

Purschke recipient of the TCP award; Demonstrates what a true XC runner is about

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The St. Louis U-High cross country team reflected on their season at the annual banquet this past week. Coaches, parents, and runners celebrated their accomplishments, and some received awards for their hard work, dedication, and embodiment of team spirit. One of these awards, and the most prestigious, was the Tradition, Class, and Pride (TCP) Award. The award was started by Assistant Principal for Mission Jim Linhares when he coached the cross country team.

"When I started this award, we were naming the most improved. We were naming the most valuable runners. We were naming the mileage champion. We were recognizing people that accomplish things," said Linhares. "The TCP award-winner is somebody who's dedicated everything we believe as a team. It's working hard, but it's also enthusiasm. It's being the kind of person who inspires people and who has his heart in the right place."

Linhares wanted to bring awareness to a runner who showed what being a SLUH cross country runner who exhibited the qualities of tradition, class, and pride. This year senior Nicholas Purschke was the recipient of the reward.

"I was pretty shocked actually, I remember my freshman year seeing senior Matt Friedrichs get the same award and just really looking up to him as a leader and thinking I wanna get that same award someday," said Purschke. "I have given so much to this team and I have lived and breathed SLUH cross country for the past four years so this award meant everything to me, and I really hope I've inspired the underclassmen to follow those three virtues of tradition, class, and pride."

Any day if you go out to watch Purschke run, you can see his inspiration over the feat of the team. He carried himself high through both his successes and his challenges. Purschke was born with ALD—a genetic disease that attacks the nerve cells responsible for brain function—and Adrenal Insufficiency, another disease that affects cortisol levels. Everyday Purschke still gives his all at practices and races while being a leader to the underclassmen as team captain.

"I think a good thing is when you're either doing a workout with him or on a race line with

him. And you just look over you see him, literally giving everything he's got. That's going to inspire others to try to push through that wall that they're facing themselves. While he's not going to help our varsity score, he's going to help our team in other tremendous

ways,” said cross country assistant coach Brian Gilmore, who received the same award in 2001. “Nicholas is an embodiment of these foundational bedrocks of what our program is and we just wanted to recognize that and to not let the chance go by unrecognized.”