

Boys soccer: SLUH takes out CBC, Chaminade for MCC title; preps for districts

Junior Billikens knock off CBC, Chaminade to secure league title

By David Kvidahl

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The St. Louis University High soccer team is your Metro Catholic Conference champions.

The Junior Billikens (23-3) secured the league title last week, as it went on the road and knocked off Christian Brothers College High on Wednesday with a 3-0 win and then took out Chaminade 1-0 on Saturday.

Even with a loaded roster last season, the MCC title eluded the Junior Billikens.

This year's version, though less heralded, managed to get the job done.

"I think it's a pretty good statement today," SLUH coach Charlie Martel said after Saturday's win against the Red Devils.

SLUH has ridden an opportunistic offense all season and Saturday was no different. Senior forward Ryan Vincent knocked in a rebound goal after the ball skittered out of the Chaminade goalkeeper's hands 27 minutes into the first half.

The Junior Billikens played solid the rest of the way and forced their pace on the Red Devils. SLUH likes to create chaos by sending waves of players toward the ball. The frenetic pressure forces most opponents to turn the ball over and gives SLUH an advantage as it quickly transitions into offense.

On Saturday, Chaminade didn't look comfortable but a handful of times, when it was able to knock the ball around and play at its own pace. The young Red Devils were forcing the issue and, in turn, playing right into SLUH's hands.

Chaminade did generate a few opportunities, but few of them were dangerous. Only a 40-yard free kick from junior midfielder Sito Sasieta actually hit the wood work, bouncing off the crossbar.

SLUH wrapped up a busy week after playing four games in six days.

"It was a solid effort," Martel said. "Did you notice the 22 tired legs out there?"

Defense has been and will continue to be the Junior Billikens' bread and butter. Last week at CBC, the Junior Billikens let the Cadets (21-4, 3-1) toy with the ball all they wanted in their half of the field, but CBC wasn't dangerous.

Against the wind, SLUH found another opportunistic goal to go up 1-0 after Vincent was there for a one-timer.

"He's come up big for us," Martel said.

In the second half, senior Tim O'Connor put on a show, as he netted two goals within a minute of each other to lift SLUH to its 3-0 victory.

SLUH was scheduled to end its season after Journal press time Tuesday night against Marquette before getting a few days off as the postseason begins.

The Junior Billikens will host either Ladue or Roosevelt at 4 p.m. Tuesday.

Chaminade will play either Webster Groves or Gateway Tech at 6 p.m. that same night at SLUH.

The winners of those games will square off for the district title at 6 p.m. Nov. 6 at SLUH.

CBC finds its fire

After watching his Cadets get bullied, whacked and pushed around against SLUH last week, CBC coach Terry Michler had two words to describe the team's effort in the 3-0 loss.

"Disappointed and embarrassed," Michler said. "I'm disappointed with our effort and embarrassed by the result."

What had Michler most concerned was the fact his team didn't appear to get amped up to play league rival SLUH. He felt they didn't care enough.

"Two evenly matched teams, it shouldn't end up 3-0," he said.

The Cadets found their winning ways the next night in a 2-1 win over Oakville and, by Saturday night, Michler thought his team found some fire in a 2-1 win over Vianney.

"I was concerned, but they've responded," Michler said.

He added getting junior Ryan Tinsley back in the starting lineup and junior stalwart Austin Tierney as a substitute helped stoke the Cadets' fire.

"Everybody looks up to those guys," Michler said. "I think they realized that last game was a clunker. I told them before the game they had to fight."

The Cadets wrap up the regular season tonight at Fort Zumwalt South before hosting districts next week.

CBC is the top-seeded team and will play the winner of Saturday's Parkway North-Parkway Central game at 5 p.m. Monday. DeSmet will play Kirkwood at 7 p.m. Monday.

The winners of those games will meet next Wednesday for the district title at 7 p.m.