PETER BREWER

Peter Brewer’s legacy as a highly successful cross country and track and field coach at Castro Valley High lives on through annual invitational meets that he created and the school continues to host today.

When he first came to Castro Valley, Brewer insists, he was surrounded by historic coaches: from Norm Guest, whom he credits with putting Castro Valley’s cross country and track programs on the sports map; to John Brosnan and Oscar Sakamoto, legendary Castro Valley football and basketball coaches who, Brewer recalls, “gave me a lot of grief for being young and stupid;” to Tony Casillas, who Peter says “was producing real good runners without basically any support.”

So, Brewer listened and when Brosnan, the athletic director, made him the head track and cross country coach in 1985, “I got really involved with it,” he said. “I really didn’t know squat. I went to clinics. Read books. Then I got a couple of athletes. That makes a big difference.”

Counting all levels (frosh-soph, junior varsity and varsity, boys and girls), Brewer’s cross country teams won an amazing 101 Hayward Area Athletic League titles from 1985 to 2008. They won four North Coast Section championships. And he had four NCS individual champions, as well as State Meet qualifiers in 20 different seasons.

In track (where there was no JV level), those numbers were 43 HAAL team titles and one NCS championship. Brewer proudly notes he had at least one athlete qualify for the State Meet in all 16 events along the way.

People noticed. The NCS selected him as an Honor Coach and for a Distinguished Achievement Award. The CIF jumped onboard with a Distinguished Achievement gesture of its own.

Brewer and his wife now live in Walnut Creek, but two annual events on the Trojans’ sports calendar still catch his eye: The Castro Valley cross country and track and field invitationals, popular events that began in 1993 and 1996, respectively.

“We established consistent excellence, which I took great pride in,” he said. “We were able to track the kids, put them in highly competitive areas, condition them, push them farther than they thought they could go. And I was fortunate to have some great athletes who came around.”