

Letter to the Editors: Walking to School

May 16 2025

Athlete of the Week: Ivan Kennedy

May 16 2025

Man at the Masthead: Missey's humble service at Prep News spans quarter century

May 16 2025



Search

SPORTS

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Vincent Weinbauer, Sports Editor Oct 20 2023

This week I met with varsity cross country runner senior Charlie Murray. Charlie was selected athlete of the week by Blue Crew for his unparalleled performance in the MCC meet Tuesday, Oct. 5, when he ran a 16:34 5K with a breathable gap between the runner up, his teammate Jackson Miller, who finished with a 16:52.



Charlie Murray keeps a steady pace. Photo | Courtesy of SLUH XC

Vincent Weinbauer: When did you start running competitively? Was it something you fell in love with when you were younger or did you compete on a



English

team? Was it a recreational thing for you? What did you do before coming to SLUH?

Charlie Murray: It was only recreational before I got to SLUH. I joined the team because I wanted to play a fall sport and I don't swim or play soccer, and I am not a big kid so there was no way I was going to play football. Before high school I would go on casual runs with my mom like once a month. That's pretty much what happened. I just wanted to play a sport and it worked out the best.

VW: Well obviously you've turned out to be pretty good at it. At this point you have been on the team for all four years. Where do you see this team leading and how has our success been and how will it be throughout the remainder of the season?

CM: This year the team has been great. We have great talent in freshman Jackson Miller, along with a lot of junior firepower with George Donahue and Gus Talleur, and we have been great and I think we have a great chance at succeeding in the postseason.

VW: Let's focus more on you a little. I have never run anything compared to cross country. What is the big thing to overcome in a race? Is it more of a mental thing or a physical thing when it comes down to it?

CM: Sure, you have to be in shape to be able to run but it's all mental in the end. Once you get on the line you have to sort through a ton of thoughts and lock in for the race you are about to run. It is you versus yourself; keeping your head in the race the entire time is a key component to running well or else you zone out and lose it.

VW: Going into the MCC race, what was your plan and how were you approaching that race?



CM: The Wednesday before we went to the course and ran it twice. I took it in and assessed the hills and different things I could use to my advantage. The hills were actually the biggest thing to take into account because that's where you are able to create a gap between the runners behind you. As soon as that gap gets created, it's hard for the runners behind you to catch up. That was my plan going into the race and it paid off. Again the biggest thing was when I got those gaps to make sure I kept a good mentality, stayed in the race and didn't let up.

VW: What's the mindset you are going to have as state approaches and what are your goals to finish off your cross country career at SLUH?

CM: The biggest thing is to not overthink and it sounds cliché but you have to have fun while doing it. If you end up overthinking then your head is out of place and you don't run well. At state, individually it would be nice to be all state, but I would like to fall somewhere around the top ten, but the main goal is to win state with the team. We've been hammering all year so now in the postseason we have to stay sharp and make sure we feel good about what we are doing.

VW: That would be awesome if you guys brought it home this year. I can't wait to see the results!

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May 16 2025

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