

# Varsity takes ninth place at the Palatine Invitational; JV wins the race for the first time in SLUH history

Lucas Rammacher and Brendan Jones, reporters

Sep 30 2022

At the midpoint of the St. Louis U. High cross country season, there was high anticipation as the varsity and top JV runners traveled 5 hours to Palatine, Ill., just north of Chicago. The team got the chance to practice an overnight team trip before the State event and compete against top-tier regional competition in this race before the post-State meet, Nike Cross Regionals.



Preparing for an out of town meet means traveling a day early to the meet, learning the course and strategizing the upcoming race, having a team dinner at a local pasta restaurant, and getting proper sleep at the hotel in preparation for the next day. Last weekend, head coach Joe Porter and coach Mike Lally took the team to see how SLUH's training has progressed so far with the goal of competing against some of Illinois' top teams in this meet.

"I was really really pleased with the day overall," said Lally. "We saw some nationally-ranked teams and to still get a top ten finish on the varsity level is insane. Our guys were running together and in a tight pack and those are two aspects we look for at this point in the season."

In the varsity race, while SLUH had no medalists, the team did what they were supposed to do and secured a 9th place finish in a competitive 30-team race. The solid finish was brought together by a 21 second gap between SLUH's top six finishers and a scoring five that averaged 15:54 for the three-mile race. Based on a comparison with this year's varsity average scoring time to last year's Palatine team, the varsity cross country team is nearly 15 seconds faster than last year.

Senior Tim Greiner led the way for the varsity team, taking places the entire race and being the highest scorer in 44th place. Greiner brought the pack through with a time of 15:40, followed by Nolan Meara (15:52 for 55th), Wyatt Seal (15:58 for 65th), Carter Lowe (15:59 for 68th), Jaden Elgin (16:00 for 71st), Charlie Murray (16:01 for 74th), and Will Riggan (17:01 for 158th). Both Elgin and Murray earned 6 second PR's on the varsity level.

The JV race at Palatine arguably has been one of the best JV races the SLUH cross country program has ever seen, and it was another race that demonstrated the incredible depth of the program. SLUH won the first-ever Palatine JV title in a field of 28 teams and 368 runners, placing all eight of its runners in the top 16 overall and scoring a JV-low 34 points. The scoring runners completed the three miles in an average time of 16:18, with just 12 seconds separating the first and fifth place finishers.

Individually, Gus Talleur led the way, challenging for the win. In the end, Talleur took second place, the second highest individual finish SLUH has had at Palatine in JV and with a PR of 12 seconds, Talleur broke 17:00 in his 5K conversion time(16:49).

"I feel like the way we raced as a team (at Palatine) was really amazing and I think it puts us in a great position for even faster times later in the season at more important races like districts, sectionals, and state," said Talleur.

After Talleur, Anthony Zangara (16:16 for 6th), George Donahue (16:18 for 7th), Alex Bendaña (16:20 for 8th), Gavin Smith (16:24 for 11th), Lucas Rammacher (16:25 for 12th), Charlie Gray (16:29 for 13th), and Brendan Jones (16:33 for 16th) followed behind, bringing a time split of 21 seconds from Talleur to Jones.

The varsity cross country team will take on the Parkway West Invitational tomorrow as they look to carry their success from Palatine.