



# SLUH XC top 7 runners remain undefeated; team advances to State for 28th consecutive year

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SLUH lives to run another day! With an impressive first place performance at the Class 5 District 2 XC meet, the team qualified for the state meet, marking the 28th consecutive time in SLUH XC history that the program has qualified for state.

The course at Sullivan was not a fast course but was very technically challenging. The course quickly narrowed at the beginning with a tight 180-degree turn within the first 60 meters, forcing the racers to get out quickly and swing wide around the turn in order to get in a comfortable position. Racers had to navigate tight turns especially on the back end of the race and had to be cautious of their footing because of the mud caused by the week’s rains. Despite these conditions, SLUH was unfazed.

“I knew that it was going to be a slower course and a bit messy, but I was not particularly concerned,” said senior Daniel Hogan. “We train in this weather, and we work hard and stay tough despite

the conditions. I think that this is what makes us such a good XC team.”

With the bang of the start gun, SLUH racers bolted from the line to get in a strong position early, and through the first kilometer, almost all of the XC bills were packed up in the front.

“Our pack did a great job of getting out front early and controlling the race from the start,” said junior Baker Pashea. “It was very exciting to be surrounded by so many white jerseys, and a huge confidence boost.”

“In the week leading up to the race, we were all a bit worried about only two teams allowed to make it to state. We are in a really strong district,” said senior Aidan Byrne. “But when I saw a huge pack of almost all of our guys right up front about a mile, I knew that we were going to do really well.”

The race began to string out in the middle mile, and with a strong move by Marquette’s Ethan Koop, the race really became a race for second. Hogan, along with four other runners from Lafayette and Marquette, were all in contention for second in the

final 500 meters.

“They had been pulling me along the entire race. My strategy was to stay behind them most of the race,” said Hogan. “But when the Lafayette runner made his move, I kind of realized that I don’t need to stay behind these guys the entire time, and so I tried to move up. I was really glad that I was aggressive, especially in that last part of the race.”

Hogan fell short to three out of the four racers in this pack, but beat Marquette’s Connor Del Carmen, who beat Hogan earlier this season. Hogan has now beaten all of Marquette’s top seven runners.

“It definitely is reassuring to know that I am in the mix with all of those guys. We haven’t had a lot of big meets where we compete against teams from across the state, so it is helpful to have at least this,” said Hogan. “I know two of them were all-Staters, so it definitely gives me confidence going into state.”

Yet, the race was really won for SLUH in the pack five places back from Hogan. Led by juniors Grant Brawley (9th) and Pashea (10th) and followed by seniors Ryan Kramer (11th) and Hayden



Senior Daniel Hogan nearing the finish at District meet. photo | Mr. David A. Kramer

Zenor (12th), the pack of four continued to push the pace throughout. The gap between Hogan and SLUH’s fifth man Zenor was only 19 seconds—by far, the smallest gap of the season.

“We said our front guys are going to cover the front of the race and cover the lead as long as they can, and our one to five gap needs to stay under 30 seconds; if we do that, then we are going to have a ton of success and that’s what happened,” said head coach Joe Porter. “Our one to five spread was 19 seconds, which is incredible.”

So far this season, SLUH’s top seven has been undefeated. SLUH hopes to build upon this performance at the state

meet, where SLUH will race against 15 other teams.

SLUH’s JV and freshman groups closed their season at the Findley Invitational with a spectacular win in the freshman and JV levels.

In the freshman race, SLUH won the race with Charlie Murray (1st) and Anthony Zangara (2nd) both running sub-18:15 to earn themselves varsity letters. Murray won his third race this season and was among six other SLUH freshmen to finish in the top ten of the race.

The JV race was split into two heats, and SLUH took 20 of the 25 medals in the JV race as a whole. In the first heat, SLUH took the top 15 finish-

ers. In the second heat, seniors Parker Stus and Alex Thro dueling each other for the win in the first two miles. Stus made a move in the third mile to take the heat two victory.

“MileSplit can take out and create a virtual meet minus the top 7 of each team, and our JV was able to win that. Across the state, if you take JV 8 to 14 then we have the best JV in the state by taking everyone’s best times. We win if we go from 14 to 21 and 21 to 28, too,” said Porter. “I think the results speak for itself. Everybody is really contributing at a really high level, and we definitely have the best JV team in the state.”

# Swim and Dive caps off undefeated season with win against Chaminade, prepares for MCC Conference Meet



photo | courtesy of @sluhswimdive

Left to right: diving coach, head coach Lindsey Ehret, senior Eli Butters, senior Joseph McArthur, senior George Hudson, coach Alexander Schenk.

BY CARTER SPENCE  
STAFF

The St. Louis U. High swim and dive team concluded the regular season with a dual meet victory vs. Chaminade on Senior Night to finish the shortened season without a single loss. For head coach Lindsey Ehret’s squad, however, an undefeated season has become the norm.

“It’s happened the last six seasons I’ve been here,” Ehret said. “We’re very good and usually have tons of depth.”

Looking ahead, the Jr. Bills will have their final chance to qualify swimmers

for the state championship meet with their state conference meet this afternoon (Wednesday, Nov. 4) at Chaminade. The qualifications now require a swimmer to be in the top 24 statewide in his event.

A trio of Jr. Bills currently have times just outside the top 24. Sophomore Gavin Baldes holds the 26th spot in the 100-yard butterfly and the 28th spot in the 200 individual medley. Sophomore Jason Cabra’s time in the 100 freestyle—which was 21st in the state just a week ago—has now fallen to 26th. Junior Brody Nester currently holds the 27th spot in the 100 breast-

stroke, just behind freshman Aidan Brawer, who narrowly owns the 24th spot. Ehret is optimistic that the three will sneak into the top 24, due to both their improvements and state meet rules.

Some swimmers, like Lee’s Summit West’s Caleb Ellis, are qualified in nearly every state event, and will be forced to compete in only a select few, potentially opening up room for many on the bubble, depending on the event.

“There’s a limit to how many events you can swim,” Ehret said. “Usually about five to six spots open up, so if you’re 25th, you’re probably safe.”

If no swimmers dropped out of an event, the improvement needed for each SLUH swimmer to jump into the top 24 would still be incredibly thin. Cabra, for instance, would only need to shave 0.14 seconds off his 100 freestyle time in order to qualify for state. Baldes and Nester would need roughly the same amount of improvement in order to qualify in their events.

“I’m trying to rest as much as I can outside of school and swim practice,” said Baldes. “I’m also trying to eat healthy, get as much sleep as possible, and overall just trying to keep in mind at practice that I’m so close to

a chance to swim at state to really stay focused so I can do as well as possible when it comes time to race on Wednesday.”

Despite much uncertainty on the borders of the 24th spot, most of SLUH’s experienced qualifiers are comfortably inside the new state championship range. The dynamic trio of senior Eli Butters, junior Cooper Scharff, and junior Ned Mehmeti accounts for nine of SLUH’s qualifiers; each is qualified in more than one event, as well as being a part of SLUH’s three qualified relays. Junior Jonas Hostetler is another Jr. Bill safely qualified in two separate events, sitting at eighth in the 50 freestyle and 11th in the 100 butterfly. After Tuesday’s conference meet, Cabra could also be qualified in multiple events.

The JV swim and dive team also concluded its season with a final meet on Oct. 31, a quad meet vs. MCC rivals De Smet, CBC, and Vianney. While not every JV member participated, the team edged out De Smet for first, and showcased the raw talent of SLUH’s underclassmen.

“The meet was mostly for some guys who won’t swim at the varsity MCC meet, but also for some regular JV guys,” Ehret said. “I thought

it was more beneficial for most of the JV swimmers to have time trials.”

Sophomores Brandon Harris and Matthew Sommers, junior Dennis McDaniel, and sophomore Freddy Laux swept the 100 yard freestyle with ease, nearly five seconds separating Laux and the fifth place finisher. Harris, McDaniel, Laux, and freshman Matthew Peretz also combined to win the 200 freestyle relay by nearly twelve seconds. Sophomore Sam Zychinski led the charge in the 100

backstroke, another event SLUH swept first to fourth in by a wide margin.

After competing in their conference meet this afternoon, the Jr. Bills will then prepare for the State Championship meet on Nov. 13, a chance to win their third straight state championship.

“I’m cautiously optimistic—that’s been the mantra,” Ehret said. “I have been really happy with the way things have gone despite all the challenges and obstacles.”



photo | courtesy of @sluhswimdive

The team lined up before its final regular season meet.