ
REPORTER

Engulfed in foreign seas and surrounded by a jungle of black and yellow, the St. Louis U. High swim team fought tooth and fin to emerge with new hardware. Last Saturday, the swimmers traveled to Columbia, Mo. to compete in Mizzou's massive swimming facility. The Jr. Bills tied the Rockhurst Hawks, last year's State Champions, for second place, an unexpectedly fantastic outcome.

"We're very happy with where we placed," said assistant coach Jason Chumley. "Rockhurst placed a lot higher than us last year at State, so we did very well, even being just 38 points behind (the first place team) Lee's Summit West. I think we achieved our goal in placing high, maybe even over-achieving in that area. We're coming off of that meet feeling very confident."

The team's most outstanding event was the 500 yard freestyle, being the only event in which all four of the Jr. Bill entrants scored points (top 16 places earn points). Senior Ned Mehmeti led the charge with an astounding performance of 4:48.87, dropping nearly three seconds off of his seed time, and earning him 6th place. Following suit, freshman Jaden Yarbrough rocketed into the wall, swimming the 500 in 4:49:28, five seconds quicker than his seed time

and earning him 11th place. With the most significant improvement of any of the distance dudes, freshman Greyson Mueller lowered his time by seven seconds, clocking a 5:03.38 and coming in 14th place. To finish off the endurance quartet junior Brendan Schroeder glided into 16th place by just 0.41 seconds, finishing with a time of 5:08.36.

"My favorite (part of the meet) was honestly watching the 500 swimmers swim," said senior Brody Nester. "Jaden and Greyson both dropped a ton of time, and everyone was really impressive. They all swam great."

Mehmeti continued to conquer the 200 individual medley, dropping four seconds, and laying claim to the 6th place medal with a 1:58.82. Freshman Ben Chumley revealed the fruits of his arduous labor in the 200 IM as well, shaving off almost three seconds, and scoring the team points at 15th place. Coming off of a detrimental knee injury, junior Gavin Baldes was barely left out of finals with a 17th place finish, but his performance being so close to the threshold bodes well for the state meet.

The SLUH squad was strong in both endurance and sprinting events, with junior Jason Cabra (6th place) and senior Jonas Hostetler (7th place) both emerging with lightning quick speed in the 50 freestyle.

All the while, the Jr. Bills

were maintaining their comradery, cheering each other on with everything they had.

"The team had really high spirits," said Nester. "We always had five or six people behind each block to cheer on the swimmer. We all dropped a ton of time and I think part of that is from the cheering. The swimmers could even hear us underwater because we were so loud."

Like a torpedo, the Jr. Bills shot through the water in order to destroy their enemies. Chumley once again put on an impressive performance, coming in 13th place while dropping 2.5 seconds off of his 100 backstroke, landing him a 57.27. For the second time this season senior Cooper Scharff has made history, shattering both the meet record as well as his own school record in the 100 back, walking away with a gold medal after a blazing fast 49.23 second swim.

"(My favorite event to watch) was Cooper's 100 back," said Yarbrough. "It was so much fun to watch, and great to see him win. I just liked watching him swim so fast."

Continuing the trend of record-breaking feats of skill, senior Sebastian Lawrence destroyed the meet's diving record, tallying up a score of 523.75 to claim first place for the second year in a row, confirming that his aerial elegance is absolutely unmatched.

The U. High swimmers especially shined in the re-



Swimmers celebrating their second place finish.

photo | Tricia Nester

lays of the meet, fueled by their dedication to their brothers in blue. The 200 medley relay, composed of Scharff on back, Mehmeti on breast, Hostetler on fly, and Cabra on free, kicked off the meet with a third place finish and dropped 1.5 seconds off of their overall time.

Made up entirely of upperclassmen, the 200 freestyle relay came in clutch to drop 4.33 seconds off of their seed time. All fighting with everything they had, sophomore Henry Unger, junior Gavin Baldes, junior Solomon Shelton, and sophomore Kearney Foy combined their efforts to earn 7th place.

The finale of the meet was the 400 freestyle relay. The Avengers are a powerful team, but this squad of Hostetler, Cabra, Mehmeti, and Scharff may be even

more formidable. That team dominated all competition, seemingly imbued with the spirit of a great white they barreled their way to a first place finish with a time of 3:11.31. By the end of the race no one on the swim team was seated, for they were cheering as loud as possible, arms interlocked, behind the block of this great squad.

"After winning the 400 free relay, we all crowded (behind the lane) and started cheering, and that was easily the best part of the meet," said freshman Luke Gill.

"Certainly my number one favorite event to watch was the 4x100 free relay," agreed Chumley. "We were able to beat our top competitor, Rockhurst, and not only beat them, but make them get third, ultimately allowing us to tie."

Coming off of the fantastic finish, the St. Louis U. High swim team has a week with no meets, meaning they can focus entirely on training. This week has been all about pushing the limits of what each swimmer can do as the state meet quickly approaches. Now that the team has summited the Everest of the Columbia Meet, they set their sights on the stars, a State Championship.

"We need to focus on building our endurance and refining our technique," said Chumley. "Our turns were a little slow and we need to get that going. In a 100 free we have three turns, in a 200 you've got seven, so if you nail your turns you are already half of a body length ahead of your competitors, so that is super important."

Top XC runners enjoy out-of-state success at Palatine, JV dominates Fox Invitational

BY JOE LABARGE AND
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REPORTERS

The SLUH XC team was divided among two different meets last weekend, with the top 14 runners travelling all the way to Palatine, Ill. to compete in one of the most stacked meets in the whole state. The rest of the runners got to show off their skills at Fox's Ed White Invitational at Arnold City Park.

Despite racing their V3 squad in the varsity race at the Fox meet, the Jr. Bills were able to secure a second place team finish, losing only to Parkway Central. SLUH had three medalists in the varsity division with their pack being led by Lucas Rammacher who ran 18:08 and finished in 17th place. He was closely followed by Cody Cox (18:10; 18th) and Brendan Jones (18:17; 24th). Senior Flynn O'Connell (18:22; 27th) and freshman Gus Talleur (18:23; 29th) completed the top five scorers for Jr. Bills. Junior Nicholas Purschke (45th) and senior Tad Gray (57th) rounded out the varsity runners on the day. All the members of the varsity team that ran at Fox were able to set a new personal record or season best.

"I think we ran really well as a pack and were able to

push each other all the way to the finish," said Rammacher. "I was able to stay really mentally tough throughout the race and move up all the way until the end."

This year's JV event was split into two different races because of Covid, with the first allowing 10 individuals from each team to compete and the second allowing everyone else to race. SLUH won the first JV race by an astounding 120-plus point margin, medaling seven runners. In third place Gabe Sullivan finished first for SLUH closely followed by Tyler Barks (4th), Charlie Gray (5th), Alex Mitterdorf (6th) and Gavin Lawhorn (9th), all running between 18:37 and 19:03.

"I feel like they competed very well and worked very well together to move up as a pack," said head coach Joe Porter. "It really shows just how deep our team is this year and how even when you take our fourth seven we can still win by over 120 points and take down some really good JV teams in the area."

The second JV race was a much closer battle but the Jr. Bills were still able to come out on top, beating Webster's top JV team by five points. SLUH was able to medal 12 runners in this division, placing six runners in the top 10.

Overall on the day SLUH had a total of 46 personal records, nine season bests, and 22 medalists.

While other athletes were performing at the Ed White Invitational, the top 14 Jr. Bills traveled with coaches Porter and Gilmore to take on top competition at the Palatine Cross Country Invitational. After running the course on Friday, the team prepared for the Saturday morning races on a flat but winding course.

In the varsity race, Sean Kellogg (15:46; 33rd) and Grant Brawley (15:52; 43rd) had impressive races, with each earning a large PR (personal record) or SB (season best). Close behind, Baker Pashea (52nd) also managed to put up an impressive time and keep his race under 16 minutes. Justin Glass (16:06; 69th) and Joe LaBarge (16:12; 75th) closed out the scoring five, and junior Wyatt Seal (16:26) finished close behind and posted an impressive 14-second PR.

Overall, the varsity team finished 9th of 29 teams at the ultra-competitive meet against 23 top-ranked Illinois teams. Although not its best finish, the 9th place finish is Jr. Bills' fifth best varsity placement since they started attending the meet in 2010.

"I thought the team ran

really well, worked on getting out well, and pushed the middle mile," senior Grant Brawley remarked. "I'm very confident with where the team is at this point in the season."

In the JV division SLUH demonstrated its unprecedented depth and dominance over many top Illinois teams. Its second place finish is the highest JV finish that the SLUH cross country team has seen at the meet and a statement about SLUH's incredible JV team.

Tim Greiner (16:26) led off the scoring running just behind the top pack and posted an elite 5th place finish against a field of strong runners. Sophomores Mason Scargall (16:30; 9th) and Charlie Murray (16:39; 15th) crossed the finish line close behind. Will Riggan and Francis Alford rounded out the scoring five both with strong races, finishing just outside the top 20.

"It was nice to travel with the team again and race against some different competition," Tim Greiner noted summarizing the meet. "The race conditions were ideal to run fast times, and as a team coming out of that meet with lots of PRs and new racing experience, it was definitely a win in my eyes."

Underclassmen Briefs

C Soccer

9/29-Lindbergh
SLUH 0 1 1
Lindbergh 3 0 3
Goals: Jose Rincon (1)

9/28-Mehlville

SLUH 2 3 5
Mehlville 1 0 1
Goals: Jose Rincon (1), Max Tieber (1), Niko Vojacic (2), Jacob White (1)

B Soccer

9/28-Mehlville

SLUH 8 1 9
Mehlville 1 0 1
Goals: Connor Drozda (1), Ben Sluhan (2), Keegan Kesterson (2), Ben Begley (1), Keegan Leesman (1), Sam Hernandez (1), Jack McGaughey (1)

JV Soccer

9/27-Kirkwood

SLUH 0 1 1
Kirkwood 0 0 0
Goals: Emmett Gallardo (1)

9/29-Lindbergh

SLUH 1 0 1
Lindbergh 1 1 2
Goals: Jake McCarthy (1)

B Football

9/9-CBC

SLUH 16
CBC 40
Touchdowns: Nathan Gunn (1), Van Mohler (1)

Hole in One!

Congratulations to sophomore Miles Rittenhouse, who recorded his first ever Hole in One on Tuesday during Intramural golf. He used an 8-iron on #9 Hawthorne.



photo | courtesy of Miles Rittenhouse