



MOST REVEREND JOSEPH R. KOPACZ, D.D., PH.D.
CATHOLIC DIOCESE of JACKSON

August 14, 2024

Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame
1152 Lakeland Drive
Jackson, MS 39216

To Whom It May Concern:

I am Bishop Joseph Kopacz of the Catholic Diocese of Jackson, and I am writing to recommend Lauren Hall as an inductee into the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame. She is a 1997 graduate of Vicksburg Catholic Schools from where she went on to Mississippi State University on a full scholarship for four years to compete in Division 1 Soccer. She graduated from Mississippi State in 2001. From an early age her parents directed her to be active through sports, which was not a hard sell because her grandfather Parker Hall was a University of Mississippi football All-American.

For a time, her athletic excellence receded to the background during her young adult life. But it reemerged with great zeal when at the mature age of 28 she discovered her passion and, therefore, her destiny in competitive cycling. For a full decade she devoted herself to competition at the highest levels of the sport, nationally and internationally. Her accomplishments in cycling are exceptional and worthy credentials for induction into the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame. She was a key member of the U.S. Women's Cycling Team for five years, racing in 4 World Championships, and a 3-time National Champion on the track. Among numerous victories around the world, she won the Gent Wevelgem in Belgian, and was a member of the USA Cycling winning Giro Rosa Team, the most prestigious women's race in the world. She was a team captain for her last five seasons before retiring in 2018. Post competitively, she remains committed to advancing her beloved sport by encouraging and teaching the next generation of cyclists.

Although cycling is not as prominent in the annals of Mississippi sports lore, it is highly respected in the Magnolia State by many, and it is held in the highest esteem in various sections of the United States and around the world.

I hope that his letter of recommendation will help to bring Lauren Hall across the finish line as an inductee in the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph R. Kopacz", is written over a faint, circular embossed seal.

+Joseph R. Kopacz
Bishop of Jackson