



SLUH defenders line up against Lift for Life.

photo | Michael Urbanski

IN SPORTS

BY COBY SPRATTE
CORE STAFF

Coming off last week’s tough loss against CBC, the Jr. Bills rebounded significantly against the Lift for Life Academy Hawks while also celebrating the contributions of the many seniors on the football team. SLUH controlled the flow of the game in a dominant fashion, winning 48-20 on their final home game of the season.

“We had a great week of preparation, so when game time came we knew our assignments and we executed them. The score was a by-product of that great preparation and us doing our jobs,” senior wide receiver Chris Brooks remarked.

The Jr. Billikens received the opening kickoff and immediately made a statement on the opening drive, marching down the field and lighting up the scoreboard in less than two minutes.

Senior Andre Tucker punched it into the end zone

from 5 yards out for his first rushing touchdown of the season and the second of his career, making it 7-0 Jr. Bills with 10:07 left in the first quarter.

The defense came out sharp as well. With some help from the Hawk penalties, they were able to force a punt and hand the ball right back to the offense.

Starting their drive at mid-field, SLUH manufactured a seven play scoring drive, capped off by a 4-yard touchdown rush from senior runningback Derrick Baker. With 4:36 still left in the game, the Jr. Bills found themselves up by two touchdowns.

The defense remained sturdy on the Hawks’ second drive of the game, forcing another punt formation. After Lift for Life fumbled on an errant snap, they turned the ball over on downs and the Jr. Bills were set up with prime field position at the 20-yard line.

They were quick to capitalize as Baker scored his second touchdown of the day, a 5-yard rushing touchdown. The Jr.

Bills mishandled the PAT snap, though, and for the first time this season they couldn’t convert the extra point, making the score 20-0 with 11:36 remaining in the second quarter.

After another Hawks punt, it seemed as if Lift for Life might finally record a stop on defense. However, senior quarterback Luke Johnston connected with Brooks for a huge third down gain to set them up in the red zone. SLUH punched in their fourth score of the night with a 13-yard touchdown pass from Johnston to star sophomore receiver Ryan Wingo which widened the margin to 27-0 with 6:01 remaining in the second quarter.

It seemed SLUH was on its way to a landslide victory, but the Hawks finally gained some momentum and responded to the Jr. Bills’ first half onslaught.

In the final minutes of the first half, the Hawks drove down the field and put six points on the board after scoring a passing touchdown on a

jump ball to the back right corner of the end zone. Lift for Life was unable to convert the two point conversion, narrowing the score to 27-6.

SLUH was looking to answer the Hawks’ counterpunch, but Johnston threw an interception over the middle of the field which gave the Hawks the most momentum they had felt all night.

Lift for Life took a shot to the end zone and got incredibly lucky. The SLUH defensive backs who were covering the play batted the ball backwards, directly into the hands of a Hawks’ receiver who was able to dive into the end zone for a touchdown. The Hawks converted the two-point conversion and narrowed their deficit to 13 points.

The bad luck didn’t end there. On SLUH’s next drive, Johnston overthrew his receiver and the Hawks had their second interception in as many drives.

The Jr. Bills’ defense stood up the Lift for Life offense inside their own 20, though, and

got into the locker room with a 27-13 lead.

“I think we could’ve had better ball security during the game. We took the ball out of our hands way too many times,” said Brooks, “The only times Lift for Life scored were after we turned the ball over and gave them great field positioning.”

After honoring the 22 seniors on the varsity team at the half, the Jr. Billikens returned from the locker room and were faced with the task of responding to adversity, something they weren’t able to do consistently last week in their loss to CBC.

They did just that. SLUH held Lift for Life to just one touchdown in the second half, while adding three more of their own. Baker, Brooks, and Wingo all carried the ball into the end zone in the second half, bringing the final score to 48-20.

Johnston finished the game 16 of 20 passing for 262 yards, two touchdowns and two interceptions. His receiver

corps was anchored by Brooks with 6 catches for 121 yards and a touchdown, Wingo with 4 catches for 81 yards and two touchdowns, and junior Zach Ortwerth adding 3 catches for 30 yards.

On the ground, Baker continued his standout season, adding 116 yards and a 6.4 yards per carry average. Brooks added two carries for 36 yards and Tucker put the Bills on the board first with his loan carry of five yards.

The Jr. Billikens will travel to South Kirkwood Road for their first away game of the season, against the Vianney Griffins (0-6) tonight at 6 p.m. Vianney surrenders an average of 53.5 points against per game, so the SLUH offense will look to pounce on them early.

“In order to prepare for Vianney we’ve been taking the same approach as we have during other weeks,” Brooks said, “We’ve been pushing each other extremely hard during practice in order to make the game on Friday easier.”

XC showcases unparalleled depth in strong showing at Parkway West

BY JOE LABARGE AND
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REPORTERS

The SLUH cross country team was able to show off its incredible depth for the second week in a row by sweeping all but one division at the Parkway West Dale Shepard Invitational this past Saturday and taking home an abundance of medals. While the varsity squad had some mishaps, the rest of the team was able to clearly separate themselves from the rest of the field.

The varsity team kicked off the day, finishing second out of 20 teams. With 78 points, the team fell only to Rock Bridge (32 points). Although the varsity squad may not have raced to its full potential, they were still able to

medal five runners.

Leading the way for the Jr. Bills was senior Sean Kellogg who finished in 8th place (16:37.8). Grant Brawley (17:01.8; 14th), Baker Pashea (17:03.1; 15th) and Joe LaBarge (17:05.9; 16th) followed. Justin Glass was the Jr. Bills fifth finisher, coming in 25th place and running 17:29.5. Juniors Wyatt Seal (27th) and Nolan Meara (55th) rounded out the varsity runners on the day.

Even though the varsity team struggled by their own account, the team is still confident that they can tighten things up and be much closer to Rock Bridge during the postseason.

“Even though we may not have had the best day as a team, I’m still very confident in our racing capabilities and

think that we can improve significantly over the next few weeks,” said Pashea. “With a little work over the next few weeks on running together and helping each other during races we will be in a much better position when the post-season arrives.”

JV certainly picked up the slack for SLUH in the next race, placing seven runners in the top nine, and taking home nine medals. For the second week in a row, junior Tim Greiner led the way for the Jr. Bills, this time winning the JV race in a time of 17:48.9. Will Riggan (17:54.9; 2nd) and Francis Alford (18:14.3; 3rd) finished just behind Greiner. Rounding out the scoring for the Jr. Bills was senior Tad Gray (18:27.7; 5th) and junior Brendan Jones (18:35.4; 7th), which helped tighten the 1-5

gap down to 46.5 seconds.

The JV squad scored an astounding 18 points, plowing through their next closest competitor, Webster Groves, by 64 points.

“Even with four guys not racing due to injury, we were still able to put seven guys in the top nine, which is incredibly impressive and shows just how deep our team is this year,” said head coach Joe Porter. “It really shows just how good our runners are when you put them on the line against some of the top JV’s in the state and they can come away with a win by that big of a margin.”

With the inclusion of a sophomore race at the meet, the Jr. Bills were also able to demonstrate their dominance across the 10th grade level. Charlie Murray destroyed

the competition, winning the race by over 15 seconds and running a time of 17:51. Mason Scargall (18:07; 2nd) and Anthony Zangara (18:09; 3rd) continued the sophomore dominance. Charlie Gray (18:23; 5th) and Gabe Sullivan (18:55; 7th) rounded out the scoring five. The five sophomores scored 17 points allowing them an easy victory over the second place team, Webster Groves who scored 60 points.

“The race really came down to confidence and closing,” said sophomore stud Charlie Murray. “As a team, we really had to race to win and work together and we did just that. We are an extremely talented team and if we continue to race like it, we are going to see results.”

At the freshman level,

SLUH came out on top of its fierce competition with five runners in the top fifteen finishers. Gus Talleur (18:45) led off the scoring in 3rd place followed by George Donahue (19:10) in 9th place. Following just behind were Patrick Jones (19:37; 10th) and Logan Phillips (19:41; 11th). Mason Lauber (19:43; 13th) and Gavin Smith (19:46; 15th) closed out the scoring and brought SLUH to its third team win of the day.

After a strong day across the board at Parkway West, the cross country program’s sights are firmly set on the upcoming Hancock Invitational on Oct. 16. The meet takes place on what is typically a very fast course at Jefferson Barracks Park, giving runners of all levels a chance to run personal record times.