

Forest Park XC Festival attracts thousands; SLUH finishes fifth

BY MICHAEL SIT
REPORTER

"I plan on kicking more butt," said senior Peter Charles, varsity cross country runner after the Forest Park XC Festival.

More than eighty of St. Louis U. High's cross-country runners competed in the eighth annual Forest Park Festival, which was co-sponsored by SLUH and the Big River Running Company. Out of all SLUH athletes, eight medals were earned. The varsity bagged a fifth place out of thirty-seven teams. Meanwhile, the JV team ascended to the top of the podium to receive a first place plaque out of thirty teams. The freshmen Cross Country teams concluded a lengthy Forest Park Festival as the team placed third overall.

Despite the end of SLUH's first place streak, many athletes at the Forest Park Festival had exceptional days. Xavier Ludwig sped with a time of 10:09 for a 3k (roughly 1.86 miles). Freshman Danny Meissner and William Kelly are freshmen that are rising to great speeds of 10:40 and 10:54, respectively.

"Overall I would say the freshman did well," said Freshmen Will Kelly. "It is early in the season. I liked the course, and it wasn't as bad as I suspected. The hills killed me. The freshmen did a good job of attaching themselves to runners that made them go faster."

The crown jewel of last Sat-

urday was the JV Squad's victory. Sophomore transfer Dustan Davidson strode into the finish line 24 seconds before the second place finisher. Davidson ran the course at an excellent time of 16:25. The JV squad stormed the podium, taking five of the thirty medals. Davidson, juniors Garrett Fox and Jack Gallagher, senior captain Jerome Amsler, and senior Alex Sextro were the winners from SLUH in the JV race.

"For the JV race, our strategy was to get out fast so we didn't get trapped behind too many people in the beginning of the race," said Amsler.

The varsity team composed of juniors Jack Sullivan, Matt Hennessey, and Shayn Jackson, sophomore Joe Butler, senior captains John Esswein, Michael Swan, Tom Rubio, and senior Peter Charles. Unfortunately, a number of rough patches hindered the varsity team from succeeding at the meet. Prior to the race, Swan experienced stomach issues and vomited before the starting shot was fired. Rubio ran into some problems during the race when he fell and suffered a head injury. Fortunately, he persevered and finished with a stellar time of 17:51.

"I've had a slow start to the season with injuries but I feel like I'm about back up to my usual level and should be able to help the team improve," said Rubio.

When asked what he could



Sophomore Pete Genovese runs in last weekend's Forest Park XC Festival

have done to prepare for the varsity race, Charles said, "I would have rested in the shade instead of playing football and running around before the race."

Sullivan, Hennessey, and Jackson resided among the admirable varsity finishers. Those three juniors completed the race amongst the top 50 out of 240 and 40 in the varsity race. All three achieved new personal records as well.

"We weren't quite at our best

on Saturday," said Charles. "The mental toughness just wasn't quite there."

A major contribution to the team's overall success at the Forest Park Festival was SLUH's make-shift Blue Crew of seniors Eric Ottenlips, Alex Piening, Kevin Benben, and Edmund Howe.

"The Blue Crew was a big help during the race. As John said in his speech, 'the fans make the race easier to get through,'" said Amsler.

When asked about his overall thoughts about the meet's success, head coach Joe Porter said, "There were over one-hundred teams, and fifth ain't bad. We definitely have some areas to improve in. I was happy with Sullivan and Butler. Some guys ran their fastest times of their careers. We are still eight weeks away from the big meets. Pete Genovese and Garrett Fox ran well in the JV race, and obviously Dustan Davidson ran well also."

First place victory for JV XC at Forest Park

BY MICHAEL DAUGHERTY
REPORTER

The JV Cross Country team began their season with a first place victory at the Forest Park Cross Country Festival. They competed against 29 other schools in the more competitive of the two JV races.

Sophomore Dustan Davidson finished first overall out of 517 runners with a time of 16:24.

"There wasn't really much competition in the JV race, so I just had to run by myself the whole time," said Davidson.

The second place runner Alex Harrison finished 27 seconds behind Davidson. Davidson is a transfer student from O'Fallon (IL) and because Davidson ran Cross Country there, he is not allowed to run in Varsity races for a full year at SLUH. Had he run in the Varsity race, he would have ranked third among the SLUH varsity runners.

Juniors Garrett Fox and Jack Gallagher, Seniors Jerry Amsler and Senior Alex Sextro rounded out SLUH's top five. All five runners finished in the top 20. Gallagher, Amsler, Sextro, and many other of SLUH's JV runners achieved record times in the race. Head coach Joe Porter attributed the fast times to the hard running surface created by the extremely dry conditions. SLUH finished with 44 points, followed by Rockhurst who came in second with 87 points. Not only did the team have a great top five, but 14 of the top 100 runners were from SLUH.

"I think the first race really showed the team's depth," said senior Matt Thomas.

The team has a very positive outlook on the remainder of the season. Its rigorous training program should prove advantageous as the season progresses.

"There is a lot more mileage at SLUH's practices than at O'Fallon's," said Davidson.

A major goal for each runner is to improve throughout the year and hopefully achieve personal records at the last race of the year, which takes place at Finley.

Because JV and varsity practice together, many JV runners look up to varsity for leadership and motivation. Senior Christian Siegfried points to Seniors Tom Rubio and John Esswein as team leaders.

JV has an upcoming race this Saturday Sept. 21 in the Paul Enke Invitational which will be held at Sioux Passage Park in Florissant, arguably one of the tougher courses with a hill has been coined "the man-maker".

"It's incredible how tough this course is," said Porter.

The following Saturday, Sept 28, SLUH's JV will split between the Hancock Invitational at Jefferson Barracks and the Palatine Invitational in Palatine, Illinois. SLUH will face off against the very competitive Illinois team in Elmhurst York at Palatine. Having a historically good cross country program, DeSmet appears to be the JV team's largest rival for conference this year.

Swim team faces Parkway West

BY PATRICK SCHULER
REPORTER

On Sept. 12, the St. Louis U. High varsity swim team had a meet against Parkway West High School at Forest Park Community College. The Jr. Bills were looking forward to this meet, as it was the first true test of how good the team will be.

Parkway West has always had a good team and SLUH knew that it would be a close competition. About two weeks ago, the team saw what Parkway West was capable of this year, as they won the Marquette Relays. SLUH took third in the same meet.

However, according to assistant coach Kevin Moore, things could have gone differently.

"We had one disqualification," said Moore, "and we had one guy, Andrew Irvine, who was injured. So, with those two things ending differently, it would have been a very close meet."

According to Moore, the key to winning this meet is that certain swimmers needed to step up to higher places in their races.

Due to the large amount of

freshmen on the team, it was difficult to predict the outcome of many races because of their short track record with SLUH. All of the coaches and team members were still optimistic that this was going to be a very close and exciting meet.

Head coach Joe Esposito seemed to have intensified practices this week to prepare the swimmers for the tough meet. He focused on perfecting details that hurt them in the previous meet against Parkway West such as learning how to start and finish a race properly.

"The guys who do those things well seem to always just win the race by a little bit," said Moore. "The other guys get touched out by a foot."

Esposito commented before the meet, "The meet against Parkway West will show what type of character this (SLUH) team has. Parkway West matches up against us well."

SLUH did not match up too well against West, though, when the meet came. The first event started well, as SLUH took first

in the 200 IM relay. But it started going downhill during the second event, the 200 Free. Senior Luke Sloan came first in the event, but was disqualified from the race, because the cap he was wearing was not a SLUH cap. It was a little mistake by the Swimills, and it cost them big time.

Overall the Jr. Bills did not have a great meet. Although freshman sensation Colin Derdeyn took first in the 100 Butterfly and Luke Sloan took first in the 100 Freestyle, it was not nearly enough to propel the Bills to victory.

SLUH ended up losing the meet by a final tally of 114 to 72. Despite the loss, this test for SLUH did help them figure out where they rank this year. They are now 1-1 in dual meets. Their next meet is the COMO Meet at Mizzou this weekend. This also will show them how they stack up, compared to teams from all over the state. Their next dual meet is Tuesday against Lafayette at Lafayette. Despite the loss, the team is hopeful and will learn from it going forward.

Cast of the Water Engine

SLUH's Fall production this year will be *The Water Engine* by David Mamet. The production will be directed by This parable of a violent disruption of a miraculous new technology was last produced as SLUH under the direction of Joseph Schulte in 1997.

A.S.M. / Onstage Company / Dave Murray Understudy — Brian Seckfort
A.S.M. / Onstage Company / Mr. Wallace Understudy — Jack Wilke
Charles Lang — Elliot Auch
Rita — Maggie Kickham
Morton Gross — Tom Fields
Lawrence Oberman — Kevin Harris

Mrs. Varrec — Jacqueline Hirlinger
Mr. Wallace — Paul Fister
Bornie — Blaise Lanter
Sound/Onstage — Evan Brende
Sound / Onstage — Christopher Weingart
—compiled by Adam Thorp