

Porter Inducted into Hall of Fame: Track and XC head coach recognized for successful career by Mo. Track & Cross Country Coaches Assn.

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Porter coaching XC. Photo: Courtesy of Brian Gilmore

After coaching St. Louis U. High track and cross country for 18 successful seasons, head coach Joe Porter was inducted into the Missouri Track and Cross Country Coaches Association (MTCCCA) Hall of Fame. Every year, five to eight coaches are inducted from the pool of nominees. This past September, Porter found out that he was one of the elite few.

“When I heard the news that Coach Porter was being inducted, I honestly wasn’t surprised. I’ve never had a coach who deserved it more. He knows exactly how to help every one of his athletes, and makes a conscious effort to know everyone on a personal level,” said senior Wyatt Seal, who runs both track and cross country. “I remember once after a bad race I was in a bad mood all day, but I got a text from him simply saying that he believed in me. It turned my mood around, and I quite literally was showing people the text to show off how amazing of a coach he is. He’s an amazing leader, role model, coach, and friend whom I feel I can trust, and I’m thankful I was given the opportunity to run for him.”

Porter joined the SLUH cross country team as an assistant coach in 2005, and started as head coach in 2010 following former head coach Jim Linhares’ retirement. In his time

with the program, Porter has helped lead the team to the State meet every year. His teams have garnered an impressive 13 State trophies, including four State Championship titles and 6 State Runner Ups. This season, he led the team to a second place finish at districts and ninth place finish at state. Additionally, 31 of his runners competed at the Nike Midwest Regional Meet and claimed first place in the overall open race.

“Hearing the news certainly didn’t shock me as there isn’t really a more deserving man out there. His tenure at SLUH High has been nothing short of incredible and he has put so much effort into being where he is today, and for that, we are all thankful,” said junior Charlie Murray, a varsity cross country runner this year.

Despite his overwhelming success as a coach, Porter was surprised to see himself voted into the prestigious group of Hall of Famers.

“Even though I knew I was on the ballot, I was still caught off guard seeing my name along with so many great coaches,” said Porter. “It was very humbling to have my name with so many great coaches that have a lot of respect throughout Missouri.”

Despite being inducted in mid-September, Porter refrained from alerting the SLUH community until after the cross country season ended on Nov. 14 to prevent the team from getting distracted. Porter will officially join the elite group of MTCCCA Hall of Famers at the induction ceremony on Dec. 9.

“I’m still young. I feel like I have a lot of coaching years ahead of me, and a lot of times when you’re a Hall of Famer, people start talking about retirement,” said Porter. “I’m not even 40 yet, so I still have plenty of years left of coaching and things that I still want to accomplish as a coach.”