



At a Glance

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BTSM IS BACK

Sweat, crottops and crowdsurfing: The Holy Trinity of BTSM



A student crowdsurfs the mosh pit. photo | Isaiah Hinkebein

BY NATHAN RICH
SPORTS EDITOR

After the virtual black hole of last year, a school year finally started the way it should: with real, live sweaty bodies and near total chaos. Featuring 800 girls and a shirt optional dress code, the Back to School Mixer returned last Friday, and students everywhere, hungry for moshing, breathed a sigh of relief. “Last year was rough, for everybody,” said senior spirit leader Matt Kluba. “For us to come together as a community, whether we were dressed up in jorts, moshing together, or even standing in the back getting a glass of water, I think it’s important that we were all together in one place as a community and building that for this coming school year.”

BTSM faced unique challenges this year, but STUCO Moderator Bradley Mueller knew from the start it would be worth it. “It was for the students. So many guys had missed so many cool things, group events, dances, Running of the Bills, the list goes on. When it comes down to it, we did it for you guys,” said Mueller. The first obstacle was, unsurprisingly, Covid. When STUCO began planning the event in early August, they first had to have several discussions with the administration, knowing in the back of their minds that the question for BTSM was not if, but how. “I think everyone was curious about what we had to do to make it safe, the big question was not

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Studium added to provide students time for academic pursuits

BY JACK FIGGE
EDITOR IN CHIEF

The Administration had a significant list of improvements that needed to be made to student life after last year. Among them was finding a way to use time made possible by the block schedule and to give students new and meaningful ways to pursue their academics. In this year’s newly revised school schedule, Studium is how they plan to make that happen.

Last year, SLUH transitioned from its standard seven period schedule to a block schedule. This change was made to better accommodate the hybrid learning schedule the school was forced to undertake due to Covid. Instead of having an Activity Period, the schedule included a period called Academic Lab every day for students to talk to teachers and relax. Another addition to the block schedule was “period eight” which occurred on B days. Period eight came at the

end of the day, resulting in most students simply leaving early instead of participating in school activities. “We put it (period eight) at the end of the day because we didn’t want students around when they weren’t in class,” said Assistant Principal for Academics Kevin Foy. “By the second semester, we didn’t need to force kids to go home anymore, but a lot of guys had developed habits and carpools that involve leaving early, which was a problem.”

The new school year offered the administration a fresh start to boost student involvement and student-teacher interaction. To tackle these issues, the administration rolled out another revised block schedule with two new changes. “We saw an opportunity to really try and separate academics and activities, which means that we can concentrate and do a better job than we ever have before, on the academic side, and tackle the deficit of activities

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Sophomores finally enjoy defining SLUH moments

BY ROARKE UNRAU
NEWS EDITOR

Running of the Bills, home-room competitions, class mass, bashball—each of these activities is part of a typical freshman year at SLUH. Because of the pandemic, the current sophomores—members of the class of 2024—have not yet experienced many of these traditions. But that will change this fall, as the sophomores will finally be able to experience the awe of an all school Mass, the sweatiness of BTSM, and the pain of forgetting your locker combination.

Last year, the first few weeks of the year were all online as the school prepared for the arrival of half the student body and the installation of a new HVAC system. For many of the current sophomores, this was an awkward experience, and not the first day of high school they were expecting.

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PN Investigates: The bizzare adventures of the Jr. Billiken mascot

BY LUKE DUFFY AND BEN CROAT
WEB EDITOR, REPORTER

A mischievous member of the class of 2021 swiped the Jr. Billiken mascot costume sometime after school ended last year and then spent the summer venturing around St. Louis and taking pictures at notable locations. “It was fun, I think the intent behind it was fun,” said StuCo co-moderator Megan Menne. “It wasn’t a negative, it was more confusing I think.”

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art | Will Blaisdell

After years of planning and construction, SLUH retreat center opens to school community



Madonna Della Strada Retreat Center. photo | courtesy of SLUH Facebook

BY JACKSON COOPER
CORE STAFF

Just over an hour’s drive north of the campus of St. Louis U. High sits the Madonna Della Strada Retreat Center, 89 acres of pristine rural Missouri land that, as of this past summer, is now open and available for retreats and group service opportunities.

The idea of a retreat center owned by SLUH was first hatched under the leadership of former President David Laughlin as a part of the Go Forth campaign, though some of the first substantial developments occurred early into the presidency of current SLUH President Alan Carruthers. Since then, Carruthers has taken the lead role in the acquisition of the site and the construction of new infrastructure on the property. The center, which sits near the small town of Silex in Lincoln County, came under the ownership of SLUH through a mixture of donations and purchases from the Sansone family, who have a long history of philanthropy in both the school community and in the St. Louis area as a whole.

Among St. Louis’s Catholic high schools, SLUH is unique in that it is the only one with its own retreat center. The acquisition of Madonna Della Strada makes SLUH the third Jesuit high school in the nation to take ownership of a retreat center.

“We’re only the third Jesuit school to have a retreat center like this in the United States, so we’re not the first and we can learn from those experiences (of other schools),” said Carruthers. “We have sent teams to find out how the other places are utilizing and running theirs, and how they’re continuing to grow.”

The administration hopes that a SLUH-owned retreat center will eliminate much of the cost associated with facilitating school-sponsored retreats. The cost of the acquisition and subsequent construction is also expected to be made up by allowing the space to be rented by outside

organizations who wish to hold retreats there.

“We were looking at ways in the long term to make (retreats) more affordable,” said Carruthers. “So, believe it or not, with the number of retreats that we can do with teams, and if we can eventually get to a level where we can host larger retreats like Kairos, for example, we can actually utilize it as a cost-cutting measure. If we can start to rent the center to other outside groups, which we’ve also started to do, we can start to generate revenue. We can go from placing pressure on tuition to actually helping us with our budget.”

Once the property was acquired, the administration began to finalize plans to expand existing facilities, including a revamping of the sewage system and expansion of bed space for overnight retreats. In addition to a main building that formerly served as a country home, the center also offers a variety of outdoor activities such as running and walking trails, a small pond for fishing, and a firepit area.

In addition to this abundance of recreational options, plans are underway for a renovation of a barn on the property, which is expected to be used as a rec center for retreat groups.

Plans have also been made to construct an authentic Marian Grotto on the premises, which aims to further reinforce the faith component of Madonna Della Strada.

“We had a donor provide the financing to put in a true Marian Grotto,” said Carruthers. “We have an old Italian marble statue of Mary that has been in school storage for years, so we’re going to build a grotto around her, which will be a great faith enhancement piece to add to the property.”

As the construction at the center has gradually been finished, larger groups have visited the property for a variety of different opportunities. The Fathers’ Club has already visited several times for various retreats and service opportunities, and both the soccer and football teams

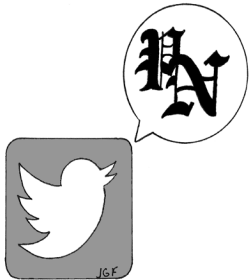
visited for single day retreats over the summer.

As of now, only one formal SLUH student retreat is scheduled to be held at the center, the 10-person Art Retreat that is led by art teacher Sean Powers. As of now, larger overnight retreats are unable to be held at Madonna Della Strada as there is only enough room for fewer than 30 guests to spend the night. The administration is working to remedy this problem, and the hope is that some bigger retreats, such as Kairos, will be able to take place fully, at the center, in the coming years. The possibility of holding a one-day retreat, such as the Freshman Retreat, at the center has also been considered.

“Right now, there just aren’t enough beds for us to bring in 150, 200 people out there,” said Director of Campus Ministry Fr. Matt Stewart, S.J. “But right now, freshman retreat isn’t overnight, so it could be possible (to hold the retreat at the center). It’s the sort of thing that could happen. I also could see something like Direction Days being out there. We just aren’t totally certain at this point.”

In addition to academic retreats, the hope is also that some of SLUH’s many clubs, teams, and activities will take advantage of the opportunity to have retreats and outings to the center.

“We have already had some teams use it,” said Carruthers, “I believe football and soccer so far have done retreats there. Hopefully we could see Cross Country move their retreat there, we have some trails that could be appropriate for that. I’m just really excited. It’s a tremendous resource.”



New Faculty: Stewart, S.J. returns as head of Campus Ministry

BY ALEX PREUSSER
REPORTER

St. Louis U. High welcomes Fr. Matthew Stewart S.J., ’98 back to the SLUH community as a priest, theology teacher, and Director of Campus Ministry.

This will be the third time Stewart has been at SLUH: once as a student, once as Director of Campus Ministry, and now as a priest. After graduating from SLUH in 1998, Stewart went on to major in music at St. Louis University, with minors in both theology and psychology.

“I love singing and music of all kinds,” said Stewart, emphasizing one of his great loves that he hopes to use in his time here.

After his tenure at SLU, he spent some time at Rockhurst High School in the Alum Service Corps, and then returned to SLUH, where he spent seven years as a theology teacher and in roles that included Director of Campus Ministry.

“There is so much great energy here,” said Stewart. “I have really dynamic, creative, and passionate colleagues.”

During this time, Stewart began discerning the priesthood and, after seven years at SLUH, he decided to enter the Jesuit novitiate in southwest Louisiana.

“My discernment to enter the Jesuits and to become a priest was kind of a long process for me,” said Stewart. “It took a long time because I loved what I was doing. I loved living in St. Louis, I loved my friends and all the stuff I was doing. And so when I started kind of feeling this very quiet, but very

persistent sense of, what if I’m called to this, this life as a Jesuit priest? I was like, Oh, boy, no way. But it just kept resurfacing, year after year.”

During his formation, Stewart lived in a variety of locations, ranging from New York City at Fordham, teaching at Regis University, to earning a licentiate in sacred theology in Boston.

Upon ordination, Stewart was assigned as associate pastor of the college church at St. Louis University for a year.

“One of my Jesuit friends says that my love for learning is my most consistent quality,” said Stewart.

After serving as associate pastor for a year, he was assigned as Director of Campus Ministry at SLUH, taking over for Fr. Joseph Hill S.J., who was transferred last year.

“I love working in high schools,” said Stewart. “I love teaching. I love theology. I love being a priest and a Jesuit. To be able to be at a place like this is really awesome.”

Even though he has past experience at SLUH, Stewart

knows that he needs to be adaptable in order to help in the ways he hopes to, particularly in helping students to discern specific vocations.

A message that Stewart holds a firm belief to and wants to emphasize during his time is that everyone has the same vocation—“to be you.”

“As a married person, a single person, a religious, a priest,” Stewart said, everyone is created by God to carry out this purpose: “to figure out how I am best able to be myself.”

Stewart believes that it is his mission to convey the love that God holds for every person and convey so in all of the various aspects of his ministry, whether it be teaching, in the confessional, or saying a Mass.

“I want every kid in our school, literally every person in the school, that would include faculty, staff, parents, alumni, benefactors, everybody involved in our school, to know that they are infinitely loved by God,” said Stewart.



photo | Mrs. Kathy Chott

Jr. Bill mascot head takes whirlwind tour of STL and beyond

(continued from page 1)

We just didn’t know who had it, and also how they got the head of the Billiken.”

The Jr. Billiken relayed his travels to some top school officials in a series of peculiar emails sent throughout June. The first email, sent on June 11, included pictures of the Jr. Billiken at some rival MCC schools, posing with the statues of Pierre-Jean De Smet and Jean-Baptiste de LaSalle’s (at CBC).

“A buddy of mine in the class of 2021 got me out for a little fresh air,” said the email.

“I went looking for my mascot buddies, but all I found were statues.”

Throughout his travels, the Jr. Billiken was set on finding his mascot friends. He continued his rendezvous around St. Louis, visiting popular STL landmarks such as the City Museum, the Arch, and Ted Drewes Frozen Custard. He went downtown to see a Cardinals game and a Blues game, but unfortunately was unable to meet up with other mascots.

Toward the end of June, the mascot decided to kick it up a notch and ventured out

of the state on vacation. The email chain was flooded with pictures of Mr. Billiken at the airport, on the beach, with the Statue of Liberty, and on college campus visits.

“We were just very confused about the whole situation,” said Menne. “So you’re looking for the Billiken head and then all of a sudden we started getting pictures of it around the United States. Like how does a head get to New York or Boston or wherever?”

Eventually, StuCo reached out to the student who pulled off this feat and arranged for a return of the head. While his intentions seemed to be good, StuCo moderators were displeased that he had taken the head without asking.

“I think that it was just good fun,” said Menne. “I think that the person that took it just kind of saw an opportunity, maybe to bring a little joy and fun to the community and he went with it. There was good intent behind it, it was just a strange situation.”

The Billiken head has been safely returned, and students can count on seeing the Jr. Bill in promos and at games again this year.



The Jr. Bill culprit at the Arch. photo | courtesy of Prep News

PN Puzzle: “Back to School”

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12
13					14						15		
16					17						18		
19				20					21	22			
			23					24					
25	26	27						28			29	30	31
32						33	34				35		
36						37					38		
39					40						41	42	
43			44						45				
			46					47					
48	49	50						51			52	53	54
55						56	57				58		
59						60					61		
62						63					64		

crossword | Paul Baudendistel

- ACROSS
1. *Thawing meat and dicing onions, e.g.

5. *Dark time

10. *Prescription part

13. Path for automobiles

14. SNL alum Cheri

15. Cliché dog name

16. Awards acronym

17. Sacred item, especially a pole

18. Days in March
19. *"... _____ to defeat the Huns."

21. *Surfing the web

23. Black, green, and oolong

24. Eye sore

25. *It starts on the longest day of the year

28. *Rent a boat

32. Larry, Moe, and Curly, e.g.

33. Actor Jake or midfielder
35. The loneliest number

36. Glenn Miller's (I've Got _____ in) Kalamazoo

37. Removes rinds

38. Sen. or Rep.

39. Comp. storage

40. Plunged head first

41. First volume

43. *Lowest ranking soldier ... and one of three theme entries that apply to SLUH
45. *Out in the open

46. Pay to play

47. Actor Michael who portrayed George Michael Bluth and Scott Pilgrim

48. *Time period named for a celestial body

51. *Pass needed to get on a plane

55. British behind

56. Earlier

58. "Me also."
59. _____-friendly

60. Winged messenger

61. Quotable auth.

62. *Regulation

63. *Swap players or draft picks

64. *Sweet place
- DOWN
1. Commoner, from Roman times

2. Brand of pasta sauce

- whose name means pasta sauce
3. Cardinal Slaughter
4. Type of brief seizure
5. Type of baby shampoo
6. "For _____ and turn, I can't sleep at night." — Tainted Love
7. Understands
8. Eur. state that lasted from Charlemagne to Napoleon
9. Actor Dalton and terrorist McVeigh
10. Skirt that goes past the knees
11. Idyllic garden
12. Prescription part
15. A good citizen, by April 15
20. More than want
22. Long-distance swimmer Diana, appropriate rhyme for a water nymph
24. Reprimand
25. A famous one depicts an airplane upside down
26. One who prods insistently
27. Only major U.S. city founded by a woman
29. Fiddler on the Roof star
30. Japanese mushroom
31. Indiana Jones target
33. Flood wall
34. Director Spike or martial artist Bruce
37. Heartbeat sound
40. Actress Delany or SNL alum Carvey
41. VP who killed Hamilton
42. Shortest book of the Bible
44. Whom Obi-Wan lied about
45. Vision store chain
47. Murmured, like a dove
48. Damascus traveler
49. Heavenly bear
50. Cardinal directions
51. Feature of an Oakland hat
52. "Pay _____ mind."
53. Weight-loss app that focuses on psychology
54. Left, as with the wind
57. Mil. down time

Complete the crossword? Email prepnews@sluh.org to be featured in next week’s paper!

FSC adds scrumptious new menu options and commits to sustainable changes

BY LUKE DUFFY
WEB EDITOR

Hungry? Stop by the cafeteria during lunch or Studium for some exciting new treats. Kathy Hylla and her team from Food Service Consultants have been hard at work diversifying the menu and making the lunch line far more enjoyable and sustainable.

For the early birds, Food Service will offer a delicious smorgasbord of breakfast foods every morning. There will be scrambled eggs, fried potatoes, bacon, sausage, biscuits, gravy, waffles, muffins, cinnamon rolls, and a sandwich of the day. The chefs will even be offering an omelet bar, serving omelets cooked-to-order every morning.

“I walked down there to get breakfast, and I no-

ticed the omelet stand and I thought that it was a nice idea because if you don’t want scrambled eggs or something you can have a personalized meal,” said junior Charles Turnell.

At lunch, there will be a “SLUH plate” special: an entree and two sides which are rotated daily. Entree options will include pork loin, pot roast, and salmon. There will always be three vegetables and a vegetarian option. Food Service also has a new hand-breaded chicken sandwich with a spicy chicken option and a chicken club.

On the beverage side of things, the soda machines are back on, there is a brand new coffee bar, and the coolers feature several new canned drinks.

These many improvements to the menu were added because Covid restrictions

concerning food have eased since last school year. This allowed the chefs to introduce new food options and go above and beyond with the menu.

“We broaden our range of things that we’re doing because of being able to serve yourself,” said Hylla. “I mean, before it was everything in a box or everything wrapped up. That was kind of hard because you eat with your eyes, you know you have to look at it, so we wanted to make sure you can see what you’re eating.”

Another goal for Food Service this year is sustainability. They are trying to eliminate waste production by offering more recyclable and compostable goods than ever before.

“Everything that you have in there outside of maybe a chip bag or a candy wrap-

per, everything will be compostable,” said Hylla. She also noted that this goal hasn’t completely been reached due to shortages on some compostable items.

“Another thing we’re working on is no plastic at all,” said Hylla. “That’s been quite a challenge because the aluminum market is really limited right now, and not producing everything that’s possible in aluminum, so we’re kind of restricted in that aspect.”

Despite the many manufacturing shortages, Hylla is trying to implement environmentally friendly products wherever she can. Many items that were previously individually packaged will now come in dispensers; for example, the sugar and creamer for the coffee bar is in a dispenser instead of small packets.

Satire
We did it, boys! Covid in the Commons is no more!

BY NATHAN RICH
SPORTS EDITOR

This past week, in a controversial move, the SARS-CoV-2 virus, more commonly called Covid-19, announced that finally, after deliberation, it would agree to not infect anyone during lunch. The meal time had long been a target for the virus, as it consistently featured maskless students. So naturally, when Fr. Gibbons labeled the commons “base” and loudly responded “No fair! I was touching the commons so you can’t infect us!” when Covid tried to infect students, the virus was confused.

After taking the summer to think it through though, Covid agreed to not exist in the Commons. In the deal, Covid still retained control

over the rest of the building, so masks are a must. In the Commons, though, students should not feel worried about the virus, it’s known for keeping its word. Not only can students eat without dividers, they can finally sit by their friends without masks.

“I mean, I was really surprised but I’m super glad we have the Commons. Be careful, though, I wouldn’t go out there,” said one Sophomore, gesturing to the open doors of the Commons. “I hear there’s a pandemic or something going on.”

To its credit, the Administration did make sure to stress the imminent danger that lies outside the Commons. Students are advised to continue wearing tasks until Gibbons can negotiate another base for students to relax at.

The glorious return of the mixer to end all mixers



STUCO members at the BTSM. photo | Isaiah Hinkebein

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whether we can have it, I think it was what do the precautions have to be like in order to host the safest event,” said Mueller.

The administration and STUCO moderators, looking for examples of crowded gatherings, turned to events going on around them. Several upcoming concerts in St. Louis, as well as this year’s Lollapalooza, a music festival that takes place in Chicago, require either proof of vaccination or a negative Covid test to enter. Those events

inspired the precautions for BTSM.

STUCO also spent time discussing their plan with local doctors, who had worked with SLUH on safety planning before.

“The question to the doctors was is this a safe event to host with these precautions in place, and we got a yes,” said Mueller. “The administration relied heavily on a safety committee which is made up of some faculty and staff and also doctors that they’re getting ad-

vice from. That’s where we got the decision to go ahead and do it.”

The complicated and somewhat late notice admission requirements had many students worried about attendance. After all, BTSM must be packed in order for it to be BTSM. That changed though, when STUCO saw that the girls tickets had sold out.

“It went way better than my expectations,” said Kluba. “I didn’t think a lot of people would come but we had like

1350 people. I really think they enjoyed it.”

“I feel like people didn’t know what to expect coming into it because it had been so long,” said STUCO vice president Ismael Karim. “But then we just, like, turned up crazy.”

With tickets thoroughly acquired, the next issue for STUCO was the venue. Traditionally held in the Danis Field House, BTSM had to be moved to the Drury Plaza this year to reflect virus concerns. The move was at first a controversial one. STUCO worried that the space would be too small and too hot, but they quickly realized the benefits of being outside.

“I loved the natural air compared to the circulation of the Field House and the sweat dripping from the ceiling. It was nice to have a breeze blowing at you when the mosh settled for a minute,” said Kluba.

“It was definitely different in terms of location and amount of people, definitely lacking in the amount of people. You couldn’t tell, though, because people seemed to be having a good time out there,” said STU-

CO president AJ Thompson.

Thompson even went so far as to suggest a potential permanent change.

“I think we might have some competition in the coming year to either keep it outside or put it back inside,” he said.

There will certainly be justification for keeping the event outside. Afterwards, this year’s BTSM received rave reviews from first time attendees.

“It was the greatest school activity I’ve been to,” said freshman Trevor Koenig. “Its entire reputation alone—you don’t want to miss it. I was excited for it because I knew it was going to be great from its reputation.”

“It was awesome,” agreed Brewer Hamilton, also a freshman. “I had a great time and I met a lot of people. I’ve heard a lot of good things from older people and STUCO definitely hyped it up. They said it would be a great time and I believe them.”

Even returning students had positive reviews for the new BTSM.

“I was surprised that they pulled it off and I was surprised it was actually worth it

to be outside,” said junior Tyler Woodcock.

The only mixed review came from senior Alex Mitten-dorf, who worked concessions and filled water for the thirsty moshers.

“It was a lot crazier and frantic than I thought it would be. We thought 3,000 cups would be plenty, but I’m glad we bought the extra ones,” he said. “It was still a blast though.”

As for president Thompson’s final reflection on BTSM, it can be summed up in one word: “exuberant.” He knew from the start how important it was to get BTSM right, and STUCO certainly did that.

“One important aspect of any school in general would be inter-grade interaction,” said Thompson. “I think that’s something we lack at SLUH a little bit, especially after last year with the cohorts and the schedule. Nobody saw each other. This year, with Studium and AP at the same time, I think we have that going for us and it’s just important to get the year started on the right foot with the whole school being together at BTSM.”

Upcoming traditions to immerse sophomores in SLUH brotherhood

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“It was pretty weird, not being able to meet people, not being able to interact with your teachers. It was kind of awkward to have to see everyone on a screen and have to sit in Zoom with them, it was pretty different, pretty weird,” said sophomore class president Kodi Cade.

The first day of the second semester for the 2020-2021 school year was the first day where SLUH opened to full capacity, a real first freshman day for the class of 2024.

“It was like first day part two,” said sophomore Tim Browdy. “It was an amazing experience and it felt really busy. It felt like I was truly at SLUH.”

“The first day of second semester was a little challenging” said sophomore Charlie Isom-McCall. “But once you get to walk around and get to know everyone and see all the great things that are SLUH, you realize why it’s so much better to be in school than it is to be at home.”

In a semester that was half virtual at all times, Browdy ran for freshman class president and experienced many obstacles and hardships, but persevered nevertheless.

“My original reason to run was because my older brother was the student body president and I had taken an interest in student government in middle school. I definitely piggybacked off of that. I think it was really important for us to unify in

such a time where we were supposed to be separate,” said Browdy. “It was pretty difficult because you had to appeal to the other cohort who may have never seen you in person. You had to give a speech that can’t only appeal to the people that already know you, but also just give a basic description of what you’re all about and what you want to do for the class.”

Many sophomores, including Isom-McCall and Charlie Gray, found some sense of normalcy and community within the sports they played.

“It was manageable, because last year we would get out at 1:20 with the block schedule so I had a lot of time to do my homework” said Gray.

“It was really odd because everyone would have screenings every two weeks, and we’d have to wear a mask on the soccer field,” said Isom-McCall. “I think with anybody else that played more than two sports, it was really challenging for them not really being in school all the time and trying to be Covid safe.”

One of the most formative parts of freshman year is daily homeroom. Making friends and competing in homerooms for fundraisers or intramurals is a staple of a typical freshman year.

“For most guys, their best friends come out of homeroom because they’re the guys who they’re with everyday in the morning. I know that guys

will sit together in my classes based on alphabetical order, even though I don’t require it, because they’re in homeroom together and they know each other,” said sophomore class moderator Frank Corley.

Year after year, BTSM proves to be a defining moment for freshmen. This year, only half of the student body has ever experienced one before. Only half of the student body knew what it was like to get light headed in the mosh pit, or to be shoved around and not be able to breathe in the process. This year’s BTSM was something that many sophomores had been looking forward to for a long time.

“It was awesome. I didn’t really know what to expect, but it was a pretty cool experience” said Gray. “It was like I jumped into a pool afterwards. I definitely was a little light-headed.”

This year will definitely be important for the upperclassmen to lead and show the way for not only the freshman, but the sophomores too. A defining year is ahead of us, one where both the freshmen and the sophomores still have many things to learn, and many firsts still left to do.

“The theme of this year is joy. So as Student Council and as the sophomore class we need to bring more joy and more spirit to the student body,” said Browdy. “It’s coming together and making up for what we didn’t have last year.”

Faculty confident that Studium can break bad pandemic study habits

(continued from page 1)

ties that we have experienced in the past 18 months,” said Foy.

This opportunity resulted in the readdition of the beloved Activity Period and the creation of a new period called Studium.

Studium is a daily period—30 minutes on A days and 55 minutes on B days—for students to meet with teachers, work on group projects, finish homework, or do any other activity related to academics.

“The biggest reason that we created Studium is that we know that students have faced a lot of difficult circumstances in the last couple of years,” said Foy. “We want more opportunities for kids who got out of a normal academic rhythm to get support for getting back into a normal academic rhythm.”

Studium is also intended to bridge a gap that the administration noticed last year, a lack of deeper relationships between faculty and students. With the awkward schedule last year, students were not able to form personal relationships with their teachers, an attribute that SLUH prides itself for having.

“There were often many students that I wanted to reach out to more intentionally and sit down with whether they were struggling or I just never had a chance to get to know them or chat with them because sometimes it would just be hard to schedule that meeting,” said math teacher Stephen Deves. “Now, (with Studium) the time is given to you.”

“Studium is a great time where I can get to know my teacher beyond the realm of the subject that they teach,” said junior Charles Turnell. “I think that if you have a relationship beyond the classroom you will prosper more.”

Studium also creates a natural time for students to collaborate on group projects and

further pursue their interests in their classes.

“Studium can help answer the decreased amount of instructional minutes by taking some of the time that teachers might have dedicated to a student’s individual pursuits, now you can take those individual pursuits and you can work on them during Studium,” said Foy.

One problem that faced SLUH and students in the past was that students had to choose between extracurriculars and meeting with teachers. Studium helps solve that problem.

“We were also trying to answer an age-old SLUH problem, which is Activity Period,” said Foy. “There were just constant conflicts between the club that you really love and when your teacher wants you to come in for extra help or wants you to make up a test.”

During the 2020-2021 school year, SLUH students experienced a lack of extracurricular activities. The readdition of Activity Period intends to counteract this effect and restore SLUH’s thriving extracurricular community.

“In the last five quarters we’ve seen a deep deficit in activities,” said Foy. “We got word from STUCO, and all the other student activities people, that they are really ready to go get those clubs and organizations back up and running. That made us start thinking that if activities grow even bigger than they used to be, the conflicts will only get worse, so let’s do what we can to separate time for activities from time for academic pursuits.”

“One nice thing this year is with the separation of Studium and Activity Period, there’s a distinct separation between time for you to meet with your teachers and finish up your homework and then here’s time

for you to do, like Spirit Week activities or your club activities or intramurals or just hang out,” said STUCO co-moderator Megan Menne.

Activity Period is designated as a time for students to participate in extracurricular activities and different activities. To promote student engagement, STUCO is hosting the yearly Activities Fair during Activity Period today. The Activities Fair is an event where students can peruse tables hosted by different clubs and sign up for any clubs that interest them. In addition, during morning announcements STUCO will begin announcing what clubs are hosting activities after school.

“Right now we have about 50 clubs signed up (for the Activities fair)” said Menne. “I think that’s just a sign that the clubs themselves are ready to go this year.”

“Activity Period gives me a lot of different opportunities to try new things,” said freshman Nuri Guneyli. “Also if I am not doing anything it gives me more time to get ahead on my homework.”

The goal and hope of Studium and Activity Period is to rebuild the community that SLUH prides itself in and to respond to the deficit of student engagement and interaction experienced last year.

“One of the reasons I love working at SLUH is because it’s such an amazing community,” said Menne. “Teachers aren’t just teachers and students aren’t just students, they are a community. They have other aspects of their lives outside of the classroom. They have what they’re interested in, and what they’re passionate about. And last year when we didn’t have the ability to interact as much, I feel like we kind of lost a little bit of that sense of community.”

Commentary: Should SLUH Mandate the Vaccine?

SLUH must mandate vaccines to overcome pandemic

BY LUKE DUFFY
WEB EDITOR

Overcoming Covid-19 has been the singular focus of the SLUH community since March of 2020. We have endured strenuous Zoom calls, uncomfortable masks, and painstaking sanitation for an entire school year. Our collective goal is to bring an end to this pandemic, and the easiest way to accomplish this is vaccinating the entire SLUH community.

While the vaccination campaign has made tremendous progress in the United States, the Covid-19 Delta variant is spreading rapidly. Missouri Covid-19 cases spiked in July with a 185 percent increase between July 1 and August 1 and have since plateaued. St. Louis is not much better: cases in the city increased by 150 percent during the month of July and have not dwindled since.

So what is the best way to prevent Covid from spreading? Getting vaccinated. Although there have been many breakthrough cases, most vaccinated people who get Covid will be asymptomatic or have very light cases. According to the CDC, only 0.005% of vaccinated people to get Covid have been hospitalized or died.

Given the evidence of the vaccine's efficacy, the rate of vaccination in our region is pitiful when compared to the rest of the country. St. Louis City is only 45.1 percent vaccinated, and St. Louis County is only 54.1 percent. Within our SLUH community, 74 percent of students are vaccinated. While this figure has increased significantly in the past weeks, we can and should do better.

The major counterargument to schools requiring vaccines is that students should have the freedom to decide whether they get a vaccine.

However, SLUH already requires students to be vaccinated for other diseases. If we have to be vaccinated for measles and smallpox, why shouldn't we have to be vaccinated for Covid-19?

Additionally, many opponents to vaccine requirements say that since the vaccines are under emergency use authorization they are less trustworthy. Not only have all of the vaccines proved highly preventive against Covid infections and symptoms, the Pfizer-BioNtech

vaccine received full F.D.A. approval on Monday, Aug. 23 for everyone 16 and older. It is completely irrational to doubt the efficacy and credibility of the Pfizer vaccine, and this reinforces the necessity for a vaccine mandate.

This pandemic is not over, but we are in the final stride and nearing the end of a horrible chapter for the human race. With firm leadership, SLUH could say goodbye to the Covid-19 pandemic for good. We must all get vaccinated.

Vaccine mandate would cause more harm than good

BY JACK RYBAK
CORE STAFF

The list of problems that the Covid-19 Pandemic has caused at SLUH is a long one: annoying masks, remote learning, a lack of class and club involvement, to name a few. All of us want to return to a state of normalcy by ending this pandemic, and with the development of the Covid-19 vaccine, an end is in sight. However, a school-mandated vaccine would cause more harm than

good.

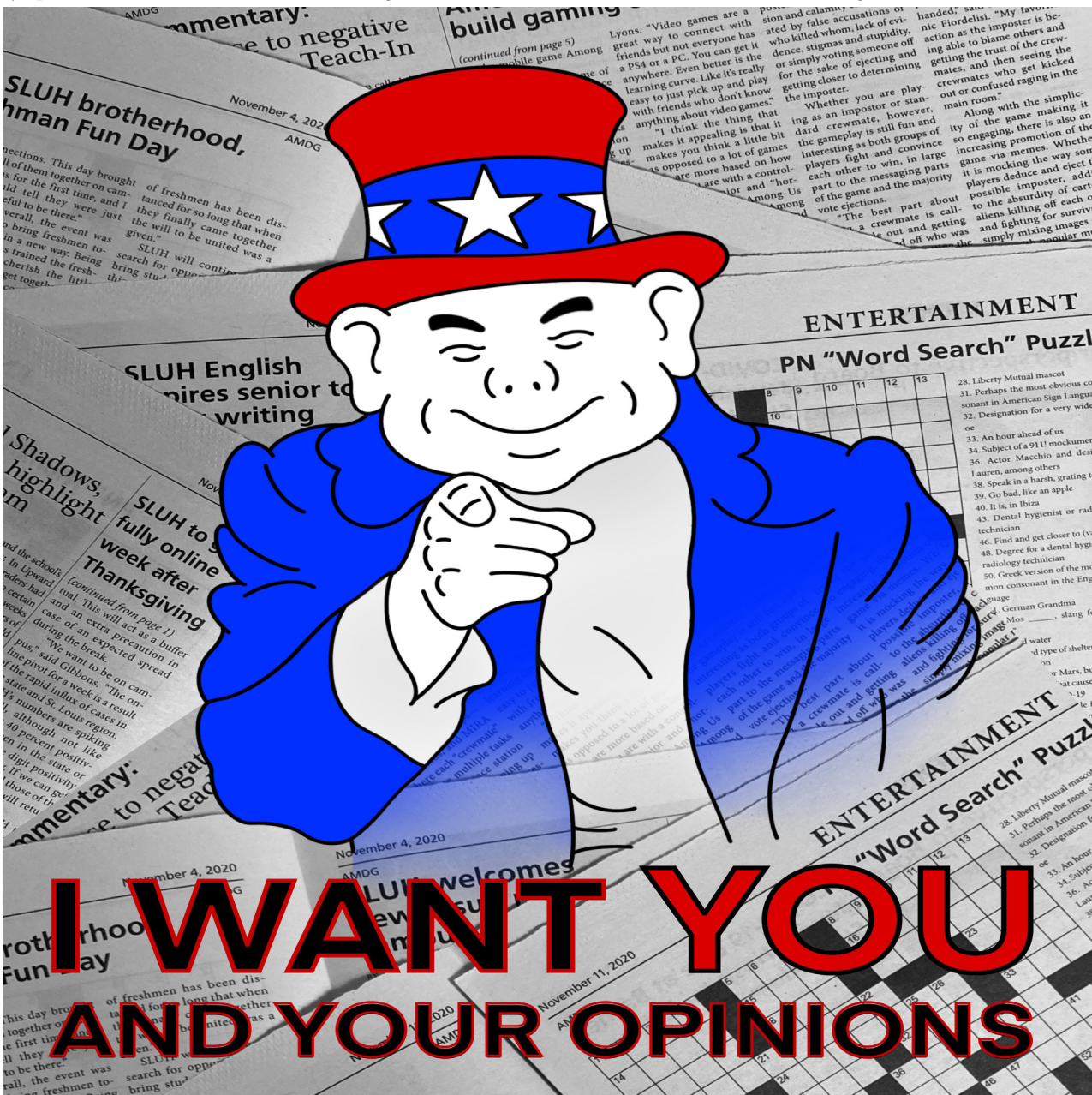
While the vaccine is most certainly the fastest and most effective way to end this pandemic, forcing students to take the vaccine would, I believe, result in extreme backlash from families. Additionally, shouldn't the students of SLUH have the choice of what vaccines they get? While the school does require immunization for other diseases such as smallpox, the differences between smallpox and Covid-19 must be acknowledged. Our World in Data esti-

mated that roughly five million people died from smallpox each year, making it deadlier than the Covid-19 virus. Additionally, the smallpox vaccine also underwent more testing and was headed by the World Health Organization.

Within SLUH, over 74 percent of students have received both doses of the vaccine without using a vaccine mandate, a 11 percent increase in the one week since school has started. In addition, 90 percent of faculty have received both doses of the vaccine. These numbers will only continue to increase with time, resulting in a natural fully vaccinated community. This strategy will allow the school to avoid any problems a mandate could potentially cause.

Many will argue that requiring the vaccination would speed up the process of reaching a fully vaccinated school. However, the time it would take to get students and faculty fully vaccinated would be at least 21 days for the Pfizer-BioNtech vaccine and 28 days for the Moderna vaccine. A 21-day minimum for a fully-vaccinated status assumes that all unvaccinated students and faculty received the vaccine at once, which is unlikely. Another common counterargument is that having the vaccine would reduce the spread of the virus, but that may not be the case. According to the CDC, even fully vaccinated people can become infected with the Delta variant and can spread the virus to others.

With the number of students and faculty fully vaccinated increasing and the number of positive cases decreasing, the end of the pandemic is in sight. The requirement of the vaccine would only bring about problems for the school. The easiest solution to end the pandemic would be to continue to encourage the students to get fully vaccinated.



art | Charlie Bieg

Prep News 86 Platform

As the student-run newspaper of St. Louis University High School, the *Prep News* is a weekly publication that strives to inform the SLUH community about events and people, with its focus on those pertaining to the school, primarily through the written word.

The *Prep News* is neither the voice of the administration nor the students. Rather, the newspaper serves to gather and distribute information for the entire school. The *Prep News* editors and staff members make every effort to be objective in their news coverage and editing.

The members of the editorial staff are co-workers and share equally the duties of writing, copy-editing, layout, and staff management. All of the editors share responsibility and leadership of the paper. The editors are supported by a core staff of regular reporters as well as artists and photographers.

It is the role of the editors

to seek out and facilitate the reporting of all significant news at SLUH. While any faculty member or student is welcome to submit suggestions to the editors for potential articles, the *Prep News* is never obligated to publish any article idea.

Our primary emphasis as editors of the *Prep News* is upon clear and accurate writing and careful editing. We also attempt to include visual expression—photography, drawing, technical aids, etc.—in every issue and on our web site. Despite our desire to make the paper visually appealing, we commit ourselves not to allow form to supersede substance.

The editorial staff will use social media to communicate with the paper's readership and to update students about SLUH events and highlight the paper's content. The editors will not allow their goal of speed and accessibility online to weaken their commitment to accuracy and depth.

The *Prep News* strongly encourages underclassman involvement, and our office on the second floor of the Jesuit Wing, room J220, is always open for involvement, criticism, praise, or suggestions. Contributed student opinions are also welcome under the *Prep News* Editorial Policy. Without student reaction and feedback, the *Prep News* could not function.

If the *Prep News* is inaccurate, we will correct any significant error in the following issue and on our web site as soon as possible.

Furthermore, the editors assume sole responsibility for the text of news and sports articles, features, and editorials. We ask faculty or students who take issue with the manner in which the news was reported or find an error to bring it to the attention of the editors, not the individual reporters.

This is the platform of the editors of Volume 86 of the *Prep News*.

Prep News 86 Editorial Policy:

Interested in sharing your opinion with the Prep News? Our door is always open!

The Volume 86 *Prep News* opinion section serves the purpose of being the vehicle of the personal opinions of students, faculty, or others at St. Louis University High School. All topics discussed in the section will be related to St. Louis University High School.

Nothing published either as an editorial or as a letter to an editor should be considered the opinion of the school, the administration, or anyone other than its author or authors.

A *Prep News* editorial is the opinion of all five editors on a particular topic.

A commentary or column is an opinion of one member of the *Prep News* staff, not of the *Prep News* itself.

A perspective or notebook, like a commentary, is the opinion of one person, often a *Prep News* staff

member.

Unlike a commentary, such a piece is often intended primarily to convey a personal experience rather than to provide a viewpoint on an issue. Unlike a letter, such pieces are usually developed at the request of, and sometimes under the guidance of, the *Prep News* editors.

Every member of the SLUH community is welcomed and encouraged to submit a letter to the editors. Every letter received by the editors will be read and given consideration. All letters must be signed, but the author's name may be withheld from publication by request and at the discretion of the editors.

The *Prep News* editors reserve the right to edit any submissions for publication in order to meet grammatical standards, but they will not

skew the author's original intent. Also, the editors reserve the right to withhold from publication any submission if it is deemed vulgar, tasteless, or otherwise inappropriate. Authors should be available for the editors to contact them before publication to address matters of concern.

All authors wishing to have letters published must submit them by 4:00 p.m. the Wednesday before the letter is to be published.

Letters should be emailed to prepnews@sluh.org, and, if possible, a signed copy should be given to a *Prep News* editors or moderator or mailed to the *Prep News* courtesy of St. Louis University High School, 4970 Oakland, St. Louis, MO 63110.

S P R T S



The Year of the Billiken: Breaking down football’s star-studded roster

BY JACK RYBAK,
COBY SPRATTE
CORE STAFF

On the first day of fall practice, coach Adam Cruz deemed this season the “Year of the Billiken” on his Twitter account, anticipating an exciting breakthrough season for the Jr. Bills on the gridiron.

“We have a really strong senior class ... they’ve kind of been through it all together,” remarked Cruz.

The four-year seniors on this team have been here for the highs and lows. The last three years, though, have seemingly yielded more lows than highs. They had to endure a 1-9 freshman season which featured five losses by four touchdowns or more and ended with a 63-0 blowout loss to CBC in the first round of the district playoffs.

The following year, the team vastly improved to finish the year 5-5, but again were knocked out in the first round by CBC.

Despite some tough times, second-year starting quarterback Luke Johnston sees the team’s past three years in a different light.

“The chemistry has been great,” he said. “I’ve known these guys for four years now so not only do I know how they move on the field but we know each other on a personal level, which is really important. We trust each other.”

SLUH will look to couple this comraderie and chemistry with a plethora of skilled playmakers to make a deep run this year, in what is the 50th anniversary of the last State Championship team at SLUH.

“The goal is always state,” starting safety Phillip Bone said simply.

The Jr. Bills see this goal as more than attainable not only due to their team rapport, but also because of their talent and playmaking abilities

on both sides of the ball, especially on offense.

“We’ve got a really strong backfield and a really strong receiving corps, really just a lot of offensive weapons in general,” Cruz recalled.

For the second straight season, senior captain Luke

Johnston believes that what makes the Jr. Bills dangerous is their assortment of options and balance in their offensive unit.

“We are a well-rounded team this year. I wouldn’t say anybody stands out more than anyone else,” said John-

ston after recording 400 yards on 20 catches in only four games of his junior season.

Wingo, the No. 6 player in the nation for the class of 2024, rounds out SLUH’s top three options. He boasts a 4.37 second 40-yard dash and will use that speed and

Brown, was the biggest question mark for the Jr. Bills. As practice has progressed though, it has since proven to be the most consistent positional group on the team. The starting line is rounded out with sophomores Gus Dames and Vince Chappuis,

sophomore campaign as the Sam linebacker.

The defensive line remains a strong suit for the Jr. Bills with senior noseguard Pierston Sanders, two way player Watson-Brown, senior Cayden Owens, with sophomores Archie Carruthers and Kyle Wright eating up some minutes as well.

Despite losing All State specialist Tyler Ridgeway, the Jr. Bills look to be set up well on special teams with seniors Thomas Ziegler and Connor Greninger manning the kicking duties, and Ziegler and senior Owen Rittenhouse splitting the team’s punting duties.

This goal of winning a state championship has been etched into the back of all 109 Junior Bills in the 2021 football program, starters or not, since before the first day of summer workouts. They clearly have the necessary pieces to accomplish that feat, but there’s a reason you show up and play every single week.

Bone iterated how, “this year, we are putting a lot more emphasis on winning each week instead of dwelling on what’s coming down the road, which has helped a lot of guys with their mentality.”

Yet, the strongest piece of mantra for the team has been the phrase, “burn the boats.”

In 1519, Spanish Conquistador Hernán Cortés arrived in the New World with 600 men and proceeded to burn all the ships once they had come ashore. This sent a clear message to his men: there is no turning back. We commit in full to win each outing. Two years later, Cortés conquered the Aztec empire. The football team will attack this season with this same driving mindset.

“We’re all willing to go out there and fight for each other. It makes it easier to play in the game knowing your brother has got your back,” said Brooks.



Senior Derrick Baker slides by a Carnahan defender as senior Craig Ortwerth sets a block

photo | courtesy of viclewchenko

Johnston will be at the helm of the Jr. Bill offense, looking to build off of his Second Team All Conference campaign last year, in which he threw for 11 touchdowns in just four games. Johnston will have a plethora of options at his disposal to set him up for a career best season.

The backfield will be primarily manned by senior running back Derrick Baker, who transferred to SLUH last year from Affton after rushing for 1300 yards as a sophomore. Sophomore Kodi Cade and junior Kam Bailey provide good positional depth for the Jr. Bills, but Baker’s speed and strength makes him the team’s ideal three down back.

ston.

The team’s wide receiver corps is, arguably, the most talented and deepest in the state, led by their three-headed monster of four-year starting seniors Isaac Thompson and Chris Brooks, and sophomore phenom Ryan Wingo.

Thompson, a Mizzou commit who came in at 7th on the St. Louis Post Dispatch’s Super 30 ranking, racked up 796 all purpose yards his sophomore year, and will look to improve upon those numbers after being out for the majority of his junior season due to Covid.

Brooks, a Yale commit who came in at 17th for the Post Dispatch’s Super 30, will be the team’s second option

athleticism to capitalize on his first full season for the Jr. Bills.

Behind this behemoth of a top three, Jacoby Oliphant, a 6’ 4” sophomore transfer from Trinity, will look to break onto the scene and make a name for himself. Other pass catchers, like seniors Tommy Etling and Craig Ortwerth, and sophomores Joe Harris and Nathan Gunn, will add remarkable depth as they vie for targets. The Jr. Bill offense also boasts junior Zach Ortwerth, an underrated 6’ 5” tight end with both blocking and pass catching abilities.

Throughout the offseason, the offensive line, led by senior captain Kyland Watson-

and juniors Matt Barnes and Alex Fowler.

On the other side of the ball, the Jr. Bills will line up two-way player and four-star DB Isaac Thompson at strong safety, alongside All-District senior captain Phillip Bone at free safety.

Two-way players Oliphant and Wingo will man the sidelines at cornerback with seniors Tommy Etling and Andre Tucker Jr., and junior Trey Smith-Crowe mixing into the equation as well.

For the third consecutive season, senior captain linebacker DonTavion Sullivan will man the middle of the field, and he will reside alongside Louis Kertz, who will look to build on a solid

Blue and White Week boosts team bonding to start the season

BY ALEX WENTZ
REPORTER

After a year stranded in foreign waters, the St. Louis U. High swim team has finally been able to return to its chlorinated paradise of Forest Park Community College. After a tough season that culminated in 5th place at state, the squad is eager to get back into the water and dominate the competition this year.

Along with the reacquisition of the home pool comes the reinstatement of many SLUH swimming traditions that were absent last year. This week in particular was “Blue

and White Week,” in which the Varsity and JV squads are split into two teams (blue team and white team) then compete against each other in a series of swimming activities. The first of those activities was the aptly named Blue and White Meet, a full intrasquad meet that serves the purpose of gathering swimmer’s first official times in their events and familiarizing the team with the pace and intensity of a high school swim meet.

The two teams were almost perfectly balanced, resulting in the blue team etching the white by just one point. The final score was 93-93.

The rest of Blue and White Week entailed friendly competition in more unconventional races.

The first race was dubbed the underwater relay because competitors were not allowed to come to the surface of the water during the race. The second event was titled the kickboard relay, its gimmick being that each swimmer must not only use his legs, but also stack the previous racer’s kickboard on top of his own which eventually culminates in the final swimmers balancing a comically large number of kickboards while trying to propel themselves as fast as possible with only their legs.

“I am enjoying seeing all the news guys come in and swim, being part of the team and being part of the traditions,” said senior Cooper Scharff. “It’s cool to see everyone (come together) as a team for the first time.”

Blue and White week is just one of many fun events that the swimmers are participating in now that they have returned to local water. Tomorrow the swim team will participate in the two-mile “Swim Across America” event, a fundraiser for cancer research that takes place in Alpine Lake.

The team’s meet schedule has also returned to normal

this year. Their first competition will be against Francis Howell Central at Forest Park Community College on Sept. 3. The playfulness of Blue and White Week paired with the familiarity of this year’s pool and schedule has left the team feeling more formidable than ever before.

“Our goal is another state championship,” said head coach Lindsey Ehret. “I’m not going to lower the standard because we didn’t win last year. We have a lot of potential, and things will have to fall into place and people will have to step up. (Overall) we’ve had a great couple weeks of training so far.”



For more on
the swim
team’s
charity work,
scan this
code!

AMDG

Volume 86, Issue 1

Soccer blows by MICDS, Timberland in preseason Jamboree, anticipation grows as team nears Marquette matchup opener

BY NATHAN RICH AND
MICHAEL ROBINSON
SPORTS EDITOR, REPORTER

Everything seemed to go right for SLUH Soccer last Tuesday. From finding the back of the net eight times in just 70 minutes to not letting up a single shot on defense, the Jr. Bills fought hard under the scorching sun to roll over visiting opponents Timberland and MICDS.

The fall soccer Jamboree is a preseason tradition that features two 35-minute scrimmages against opposing high school teams. This year, the practice bout was the Jr. Bills’ first taste of real gameplay in several months, and served as a preview of the deep talent on this year’s team. Head Coach Bob O’Connell was able to play all of his varsity players over the course of the two games, and SLUH still shut out the competition, beating Timberland 6-0 and MICDS 2-0.

The offense dazzled against Timberland. The Jr. Bills hoarded the ball for most of the half and their quick passes created several breakaway opportunities.

“To be honest, I was really pleased with the amount of chances we created. We scored six goals in the first period—that’s a lot of goals,” said O’Connell. “I don’t know if I’ve had a group in any game

or Jamboree score that many. I thought offensively it was pretty good.”

Both teams seemed to have an obvious size advantage against SLUH, but experience proved sufficient for the Jr. Bills. Three of SLUH’s starting forwards this year are seniors, including Tyler Van Bree, who joins varsity for his third year in a row, and Stephen Saladin.

“We’re pretty good up the middle,” O’Connell noted. “We have a lot of senior leadership up the middle of the field. Having Stephen play for us again this year is something that a lot of schools don’t have. His speed is different and his toughness is going to help us score goals.”

Rounding out SLUH’s senior offense is Johnny Ferrara, who started at right forward in both Jamboree matches. Ferrara led the team with two goals in the match against Timberland. His first goal, a vicious shot that looped over the head of Timberland’s defense after a breakaway, showed the speed and precision of SLUH’s offense when it’s clicking.

Still, senior Evan Yalavarthi saw room for further improvement.

“They were introductory matches so we did put up a lot of goals, but I also thought we still have a lot of work to do,” he said. “We are still trying to figure our formation out. I think we have all the players and

pieces we need but it will still take time to combine them all together. We don’t really have the chemistry yet to win a state championship.”

Yalavarthi, who starts at midfield, also brings varsity experience to the roster. He joined the team as a sophomore, and now he’s looking forward to being a leader for the young team.

“We have a lot of talented players on the team but also the team is kind of young,” said Yalavarthi. “We have a senior in each spot, though: defense, midfield, and offense and then we have the younger players around us, so I think the seniors will definitely be leaders.”

Junior Midfielder Davis Ragan is one of those surrounding players.

“We have a lot of talented players” said Ragan. “I feel that as a team we are yet to prove ourselves, but if the Jamboree was any indication of the future, I’m excited.”

On the back end of the field, play on Tuesday night was just as clean. Senior center back Ben Ridgway and sophomore center back Christian Thro were able to keep pace with both teams’ strikers all night, chasing down every breakaway. Senior Brian Critchfield, who started in goal against Timberland, only touched the ball once in his roughly 20 minutes of playing time.

The pair of defenders also made contributions on offense. Ridgway rushed the net to score off a corner kick against Timberland and Thro notched an assist against MICDS after he rocketed the ball up the field to junior Sam Tieber, who scored on the breakaway.

Still, O’Connell faces uncertainties about the starting defense.

“Some of the areas we are still questioning is who the goalie will be and how we’ll play in the back,” he said. “I think the Jamboree answered some of those questions but we still need to see our back three or four against some better, faster kids.”

Ridgway agreed with both O’Connell and Yalavarthi: the ceiling for SLUH soccer is still higher.

“We didn’t let in any goals and I see that as a success but it’s early in the season and there’s always room to improve,” he said. “But as a first look of what our team’s going to look like, it was very good.”

The wins last Tuesday showed the strength of SLUH’s roster this year, but they will have a tough task ahead of them on their season opener. This Tuesday, the Jr. Bills will travel to Marquette to take on the Mustangs.

“Marquette is always really well coached, to open with them will be a real test. I know



Junior Sam Tieber against MICDS photo | Richard Taylor

they have a forward, number 10, who’s really special as well,” said O’Connell.

“I’m excited to play Marquette,” said Ridgway. “They’re supposed to be a pretty good team so it will be a good test to see how we play as a team. If we can come out with that game, our season will look pretty good.”

In the meantime, O’Connell plans to focus on defense at practice, drilling his team on defensive responsibility and when to press opposing teams. Even this early in the season, though, the Jr. Bills are looking past the season opener and keeping their focus on its end: the playoffs. After losing back to back district semifinals, var-

sity soccer is looking to finally capitalize on some of its talent.

“This is one of the best teams I’ve had since I’ve been playing,” said Yalavarthi. “Obviously our end goal is to win a state championship. Last year we didn’t really get the chance to come together as a team so we never reached our potential. This year, we’re starting out strong and if we keep winning we’ll definitely make it to the state championship.”

“We are always, and I really believe this, more concerned with our own development,” echoed O’Connell. “Hopefully we keep getting better. We don’t want to be the best team in August, we want to be peaking by the end of October.”

Senior Chris Brooks commits to Yale University



Brooks posing in the Yale Bowl. photo | courtesy of Chris Brooks

BY JACK RYBAK
CORE STAFF

Senior Chris Brooks, a standout wide receiver for SLUH since his freshman year, verbally committed to Yale University on July 16.

Brooks made headlines recently, ranking at number 30 in the 2022 Rivals Missouri Top 30 ranking. Brooks began to shine on the field his junior year, when racked up 400 receiving yards and six touchdowns. The Jr. Bill standout also achieved the 2020 1st Team All-Metro title.

Brooks had several schools to look at, but decided on Yale for the opportunities he would have both on the field and in the classroom.

“There’s no doubt in my

mind that I want to try to pursue going to the NFL,” said Brooks. “(Yale is) just the best place for me in both aspects of my own athletic future and my future outside of football.”

Another large factor for Brooks was the feeling of familiarity and the welcoming feeling the campus gave off.

“It was a place that felt like home. When I went up there for a visit or a week, it felt exactly like SLUH,” said Brooks. “Even the campus and just seeing the people there and meeting all the coaches, I kind of knew it was the place I wanted to call home.”

The SLUH has high praise for Brooks as a phenomenal player on the field and a better person off the field.

“As a leader, as a football player, as a student, and as a young man, I believe God does not make them much better than Chris Brooks,” said assistant coach Adam Cruz. “He is the quintessential role model and ambassador to the school.”

While Brooks continues to look towards his future, he is also looking forward to the upcoming season with the Jr. Bills. This is the Year of the Bill and Brooks plans to go all the way to the state championship and bring a ring with him on his way to Connecticut.

“I think that next year is gonna be very, very good,” said Brooks. “State Championship or nothing.”

Cross Country sets sights on state title after 3 years as runner-up

BY JACKSON COOPER AND
PETER JAMES
CORE STAFF, STAFF

If you happened to venture to Forest Park on an early morning this summer, it would have been hard to miss the SLUH cross country team putting in miles on the trails and gearing up for what is hoped to be a successful season.

In each of the past three years, the Jr. Bills have achieved great success in both the St. Louis area and the state of Missouri, winning their district and sectional in all three years. The team has also come tantalizingly close to a seventh state title in each of those years, finishing second in the state meet in 2018, 2019, and 2020. In all three years, SLUH has also been the highest finisher from the St. Louis area in Class 5, the highest MSHSAA classification level, beating out other top schools such as Marquette, Lafayette, and Ladue in the process.

This high level of success is nothing new for a program that has won 26 of a possible 29 Metro Catholic Conference championships (including 17 straight), and both the runners and the coaching staff will look to finally get their hands on another state trophy at the end of this upcoming season.

The current team retains a remarkable amount of depth from the varsity squad that took home second place at the Gans Creek Cross Country course in Columbia, Mo. last year, losing only three of the seven run-

ners to graduation. The four remaining members of that team—seniors Grant Brawley, Baker Pashea, Sean Kellogg, and Justin Glass—as well as all three alternates—juniors Wyatt Seal, Tim Greiner, and Nolan Meara—remain with the team, and are followed by another group of runners hungry to prove themselves. This experience and depth puts the Jr. Bills squarely on the shortlist of favorites to bring home a state championship in November.

For head coach Joe Porter, it is important that his runners know that, while winning a state title is a great accomplishment, it is not always an effective measuring stick for a season’s success.

“We’re trying to be right and run our best races at the end of the season, but we also want to establish a brotherhood and a community where everyone cares about everyone else,” said Porter. “Those are the things that are going to determine success, the (state) title is not something that I’m going to be talking about at all during the season.”

In comparison to last season, members of the top group of varsity runners are ahead of schedule in terms of the paces that they are hitting in workouts, much of which can be attributed to the return to summer morning runs held by coaches, which couldn’t take place for much of last year due to Covid-19 restrictions.

This year also featured the return of the weeklong training

trip that top team members take to the small northern Missouri town of Brashear, which helped to further grow the brotherhood between teammates.

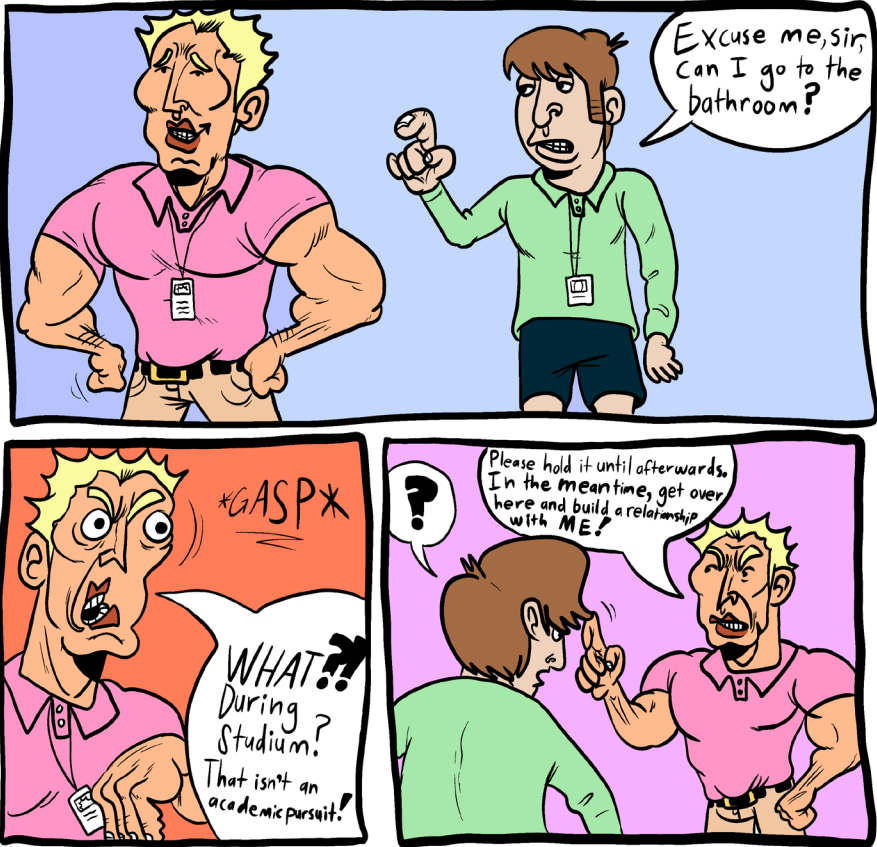
“The team has been doing really well so far,” said Brawley, who is one of four team captains this year. “We’re ahead of schedule compared to this point last year. We as captains are trying to get everyone motivated to do workouts and runs, and also to try and help push the bottom guys and teach the freshmen what to do and get them involved, and just to get excited for a good season.”

This past week in particular, the resiliency of this team has already been put to the test, as the recent heat wave has forced daily practices to occur either inside the Danis Field House after school or in Forest Park before school.

“Yeah, it’s not fun for anybody,” said Porter, “We’ve had some guys come in the mornings and get in workouts, which has been an optional thing to kind of get practice out of the way. It was still hot this morning, but we went out and ran right through it.”

As for short-term goals, the focus of the varsity, JV, and freshman teams are set on upcoming meets. Freshmen and sophomores will run in their first race on Wednesday, Sept. 1, at the O’Fallon (Ill.) Futures Meet. Varsity and JV begin their racing season the following Saturday, Sept. 4, at the Granite City Invitational.

SLUH SERS #1: STUDY? UM...



art | Jude Reed

Back To School Photos



Students having fun at BTSM.

photo | Isaiah Hinkebein



Students enjoying the first tailgate.

photo | Isaiah Hinkebein



Students enjoying lunch without plastic barriers.

photo | Jack Figge



Students decked out in BTSM attire.

photo | Isaiah Hinkebein

Calendar

Friday, August 27

B Day

1st Possible Fall Sports Contest
Fall Activities Fair
Running of the Bills for Class of 2024
Sophomore Class Meeting-Studium
LUNCH Homestyle Battered Cod
Snack Ultimate Beef Nachos
12:20PM Junior Class Meeting
6:00PM Varsity Football vs MICDS

Saturday, August 28

10:00AM JV Soccer at Jackson HS

Sunday, August 29

No Events

Monday, August 30

A Day

LUNCH Homestyle Meatloaf
Snack Mini Pizza
4:00PM B Team Football vs MICDS
5:00PM JV Soccer vs CBC

Tuesday, August 31

B Day

Emergency Drills - Lockout
Mass of the Holy Spirit
Morning Assembly Schedule
LUNCH Homestyle Chicken Wing Duo
Snack SLUH Sliders
4:15PM B Team Soccer vs Marquette
4:30PM C Team Soccer vs Marquette
6:00PM Varsity Soccer vs Marquette

Wednesday, September 1

A Day

LUNCH Homestyle Chicken Alfredo
Snack Duo Drummies
5:00PM C Team Soccer vs St. Dominic

Thursday, September 3

B Day

LUNCH Homestyle Santa Fe Chicken
Snack Bosco
Late Start Schedule

calendar | Roarke Unrau

Prep News

Volume 86, Issue 1

Editor in Chief
Jack “papal cross” Figge

Sports Editor
Nathan “Phillip Bone’s eye-paint” Rich

News Editor
Roarke “blow-up volleyball” Unrau

Visual Editor
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Staff
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Coby “foreign substances” Spratte
George “N-95 Mask” Henken

Reporters
Alex “‘Jesus Loves You’ tie-dye shirt” Preusser
Ben “gardening tools” Croat
Michael “my Crocs” Robinson
Alex “swim cap” Wentz

Credits

“What was your BTSM accessory?”

Artists
Alex “Salt + Smoke employee discount” Deiters
Will “temporary face tattoos” Blaisdell

Contributing Photographers
Mrs. Kathy “Periodic Table trench coat” Chott
Isaiah “Chinese finger trap” Hinkebein

Moderator
Steve “I didn’t go” Missey

SLUH post of the week: Senior Phillip Bone



@lukejohnston_11_ Last slide is for you @pjbehan. see you Friday